An Analysis of \spects of Existentialism and Humanistic Psychology Relevant to Education. With Special Reference to Informal Education in the Primary Schools of Great Britain.

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this thesis is to draw attention to the relevance to the field of education of certain aspects of Existentialist philosophy and Humanistic psychology, and more particularly their relevance to the development of informal education.

An examination of the problem facing contemporary man in terms of widespread feelings of anxiety, alienation, loss of identity and loss of meaning suggests the development of a type of education which will prepare individuals to make choices and decisions for themselves in order to cope with what has been referred to as "the death of permanence" and "the existential vacuum."

The problem suggests the development of an educational system emphasizing freedom, self-awareness, choosing and personal responsibility, that is, an education stressing individualism and activism - what might be called on Existentialist education.

An attempt will be made to show what support may be found in the history of educational thought in support of existentialist educational ideals.

An examination will also be made of present schools in order to determine if any educational system at present could be said to be fostering the educational ideals suggested by Existentialist philosophy and the emerging new Humanistic Psychology.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

In Man's Search For Himself, Rollo May refers to a parable by Friedrich Nietzsche concerning a madman who runs into the village square shouting "Where is God?" The townspeople laugh and deride him. The madman then shouts: "Whither is God?"

> I shall tell you! We have killed him - you and I!....yet how have we done this?....Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the whole horizon? What did we do when we unchained this earth from its sun?... Whither do we move now? Away from all suns? Do we not fall incessantly? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there yet any up and down? Do we not err as through an infinite naught? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night and more night coming on all the while?...God is dead! God remains dead!....and we have killed him!....Here the madman became silent and looked again at his listeners: They too remained silent and looked at him....'I come too early,' he said then ...This tremendous event is still on its way.[1]

May states that Nietzsche is not calling for a return to the conventional belief in God, but he is pointing out what happens when a society loses its center of values.

> The way out, says Nietzsche, is a finding of a center of values anew - what he terms 'revaluation' or 'transvaluation' of all values. 'Revaluation of all values,' he proclaims, 'that is my formula for an act of ultimate self-examination by mankind! The upshot is that the values and goals which provided a unifying center for previous centuries in the modern period no longer are cogent. We have not yet found the new center which will enable us to choose our goals constructively, and thus to overcome the painful bewilderment and anxiety of not knowing which way to move.[2]

1. May, Rolo, Man's Search For Himself, New York, W. W. Norton, 1953, p. 48
2. Ibid, p. 49

This loss of the old beliefs, values and goals, which May and numerous other contemporary writers have described, is a condition which modern man faces now and apparently will be facing increasingly in the future.

Regarding the individual phenomenonological aspect of this condition, Albert Camus writes of the moment when the "stage sets collapse", when a man suddenly questions the routine of daily life which carries him along. He suddenly realizes that he is growing old and that all the tomorrows for which he had hoped and planned are merely leading him towards death. Why should he continue?

Some writers including the noted Austrian psychotherapist, Viktor Frankl, have described the same phenomenon and have referred to it as the "existential vacuum".

> The existential vacuum is a widespread phenomenon of the twentieth century. This is understandable; it may be due to a twofold loss that man had to undergo since he became a truly human being. At the beginning of human history, man lost some of the basic animal instincts in which an animal's behavior is embedded and by which it is secured. Such security, like Paradise, is closed to man forever; man has to make choices. In addition to this, however, man has suffered another loss in his more recent development: the traditions that had buttressed his behavior are now rapidly diminishing. No instinct tells him what he has to do, and no tradition tells him what he ought to do; soon he will not know what he wants to do. More and more he will be governed by what others want him to do, thus increasingly falling prey to conformism.[3]

Abraham Maslow believes we are now witnessing the total collapse of all sources of values outside the individual. He contends that European Existentialist philosophers and American

3. Frankl, Viktor E., Man's Search for Meaning, New York, Washington Square Press, 1963, p. 167

psychologists have independently and simultaneously come to the same conclusion. The European existentialists are largely reacting to Nietzsche's conclusion that God is dead and perhaps to the fact that Marx also is dead. The Americans have learned that political democracy and economic prosperity do not in themselves solve any of the basic value problems.[4]

This shift and loss of a locus of values was identified and analysed more than twenty years ago by David Riesman in his influential work, The Lonely Crowd.[5] Reisman believes that before this century, the American individual was "inner-directed." He had incorporated the standards he was taught; he was moralistic in the late Victorian sense and had strong motives and ambitions, although these were derived from the outside. He lived as though he were given stability by an inner gyroscope. He fitted the early psychoanalytic description of the emotionally repressed person who is directed by a strong super ego.

Riesman believes the present day American is now "outer-directed". He seeks not to be outstanding but to "fit in"; he lives as though he were directed by a radar set fastened to his head perpetually telling him what other people expect of him. The radar type gets his motives and directions from others, he is able to respond but not to choose; he has no effective centre of motivation of his own.

4. Maslow, Abraham H., Toward a Psychology of Being, New York, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1968, p. 10.
5. Riesman David, The Lonely Crowd, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1950.

> What is common to all the other-directed people is that their contemporaries are the source of direction for the individual - either those known to him or those with whom he is indirectly acquainted, through friends and through the mass media. This source is of course "internalized" in the sense that dependence on it for guidance in life is implanted early. The goals toward which the other-directed person strives shift with that guidance: it is only the process of striving itself and the process of paying close attention to the signals from others that remain unaltered throughout life.[6]

The importance of these "signals from others" in directing contemporary man's life has been given a detailed analysis more recently in Erving Goffman's fascinating work, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.[7]

The gyroscope method of gaining psychological power of the previous "inner-directed" generations was unsound and eventually self-defeating and their inner direction a moralistic substitute for integrity rather than integrity itself. It is now necessary for contemporary man to find a new centre of strength within himself. Men today must find something to take the place of the gyroscope man's rigid rules.

Riesman points out that the "outer-directed" people in our time generally are characterized by attitudes of passivity and apathy. He believes modern young people have by and large given up the driving ambition to excell or reach the top; they regard such ambition as a fault. They would rather be accepted by their peers even to the extent of being inconspicuous and absorbed in the group.

6. Ibid, p. 21
7. Goffman, Erving, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, New York, Doubleday, 1959

To many of the Jack Kerouac - "beatnik" generation of the nineteen fifties the catch phrase best summing up their attitudes was "blessed, blessed oblivion". With the "hippie" and "now" generations of the sixties and seventies the same attitude is now referred to in the phrase, "opting out."

Rollo May has described modern"outer-directed" man, in the words of T.S. Eliot, as "the hollow men". May believes the experience of hollowness or emptiness generally comes from contemporary man's feeling that he is powerless to do anything effective about his life or the world he lives in.

> Inner vacuousness is the long-term, accumulated result of a person's particular conviction toward himself, namely his conviction that he cannot act as an entity in directing his own life, or change other people's attitudes toward him, or effectually influence the world around him. Thus he gets the deep sense of despair and futility which so many people in our day have. And soon, since what he wants and what he feels can make no real difference, he gives up wanting and feeling. Apathy and lack of feeling are also defenses against anxiety.[8]

Erich Fromm has pointed out that people today no longer live under the authority of church or moral laws, but rather under "anonymous authorities" like public opinion. The authority is the public itself, but this public is merely a collection of many individuals each with his radar set adjusted to finding out what the others expect of him.

8. May, Op. Cit., p. 22

Riesman makes the point that the public is therefore afraid of something which has no real existence. It is an anonymous authority derived from a composite of themselves, but themselves without individual centers.

In the final analysis modern man is afraid of his own "collective emptiness". As May states:

> The great danger of this situation of vacuity and powerlessness is that it leads sooner or later to painful anxiety and despair, and ultimately, if it is not corrected, to futility and the blocking off of the most precious qualities of the human being. Its end results are the dwarfing and impoverishment of persons psychologically, or else surrender to some destructive authoritarianism.9

Another characteristic of modern man is loneliness. May sees a close relationship between the feeling of emptiness and loneliness. When an individual does not know with any conviction what he wants or what he feels, when he becomes aware of the fact that conventional desires and goals he has been taught to follow, no longer bring him any security or give him a sense of direction, when he feels an inner void while he notes around him the apparent confusion of fast changing modern society, he is apprehensive and his natural reaction is to look to the others around him. He looks to them for some sense of direction, some comfort in the knowledge that he is not alone in his fear.

Modern man fears being completely along because he is afraid this may result in his losing awareness of himself. People are afraid of being alone for long periods of time because they feel that without others around them they would lose the boundaries for

9. Ibid, p. 23

themselves; they would have nothing by which to orient themselves. Social acceptance is a buffer against the feelings of loneliness; a person can comfortably merge himself in the group. He loses his loneliness; but it is usually at the price of giving up his existence as an identity in his own right. He is no longer lonely but he has lost the opportunity to develop his own inner resources, strength and sense of direction by which he could establish meaningful relationships with others.[10]

American sociologist, Orrin E. Klapp believes contemporary men are engaged in what he terms "a collective search for identity".

> My view, briefly, is that a collective identity search is symptomatic of the fact that some modern social systems deprive people of psychological "payoffs", the lack of which, expressed by terms such as alienation, meaninglessness, identity problem, motivates a mass groping for activities and symbols with which to restore or find new identity. People grope because they do not really know what is wrong especially when there is physical prosperity yet a sense of being cheated. When mass movements become concerned with identity, they develop certain characteristics such as "ego-screaming", concern with costume and self-ornamentation, style rebellion, concern with emotional gestures rather than practical effects, adulation of heroes, cultism, and the like, with which I shall deal. Such signs show that ordinary economic and political solutions are not what is wanted. People feel the futility and irrelevance of such measures, yet do not know quite what else to do. The sense of being cheated is not explainable in economic terms because it is shortcoming in meaning. 11

In his book Klapp examines certain social activities and movements which he believes plainly show a turning away from "sensible" economic and political measures toward a "search for meaning to oneself, for oneself, in oneself. Klapp contends that some activities

10. Ibid, p. 30.
11. Klapp, Orrin E., Collective Search For Identity, New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969, p. vii.

such as cultic movements are relatively successful; others like ego-screaming and faddism seem to fail. The basic viewpoint from which he judges such behaviour is his theory of symbolism. It is his contention that collective behaviour is an effort,more or less successful to create symbols which give meaning to oneself and thus on a larger scale to restore symbolic balance to society.

Klapp believes there is a disturbance of symbolic balance - a loss of non-discursive symbolism - behind the identity problem of modern times.

> A society fails to supply adequate identity when symbols are disturbed to the extent that they no longer give reliable reference points (in such things as status symbols, place symbols, style models, cultic values, mystiques) by which people can locate themselves socially, realize themselves sentimentally, and declare (to self and others) who they are. Although technology has a mystique of its own - of science, chrome, and efficiency - so far it has not supplied man with identity and a sense of belonging to the world. On the whole, technology has been much better at wiping away symbols than making them.[12]

Alvin Toffler has described our age as a time in which man is witnessing "the death of permanence" due to the greatly accelerated rate of change in society. It is a form of culture shock within one's own society, but one from which modern man can not even return to the familiar culture left behind.

> Take an individual out of his own culture and set him down suddenly in an environment sharply different from his own, with a different set of cues to react to - different conceptions of time, space, work, love, religion, sex, and everything else - then cut him off

12. Ibid, p. viii

> from any hope of retreat to a more familiar social landscape, and the dislocation he suffers is doubly severe. Moreover, if this new culture is itself in constant turmoil, and if - worse yet - its values are incessantly changing, the sense of disorientation will be still further intensified. Given few clues as to what kind of behavior is rational under the radically new circumstances, the victim may well become a hazard to himself and others.
>
> Now imagine not merely an individual but an entire society, an entire generation - including its weakest, least intelligent, and most irrational members - suddenly transported into this new world. The result is mass disorientation, future shock on a grand scale.[13]

Toffler feels modern man has released a totally new social force - a stream of change so accelerated that it influences his sense of time and revolutionizes the tempo of his daily life. Contemporary man no longer "feels" life as men did in the past - this separates the true contemporary man from all others. The acceleration of change results in a feeling of impermanence and transience that characterizes the modern consciousness. It affects individuals in the way they relate to other people, to things, to the entire universe of ideas, art and values.

One of the basic characteristics of modern man is the psychological pain and turmoil referred to as anxiety. In one of his poems W. H. Auden refers to our time as The Age of Anxiety. Modern man is anxious because he does not know what roles to pursue or what principles for action to believe in. In this confusion modern man experiences an inward gnawing apprehension. The novelist, Herman Hesse has described an age as a time "when a whole generation is caught....between two ages, two modes of life, with the consequence that it loses all power to understand itself and has no standards, no security, no simple acquiescence."

13. Toffler, Alvin, Future Shock, New York, Random House, 1970, p. 11

May describes the feeling of anxiety as "the human beings basic reaction to a danger to his existence...As soon as a threat becomes great enough to involve the total self, one then has the experience of anxiety. Anxiety is what we feel when our existence as selves is threatened."[14]

Anxiety thus can result when some value a man holds essential to his existence is threatened. An individual may have values which are his "core" or reason for living. If such values are destroyed, the individual may feel his existence as a self might as well be destroyed.

May does not, however, see the anxiety of modern man as only a negative force.

> This bewilderment - this confusion as to who we are and what we should do - is the most painful thing about anxiety. But the positive and hopeful side is that just as anxiety destroys our self-awareness, so awareness of ourselves can destroy anxiety. That is to say, the stronger our consciousness of ourselves, the more we can take a stand against and overcome anxiety. Anxiety, like fever is a sign that an inner struggle is progress. Neurotic anxiety is nature's way, as it were, of indicating to us that we need to solve a problem. The same is true of normal anxiety - it is a signal for us to call up our reserves and do battle against a threat. But the greater our self-strength - that is, the greater our capacity to preserve our awareness of ourselves and the objective world around us - the less we will be overcome by the threat.
>
> The only thing which would signify the loss of hope for getting through our present difficulties as individuals and as a nation, would be a resigning into apathy, and a failure to feel and face our anxiety constructively. Our task, then, is to strengthen our consciousness of ourselves, to find centers of strength within ourselves which will enable us to stand despite the confusion and bewilderment around us. 15

14. May, Op. Cit., P. 36.
15. Ibid, p. 39.

Although all the writers quoted heretofore appear to agree on the type of crisis facing contemporary man in terms of loss of identity, meaninglessness and wide felt anxiety, yet, it should be pointed out that there are great differences in regard to their proposed solutions to these problems.

Writers such as May, Fromm, Maslow and others are all, in a sense, Platonists or absolutists. I shall deal with their view of man at greater length in the final chapter which examines modern Humanistic or Third Force psychology. However, for the moment, it should be stated that these thinkers do believe that there is a knowable ideal towards which man can strive; that there is such a thing as fulfilling or realizing one's given nature. They believe autonomy is a crucial basic aspect of self fulfillment; but its full development requires certain specified psychological and social conditions, and its realization will lead to predictable ends which is their ideal of human nature. Some strict existentialists would, of course, consider it contradictory to speak of both autonomy and a knowable ideal.

Writers such as Klapp and Toffler might be regarded more as cultural relativists - that is, they seem to view man as being in a sense infinitely malleable and therefore any values and beliefs held by man are acceptable as long as man can construct a coherent identity and a stable society. Klapp would even have us embrace false myth in order to satisfy psychological need. Maslow, Fromm and others feel that we would never be able to realize our true natures if we accept the relativist positions which Klapp and Toffler appear to be

prepared to accept.

However, the problem still remains; how can modern man strengthen his consciousness, his self awareness and find centers of strength within himself in order to cope with the identity crisis, the death of permanence, the existential vacuum which he now faces. Surely this is an urgent problem which contemporary educators cannot ignore. Yet our tradition bound, authoritarian educational systems exhibit little evidence of even an awareness of the problem, much less any large scale attempts to deal with it in a rational, systematic manner.

Our present day schools still largely reflect the values and structures of Nineteenth Century industrialism. Alvin Toffler refers to our present educational system as "a hopeless anachronism".

> Parents look to education to fit their children for life in the future. Teachers warn that lack of an education will cripple a child's chances in the world of tomorrow. Government ministries, churches, the mass media - all exhort young people to stay in school, insisting that now, as never before, one's future is almost wholly dependent upon education.
>
> Yet for all this rhetoric about the future, our schools face backward toward a dying system, rather than forward to the emerging new society. Their vast energies are applied to cranking out Industrial Men-people tooled for survival in a system that will be dead before they are.[16]

In Toffler's view, in the societies of old, the past crept forward into the present and repeated itself in the future. In such a society the most sensible way to prepare a child was to arm

16. Toffler, Op.Cit.; p. 399.

him with the skills of the past - for these were precisely the same skills he would need in the future. Thus father handed down to son all sorts of practical techniques along with a clearly defined, highly traditional set of values. The key to the system was its absolute devotion to yesterday.

The industrial age destroyed this because industrialism required a new kind of man. It demanded skills that neither the family nor the church could by themselves provide. It brought about changes in the value system and required that man develop a new sense of time.

To produce the kind of adults it needed, industrial society constructed the machine of mass education. It had to adapt children for a new world - a world of repetitive indoor toil, machines, crowded living conditions, collective discipline, a world regulated by the factory whistle and clock.[17]

Toffler believes the educational system developed so that its very structure simulated the new industrial world.

> This system did not emerge instantly. Even today it retains throwback elements from pre-industrial society. Yet the whole ideal of assembling masses of students (raw material) to be processed by teachers (workers) in a centrally located school (factory) was a stroke of industrial genius. The whole administrative hierarchy of education, as it grew up, followed the model of industrial bureaucracy. The very organization of knowledge into permanent disciplines was grounded on industrial assumptions. Children marched from place to place and sat in assigned stations. Bells rang to announce changes of time.[18]

17. Ibid., p. 400.
18. Ibid., p. 400.

Schools thus become perfect introductions to industrial society. The regimentation, lack of individualization, the frigid system of classroom grouping and grading, the authoritarian role of the teacher made, and still makes, mass public education an extremely effective instrument of adaptation for an industrial society.

Children passing through such an educational system emerge into an adult society whose structure of jobs, roles and institutions resemble that of the school itself. The child lives as well as learns a way of life modeled after the one he will lead in the future.

Erich Fromm also noted how our educational system has been determined by the organizational needs of our industrial society and how in such a production organization, the individual is managed and manipulated in order that the production machine may run smoothly and without interuption. He has also noted the change from the overt authority of the nineteenth century to the more subtle anonymous authority of the twentieth century both in educatinn and industry.

> The change from the overt authority of the nineteenth century to the anonymous authority of the twentieth was determined by the organizational needs of our modern industrial society. The concentration of capital led to the formation of great enterprises managed by hierarchically organized bureaucracies. Large conglomerations of workers and clerks work togeter, each individual, or part of a vast organized production machine, which in order to run at all, must run smoothly and without interruption. The individual worker becomes merely a cog in this machine. In such a production organization, the individual is managed and manipulated. 18

[18] Fromm, Erich, in the introduction to Summerhill A Radical Approach to Child Rearing, by A.S. Neill, New York, Hart, 1960, P. X.

Although our schools do enormous psychic and emotional damage to our children in the cause of industrialism, and do little to prepare them for the "future shock" and "existential vacuum" they will face in their adult lives, it is now ironic to realize that they no longer even properly prepare children for the industrial society which they were designed to serve. Toffler believes that in the technological systems of tomorrow, machines will deal with the flow of physical materials while men will cope with the flow of information and insight. Machines will perform the routine tasks while men perform the intellectual and creative tasks.

> Machines and men both, instead of being concentrated in gigantic factories and factory cities, will be scattered across the globe, linked together by amazingly sensitive, near-instantaneous communications. Human work will move out of the factory and mass office into the community and the home. Simultaneously, the organizations needed to control technology will shift from bureaucracy to Ad-hocracy, from permanence to transience, and from a concern with the present to a focus on the future.
>
> The technology of tomorrow requires not millions of lightly lettered men, ready to work in unision at endlessly repetitious jobs, it requires not men who take orders in unblinking fashion, aware that the price of bread is mechanical submission to authority, but men who can make critical judgments, who can weave their way through novel environments, who are quick to spot new relationships in the rapidly changing reality. It requires men who, in C.P. Snow's compelling term, "have the future in their bones." 20

It would appear from this then, that our schools are not only failing to prepare our children for the future in a social and

20. Toffler, Op. Cit.; p. 402.

philosophical sense; but they are also failing in their apparent main function, the service of industry and commerce.

How then to create men who will have "the future in their bones" - men who will be able to function in a world experiencing "the death of permanence" and "the existential vacuum".

If modern man hopes to cope with these problems, surely the answer points to the development of an educational system ~~in~~ which develops in children the desire and the ability to make choices and decisions for themselves. They must learn to freely choose their own values and essence. They must learn that they cannot escape this responsibility. They must be taught to approach life as authentic existential men.

The difficulty with most individuals is that they have had no experience in freely choosing their own values or meaning in life. Many of them, as we have noted, cannot face this necessity; as Fromm suggests, they desire "to escape from freedom".

An educational system must be developed which will lead individuals to realize that they are free subjectivities who must choose and take responsibility for the values they create for themselves. An education designed to produce such essential qualities as self awareness, initiative, decisiveness and personal responsibility might be referred to as an existentialist education.

CHAPTER TWO THE EXISTENTIALIST SCHOOL

In Existentialism in Education,[1] Van Cleve Morris attempts to prove that an Existential analysis of the human condition can suggest lines of argument for the education of the young.

In the first part of his book, Morris presents a summary of what he believes to be, the main tenets of existential philosophy based for the most part on the Sartrean view. In this paper, however, we shall confine ourselves to a consideration of the significance which Morris feels the Existential method may have for the education of children.

In his book Escape from Freedom, Erich Fromm develops a theme which, Morris believes can be instructive to us because it sets the Existential predicament in its commonest terms and makes possible a sociological analogy. Fromm says that individuals are frequently in anguish over the baselessness of their values; freedom is simply too much for them; they cannot stand a life without directions, sanctions, laws, and ethical principles handed down from on high. Hence, they try to "escape" this condition by submitting to external (that is external to their own will) determinants of conduct.[2]

Morris believes the Existentialist counterreply on social and political questions would therefore be something like this: If the authentic man is our aim, then the authentic society is also our

1. Morris, Van Cleve, Existentialism in Education, New York, Harper & Row, 1966
2. Ibid, p. 102

aim. That society is authentic in the degree to which it fails to provoke in the individual citizen these urgings to escape from his freedom. That society is authentic which refuses to specify "the good" to its citizens. That society is authentic in the degree to which it summons the citizen to stand by himself, for himself, is shaping the direction of his life, and therefore the meaning of his existence.

He asks, is such a society possible? Can a society emerge in which each individual takes personal responsibility for the laws he obeys, the conventions he consents to, the values he appropriates for his own life? Whatever it may take to answer these questions, Morris calls an Existential sociology, and he believes a theory of education can be understandable in these terms.

Education is an activity that is usually carried on with young people in groups. This does not preclude the possibility of considering students as other than - physical groups; psychologically, they may still be understood as subjectivities existing alone as individuals. It is the latter aspect of human growth and development that can rightfully become the subject matter of an Existentialist theory of education.

Morris describes and criticizes four representative and widely held definitions of education. He believes that each viewpoint makes the same mistake, the mistake of believing that the young are things to be worked over in some fashion to bring them into alignment with a prior notion of what they should be. The young, in these conceptions of education, are to be used; they are to be

employed on behalf of (1) a prepared, precertified idea of "human nature" which they are expected to fulfill, (2) an objective body of extant subject matter which they are expected to absorb, (3) an objective concept of a culture's ways and means of living which they are expected to assume, or (4) a set of dispositions, deemed fundamental, which are to be formed in them and for which they are expected to become the living vehicles. Contemporary educational authorities such as R. S. Peters[3] in England, and James B. Conant[4] and Marc Belth[5] in the United States are among the most influential advocates of this traditional conception of education.

In every case the process of education is understood to have its aim and point outside the learner. The child, by virtue of what is to be done with him and for him, is eventually seen as an object rather than a subject. His activity of learning is aroused and promoted in the name of considerations residing outside his own self-determination and self-direction.[6]

Morris believes that if education is to be truly human, it must somehow awaken awareness in the learner - existential awareness of himself as a single subjectivity present in the world.

To be human is first to exist; and to exist, as a human, is to be aware of being, to be aware of existing. This awareness is manifest most vividly in the awareness of choosing - the awareness of oneself as a baseless base of value creation. It is to be aware

[3]Peters, R.S., Authority, Responsibility and Education, London, Allen and Unwin, 1959.

[4]Conant, James B., The American High School Today, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1959.

[5]Belth, Marc, The New World of Education, Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 1970.

that one is the author of his own dispositions.

An education which reminds children that they are constantly, freely, baselessly, creatively choosing their values is the kind of education which an Existentialist would strive for. It is the education of private awareness and personal involvement. Education should also be the discovery of personal responsibility. It should awaken in the learner the sense of being personally answerable for his own life.

Any system of education which attempts the above should be guided by the proposition that the child must somehow learn to feel his freedom and responsibility in the most personal terms. Such an educational program will give greater than usual prominence to educational experiences in which personal involvement is magnified and intensified.[7]

For the most part, in present schools, the child remains passive; the subject matters of schools are really "object" matters. They deal with the world beyond the school house door, seldom with the childs own response to what is going on. The learner does not see the possibility for asserting a personal subjective view on anything, in fact, he is usually discouraged from doing so.

Morris believes that knowledge is always in part subjective. That is, for anything to be true, it must first pass into and be taken hold of by some subjective consciousness. It must be chosen, i.e., appropriated, before it can be true for that consciousness. Knowledge

7. Ibid, p. 118.

is not something purely objective and laid out to be learned (as the traditional educator might say), nor is it something merely functional and useful in the management of experience (as the Pragmatist or Experimentalist might say). At bottom, knowledge becomes knowledge only when a subjectivity takes hold of it and puts it into his own life. In this sense, then, the individual may be said to be responsible for his own knowledge.

In Man's Search For Himself, Rollo May has written in a similar vein while discussing the concept of truth.

> One has to venture, and whether one arrives at the best answer depends very intimately on the degree of one's maturity and courage. Even in discovering scientific truth before it is reduced to accepted formulae, such as Columbus' venture to prove the earth was round or Freud's early explorations, the finding of the truth hinges greatly on the investigator's inner qualities of probity and courage.....
>
> ...Almost all the errors and unutterable follies of which doctrines and philosophies are so full seem to me to spring from lack of this probity. The truth was not found, not because it was unsought, but because the intention always was to find again instead some preconceived opinion or other, or at least not to wound some favorite idea, and with this aim in view subterfuges had to be employed against both other people and the thinker himself. It is the courage of making a clean breast of it in the face of every question that makes the philosopher.....
>
> ...The philosopher (must) interrogate himself without mercy. This philosophical courage, however, does not arise from reflection, cannot be wrung from resolutions, but is an inborn trend of the mind.
>
> We agree with Schopenhauer that such probity is necessary if one is to see truth, and that it does not come from the intellect as such but is a part of the inborn capacity for selfawareness. We do not agree, however, that it is an "inborn trend" in the respect that one can do nothing about it. Such probity is an ethical attitude, involving courage and other aspects

> of one's relation to one's self; it not only can be developed to an extent but must be developed if a person is to fulfill himself as a human being.[8]

The library of any university or the curriculum of any school, insofar as it represents the extant knowledge of the world, represents the "scripts" that have thus far been written, the lines spoken by others in their interpretation of the "role" of man. They are there for the taking, but each learner must do the taking. They are possible lines to be spoken if the learner wishes to employ them in realizing his own subjectivity. The curriculum is not there to be mastered (as the traditionalist would say), nor is it there to be experienced (as the Experimentalist might say). It is there to be chosen. The subject matters and experiences in a curriculum should be merely available; to be learned, they must first be opted for, sought out, and appropriated by the student.[9]

Morris discusses the development of so-called "extra-curricular activities" in which children find the kind of self-creating experiences that the regular curriculum does not offer. He finds this is appropriation, in almost its literal sense, the sense of making an experience "one's own".

In some of these activities children actually return to the rigorous difficulties of the curriculum itself which they have allegedly escaped. Chess clubs demand a concentration in logic far beyond any course in algebra; school newspapers require a discipline of accuracy and of meeting deadlines even stricter than in English etc. Yet students still seek out these experiences, appropriating them in behalf of their own developing subjectivities.

8. May, Op.Cit., p. 141.
9. Morris, Op.Cit., p. 124.

Under Existentialist analysis, the reason for this may be found in a deceptively subtle psychological distinction between what Sartre calls the attitude of "seriousness" and the attitude of "play." The "serious" attitude may be characterized as that which sees man as an object, among other objects, in a world made up exclusively of objects. Man, in the serious mode, is always a consequence of an antecendent reality; he is to be understood only in terms of an environment or temporality not of his own making, a world which is somehow more real than he is. As Sartre states:

> The serious attitude involves starting from the world and attributing more reality to the world than to oneself; at the very least the serious man confers reality on himself to the degree to which he belongs to the world. It is not by chance that materialism is serious, it is not by chance that it is found at all times and places as the favorite doctrine of the revolutionary. This is because revolutionaries are serious. They come to know themselves first in terms of the world which oppresses them, and they wish to change this world. In this one respect they are in agreement with their ancient adversaries, the possessors, who also come to know themselves and appreciate themselves in terms of their position in the world. Thus all serious thought is thickened by the world; it coagulates; it is a dismissal of human reality in favor of the world. The serious man is "of the world" and has no resource in himself. He does not even imagine any longer the possibility of getting out of the world, for he has given to himself the type of existence of the rock, the consistency, the inertia, the opacity of being-in-the-midst-of-the-world. It is obvious that the serious man at bottom is hiding from himself the consciousness of his freedom; he is in bad faith and has bad sequence; everything is a consequence for him, and there is never any beginning. That is why he is so concerned with the consequences of his acts. Marx proposed the original dogma of the serious when he asserted the priority of object over subject. Man is serious when he takes himself for an object.[10]

[10] Sartre, Jean-Paul, Being and Nothingness, New York, Washington Square Press, 1966., P. 739.

In Slavery and Freedom,[11] the philosopher of Personalism, Nikolai Berdyaev has also described how man objectifies himself and others by permitting himself to become a slave to what Berdyaev refers to as various "lures" such as materialism, society, civilization and culture.

The curriculum of the typical school is the "serious" content of the world made available to the young. Because it is "serious" it always outranks the student in importance. The Existentialist educator is understandably guarded on the role of "serious" knowledge, i.e., the conventional curriculum, in the educative process. That is why he has altered the conception of the learning process from mastering or experiencing the curriculum to choosing and appropriating the curriculum. The student is given to see that he is taking on a cargo which only he himself requires, and thus he is responsible for having taken it on. In this way "serious" knowledge is rendered harmless; its "serious" quality is neutralized and disarmed by putting the choice of learning it up to the learner himself.

When we come to the extracurriculum, we find a set of learning experiences that do not stand in need of being neutralized. They are already undertaken in an attitude quite different from that of "the serious". They are, technically speaking, "play." That is, they are undertaken only on the individual's own terms, not on terms which have been set in advance. The student outranks the activity in importance.

[11] Berdyaev, Nikolai, Slavery and Freedom, (translated from the Russian by R.M. French) Charles Scribners and Sons, New York, 1944.

As Sartre states:

> Play, like Kierkegaard's irony, releases subjectivity. What is play indeed if not an activity of which man is the first origin, for which man himself sets the rules, and which has no consequences except according to the rules posited. As soon as a man apprehends himself as free and wishes to use his freedom, a freedom, by the way, which could just as well be his anguish, then his activity is play. The first principle of play is man himself; through it he escapes his natural nature; he himself sets the value and rules for his acts and consents to play only according to the rules which he himself has established and defined. As a result, there is in a sense "little reality" in the world. It might appear then that when a man is playing, bent on discovering himself as free in his very action, he certainly could not be concerned with possessing a being in the world. His goal, which he aims at through sports or pantomime or games, is to attain himself as a certain being, precisely the being which is in question in his being.
>
> The point of these remarks, however, is not to show us that in play the desire to do is irreducible. On the contrary we must conclude that the desire to do is here reduced to a certain desire to be. The act is not its own goal for itself; neither does its explicit end represent its goal and its profound meaning; but the function of the act is to make manifest and to present to itself the absolute freedom which is the very being of the person.[13]

More than a hundred years ago the great educator August Friedrich Froebel recognized the pedagogical importance of play. He noted that play has for its purpose the activity itself. It is at this point that instruction begins; the duty of the instructor is to blend into the spontaneous selfactivity of the child whatever tends toward the development of the child.

In the words of Froebel:

> Play is the purest, most spiritual activity of man at this stage (childhood) and, at the same time, typical

13. Sartre, Op.Cit., p. 742.

> of human life as a whole - of the inner hidden natural life in man and all things. It gives, therefore, joy freedom, contentment, inner and outer rest, peace with the world. It holds the sources of all that is good. A child that plays thoroughly, with self-active determination, perserveringly until physical fatigue forbids, will surely be a thorough, determined man, capable of self-sacrifice for the promotion of the welfare of himself and others....The plays of childhoos are the germinal leaves of all later life; for the whole man is developed and shown in these, his tenderest dispositions, in his innermost tendencies. The whole later life of man, even to the moment when he shall leave it again, has its source in the period of childhood....If the child is injured at this period, if the germinal leaves of future tree of his life are marred at this time, he will only with the greatest difficulty and the utmost effort grow into strong manhood; he will only with the greatest difficulty escape in his further development the stunting effects of the injury or the one-sidedness it entails.[14]

From an existentialist standpoint, it is unfortunate that Froebel's thoughts have found little acceptance in our schools beyond the kindergarten level. Surely what Froebel has to say about the value of play has validity for the teaching of children well beyond the ages of four or five.

Morris believes that elementary school education need not be of great concern to an existentialist educator. He believes it could take a variety of forms and still be adaquate to an existential secondary education. He believes this because he feels the "existential moment" does not occur in most children until late elementary or junior high school years.

> Somewhere in the general vicinity of puberty comes a moment in the subjective life of the individual which

[14] Froebel, Frederick, W.A., Education of Man (translated by J. Jarvis), Appleton - Century - Crofts, 1886, P. 78.

> I speak of as the "Existential Moment." It is the moment when the individual first discovers himself as existing. It is the abrupt onset, the charged beginning, of awareness of the phenomenon of one's own presence in the world as a person. Prior to this point there is no such awareness. Children do not know what they are; they do not even know that they are. Childhood is a pre-Existential phase of human life.[15]

Because he believes that the "existentialist moment" does not occur until around puberty, Morris feels that existentialist education need not concern itself with the elementary school years. This view is surely questionable. Modern child psychologists such as Erik H. Erikson,[16] continually stress the importance of the early formative years in the development of basic personality and attitudes in the child. Children at an early age could benefit from existential ideals. Even the youngest of children can be permitted some free choices in their education and they can begin to feel a sense of personal responsibility for the results of these free choices. The crucial elementary school years should certainly not be ignored in an existential education. They may, in fact, prove to be the most important years for the formation of existentialist educational ideals.

Morris shows the Existential Moment, as the onset of the self's awareness of its own existing, as dividing the life span into two radically different phases, the "pre-Existential" and the "Existential." He thinks the passage from the one to the other of these phases is critical, and an understanding of it can help us think about education.

[15]Morris, Op. Cit., P. 143.

The individual sees himself for the first time as responsible for his own conduct. Society recognizes this boundary line in its treatment of children; children cannot be "held responsible" for what they do because; they are not yet "existential", that is, self-aware subjectivities capable of feeling a sense of responsibility. The Existential Moment is the beginning of the sense of being responsible.[17]

But Morris considers what lies beyond the initial reaction as more important. After these immediate sensations have passes there can issue a feeling of great power and thrust. For the first time a person is in a position to see his life as his own. He is in charge of everything that happens from that Existential Moment forward. The world that opens out to him, after this remarkable event, is baffling and difficult. Tillich speaks of it as essentially an "encounter with meaninglessness." However, a world without meaning already woven into and embedded in it, is a world which, in a manner of speaking, is "on our side." That is, it presents possibilities without exacting the reciprocal tribute of human compliance. If there is not a priori meaning to it - and this obviously is how the Existentialist sees it - then we as free subjectivities can creatively assign meaning to it.

> Why is it that "meaninglessness" is so generally thought to be an epithet, a philosophical swear word, a term of scorn and rebuke? The Existentialist can tell you: It is because men still want to "escape from freedom"; they still exhibit a "failure of nerve,"

17. Morris, Op.Cit., p. 147.

> as William James used to say. Even the Experimentalists feel ill at ease in the company of the word "meaninglessness." But why should they? A world without meaning already contained in it is the only kind of world where human freedom really makes any ultimate sense. A world with meaning is a world where compliances are owed, where certain understandings are legitimate and therefore expected, a world to which man's relation must be, in some degree, unfree.[18]

The world of the Existentialist is void of all prior meaning. It is a world in which meanings are human inventions and creations. It is therefore a world that is really open, in the most thoroughgoing interpretation of this term. This is the kind of world to which the Existentialist would hope to introduce the young. It is in this kind of genuinely meaningless existence that the free human project can get started, the project of creating meanings and fashioning an essence of man.

> "If the world offers all but requires nothing - if it is really open and man is free - then the human project to which the young are to be invited is the project of shaping something unique and singular completely on their own, a human life to which they can refer by saying. "Here. This is my contribution to the developing essence of man. This, my life as I see how it might be lived, is my 'vote' on what man means in the world." It is really a creative task, the literal creation of somethingness ouf of a meaningless nothingness, a "sculpturing of one's figure in the world," as Sartre puts it. An education which grips a child by his moral coat collars and lifts him up to see over the crowd to the task of taking personal responsibility for being human - that education can be called Existentialist."[19]

Morris attempted to find a school designed to function on behalf only of the individual learner. He believes that Progressive

18. Ibid, p. 176.
19. Ibid, p. 178.

Schools have often claimed this distinction, but concludes that they all ultimately all fall prey to the "socializing" theory of child development. They foster the growth of individualism, but only in social terms, only in terms of the individual's relation to other members of the group itself.

He believes that a possible candidate for the existential model school may be Summerhill, a small private school in England at Leiston, Suffolk, about 100 miles from London. The school is now over fifty years old, having been founded in 1921 by A.S. Neill.

> For forty years "Neill," as his students call him, has been testing a hazardous hypothesis. Does freedom work? Suppose you had a school in which there were no rules, no requirements, no homework, no regulations, no roll taking, no grades, no academic expectations, no tests, no institutional code of decorum, no social conventions. Suppose all you had were a small "campus," some living quarters, some classrooms, half a dozen teachers, and forty to fifty youngsters ranging in age from five to seventeen. It would be a small but thoroughly free and open society, with no institutional "ethos" to adjust to and no organizational hierarchy to please. It would be, rather, merely a collection of separate individuals dealing with one another, old and young alike, as free and autonomous persons. Could anything like "education" possibly occur there? Neill has found the answer is "Yes."[20]

Neill believes that a free child is a happy child. A happy child does not fear or hate; he can love and give. The loving, giving child can live positively. Neill has given us some of his theories on education in his book, Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing:

> My view is that a child is innately wise and realistic. If left to himself without adult suggestion of any kind, he will develop as far as he is capable of

20. Ibid, p. 152.

> developing. Logically, Summerhill is a place in which people who have the innate ability and wish to be scholars will be scholars; while those who are only fit to sweep the streets will sweep the streets. But we have not produced a street cleaner so far. Nor do I write this snobbishly, for I would rather see a school produce a happy street cleaner than a neurotic scholar.
>
> In all countries, capitalist, socialist, or communist, elaborate schools are built to educate the young. But all the wonderful labs and workshops do nothing to help John or Peter or Ivan surmount the emotional damage and the social evils bred by the pressure on him from his parents, his schoolteachers, and the pressure of the coercive quality of our civilization. 21

Certainly one would agree with Morris that in most instances, Summerhill offers a satisfactory model for the existentialist school. However, Summerhill, has a basic approach to free learning which is rather negative. It removes exams, grades, and units etc. - a good first step - but it fails to add new educational situations to take their place. It pays too little attention to building total involving environments. By employing modern technology in the service of our schools it would be possible to create a far more educationally stimulating environment for free learners than can be found in an institution such as Summerhill.

In later chapters, we shall examine what might be possible for free schools in the future, if we employ the technology now at our disposal.

Finally, Morris warns us that the policy of freedom has certain consequences we had better be prepared for:

21. Neill, A.S., Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing, New York, Hart, 1960, p. 10.

> It means no hierarchy of authority in the school, no dominion of teacher over pupil, no external standards of achievement or success visited upon the young. It means that the students shall have not only a freedom from such standards but a coordinate freedom to establish their own standards in terms of which they choose to learn. But let them be mindful of the fact that they are, indeed, doing the choosing. The choices are theirs to be responsible for. When the full impact of their responsibility comes home to them, in that moment the need for tests and grades and report cards will have disappeared.[22]

From this it can be determined that the Existentialist school would be one which would stress the concepts of freedom, individualism and activism in order to foster in its students the qualities of self-awareness, initiative, decisiveness and personal responsibility.

In the next two chapters we shall examine the history of education, past and present in order to determine what support may be found for these existentialist educational ideals, of freedom, individualism and activism.

22. Morris, Op.Cit., p. 155.

CHAPTER THREE

INDIVIDUALISM

More than nineteen hundred years ago, the great Roman teacher, Quintillian wrote:

> "It has generally and deservedly been accounted a great merit in a master to observe the different capacities and disposition of his pupils, and to know what nature has chiefly fitted them for. For in this report, the variety is so incredible, that we meet with as many different kinds of capacities as of persons. Most teachers think that the proper way to educate a youth is to cherish, by instruction, the peculiar talents which nature has given him and to assist his progress in that walk into which his genius leads him...a master of eloquence, after a sagacious inspection, can pronounce that such a boy's genius leads him to a close, polished manner of speaking; and others, a keen, a weighty, a smooth, a sharp, a bright, or a witty manner. He will then so adapt himself to everyone, as to improve each in that manner for which nature has chiefly fitted him. For nature may be greatly assisted by art; and a young man who is set upon a study that is disagreeable to his genius, can never make any considerable advance in that study, and by abandoning the path chalked out by nature, he will make a poor figure even in those studies for which she has designed him. It is indeed absolutely necessary to consult a younger genius, and to encourage him to strike into that walk of learning for which nature has fitted him. One may be fit for the study of history, another for poetry; another for the law, and some perhaps may be fit only to follow the plough."[1]

Three hundred years later, another great Roman teacher, Jerome, was writing in a similar vein:

> "Don't scold her if she is slow, but arouse her ambition by praise so that she may delight at victory and smart at defeat. Above all, don't allow her to hate her studies, lest the bitterness of them, acquired in childhood may last to her mature years."[2]

1. Guthrie, W., Quintillian's Institutes of Eloquence, Vol. I, London: Dewick and Clark, 1905, pp. 92-93.
2. Wright, F.A., (translator) Selected Letters of Saint Jerome, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1923, p. 345.

This is not to suggest that these great teachers of antiquity were advocating a free school philosophy, but it does illustrate that even in that early age, those great educators recognized the supposedly modern doctrine of individual differences upon which the free school movement is based. Actually, almost every great teacher since has emphasized this concept at some point in their writing.

Traditional educators' and teachers' colleges often refer to the thoughts of certain great educational thinkers of the past as constituting the philosophical foundations of our traditional pedagogy. The names most frequently mentioned in this regard are Comenius, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori and Dewey.

When one considers the concentration on discipline and the passivity of the child which characterizes most of our schools today, there is obvious irony in the fact that these particular educational thinkers are cited as founding fathers of our educational system. A study of their educational thought reveals the recurrence of two dominant themes - individualism and the self-activity of the child.

Since these two themes are the crux of the existentialist education described earlier, the next two chapters will be devoted to a brief examination of the writings of these educators of the past in order to illustrate the importance they place on the concepts of individualism and activism in the proper education of the child.

Although, John Amos Comenius (1592-1670) is properly acknowledged as a leading sense-realist and one of the founding fathers of the activity school movement, there is also ample evidence in his writing which illustrates his appreciation of the importance of

recognizing the individual differences among children and the need for a free and liberal atmosphere in the classroom. This is obvious in the following brief excerpt from his writing:

> Care must be taken to suit all these books to the children for whom they are intended; for children like whimsicality and humour, and detest pedantry and severity. Instruction, therefore, should ever be combined with amusement, that they may take pleasure in learning serious things which will be genuine use to them later on, and that their dispositions may be, as it were, perpetually enticed to develop in the manner desired.
>
> Beginners should at first practice on material that is familiar to them - students should not be overburdened with matters that are unsuitable to their age, comprehension, and present condition, since otherwise they will spend their time in wrestling with shadows.[3]
>
> Now no discipline of a severe kind should be exercised in connection with studies or literary exercises, but only where questions of morality are at stake. For, as we have already shown, studies, if they are properly organised, form in themselves a sufficient attraction, and entice all (with the exception of monstrosities) by their inherent pleasantness. If this be not the case, the fault lies, not with the pupil, but with the master, and, if our skill is unable to make impression on the understanding, our blows will have no effect. Indeed, by any application of force we are far more likely to produce a distaste for letters than a love for them. Whenever, therefore, we see that a mind is diseased and dislikes studies, we should try to remove its indisposition by gentle remedies, but should on no account employ violent ones.....
>
> He (the teacher) may employ advice, exhortation, and sometimes blame, but should take great care to make his motive clear and to show unmistakably that his actions are based on paternal affection, and are destined to build up the characters of his pupils and not to crush them. Unless the pupil understands this and is fully persuaded of it, he will despise all discipline and will deliberately resist it.

3. Keatinge, M.W., The Great Didactic of John Amos Comenius, London, A & C Black, 1910, p. 270.

> The young should never be compelled to do anything, but their tasks should be of such a kind and should be given them in such a way that they will do them of their own accord, and take pleasure in them. I am therefore of opinion that rods and blows, those weapons of slavery, are quite unsuitable to freemen, and should never be used in schools.[4]

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) has been referred to as the father of the activity school in education; it is this writer's contention that Rousseau could be even more properly referred to as the father of individualism and freedom in child education. Certainly in Emile,[5] the theme of freedom for the child is as important, if not more dominant, than the idea of self-activity for the child. The following statements of Rousseau illustrate this:

> Nature wants children to be children before they are men. If we try to pervert this order, we shall produce precocious fruits that will have neither maturity nor savor and will not be long in spoiling; we shall have young scholars and old children. Childhood has its ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling that are appropriate to it; nothing is less intelligent than to want to substitute our own ways.[6]

> The child who feels the need of help from others, who never ceases to experience their good intentions, has no interest in deceiving them; on the contrary, he has a reasonable interest in their seeing things as they are, for fear that they may deceive themselves to his prejudice....In a natural and free education, why should your child lie to you? What has he to hide from you? You do not rebuke him, you never punish him, you exact nothing from him. Why would he not tell you all that he did as frankly as he would tell a small friend? He cannot see in this confession more danger from one side than from the other.[7]

4. Ibid., pp. 250-251.
5. Rousseau, J.J., Emile ou de l'Education (translated by W.H. Payne as Emile or Education according to Nature) Appleton-Century-Crafts Company, 1908, 363 pp.
6. Ibid., p. 72.
7. Ibid., pp. 86-87.

> A sense of duty does not exist at their age (during childhood) and there is not a man in the world who can make it really intelligible to them; but the fear of punishment, the hope of pardon, the importunities, the embarrassment, of answering, tear from them all the promises that you demand; and you believe you have convinced them when you have only bored or frightened them. What happens as a result? In the first place, by imposing upon them a duty they do not feel, you prejudice them against your tyranny and turn them aside from loving you; secondly, you teach them to be deceitful, false, untruthful in order to extort rewards or to get out of punishment; finally - accustoming them always to cover over their secret motive with an apparent one - you yourself give them the means for cheating you endlessly, for hiding from you the knowledge of their real character, and of paying you and others with vain words as occasion offers.[8]

The name of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) is another frequently mentioned in discussions of the history of traditional pedagogy, yet one can find little evidence of his directives in the methodology presently employed in our schools.

It would be difficult to find a more explicit statement in support of the existentialist ideal of pupil freedom and responsibility than the following.

> I would say to the teacher: be thoroughly convinced of the immense value of liberty; do not let vanity make you anxious to see your efforts producing premature fruit; let your child be as free as possible, and seek diligently for every means of ensuring his liberty, peace of mind, and good humour.
>
> He must trust you. If he asks for something you do not think good, tell him what the consequences will be, and leave him his liberty. But you must take care that the consequences are such that he will not easily forget. Always show him the right way. Should he leave it and fall into the mire, go to his rescue, but do not shield him from the unpleasant results of having enjoyed complete liberty, and of not having listened to your warnings. In this way his trust in you will be so great that it will not be shaken even when you have to thwart him. He must obey the wise teacher or the father he has learned to respect; but only in cases of necessity must an order be given.[9]

8. Ibid., p. 73.
9. de Guimps, R., Pestalozzi: His Life and Work, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1892, pp. 46-48.

August Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel (1782-1852) is regarded as one of the great early leaders in the history of education. As stated earlier, it is unfortunate that his thoughts have not seen more application in the education of children beyond the kindergarten stage.

As was stated previously, in chapter two, Froebel believed in the importance of the establishment of an "inner connection" between the internal world of the child and the external world around him. To permit the "inner connection" to take place he stressed the importance of recognizing the individual difference in children and the need to allow the child to follow his own innate interests. He too, then, may be regarded as a leading exponent of individualism and freedom in education.

In Froebel's words:

> It is not the educator who puts new powers and faculties into man, and imparts to him breath and life. He only takes care that no untoward influence shall disturb nature's march of development. The moral, intellectual, and practical powers of man must be nurtured within himself and not from artificial substitutes. Thus, faith must be cultivated by our own act of believing not by reasoning about faith; love, by our own act of loving, not by fine words about love; thought, by our own act of thinking, not be merely appropriating the thoughts of other men; and knowledge, by our own investigation, not by endless talk about the results of art and science.[10]

> For the purpose of instruction is to bring ever more out of man rather than to put more and more into him; for that which can get into man we already know and possess as the property of mankind, and every one, simply because he is a human being, will unfold and develop it out of himself in accordance with the laws of mankind. On the other hand, what yet is to come out of mankind, what human nature is yet to develop, that we do not yet

10. Froebel, Friedrich, W.A., Education of Man (translated by J. Jarvis), Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1886, p. 4.

> know, that is not yet the property of mankind; and still human nature, like the spirit of God, is ever unfolding its inner essence.[11]

Throughout history there have been isolated instances of attempts to establish schools founded on the principles of freedom and individualism. Since these free schools have usually been due to the efforts of enlightened "amateurs" and because none have had any lasting infuence, they are usually ignored in what is regarded as the main stream of educational history. One of the most fascinating of these educational experiements was attempted in 19th century Russia by the famous novelist, Count Leo Tolstoy.

In the fall of 1859, Tolstoy established his school for the peasant children on his estates. Almost to the exclusion of all other interests, he gave three years of his life to the peasant children. His work had nothing in common with the standard, well-regulated school systems. Tolstoy wrote that he had a passionate affection for his school. Under his guidance other young people who helped him in his work developed a similar "passionate affection."

As is usual in such instances, he began by discarding all exist ng traditions and by refusing to follow any method of teaching already in use. First he attempted to fathom the mind of the peasant child, and by doing away by punishment, he let his pupils teach him the art of teaching. In his school his pupils were free to choose their own subjects, and to take as much work as they desired. The teacher considered it his duty to assist the children in their search for knowledge by adjusting his method of approach to the individual child, and by finding the best way of proffering assistance in each case.

11. Ibid., p. 279.

These free Tolstoy schools, without programmes, without punishments, without rules, without forcing the will of a child, were apparently remarkably successful. Reports of the time indicate that the children spent entire days at their studies and were reluctant to leave the schoolhouse.[12]

Fifty years later, Basil Borosov, one of the peasants, wrote:

> "Hours passed like minutes. If life were always as gay no one would ever notice it go by....In our pleasures, in our gaiety, in our rapid progress, we soon became as thick as thieves with the Count. We were unhappy without the Count and the Count was unhappy without us. We were inseparable, and only night drew us apart....There was no end to our conversations. We told him a lot of things; about sorcerers, about forest devils...[13]

As with most such attempts, the idea and stimulus for Tolstoy's schools died with their founder. Unfortunately Tolstoy's educational experiment had little or no influence on traditional Russian pedagogy. In the light of Russian history since, the fact that his educational ideas did not receive wide spread acceptance might be regarded as tragic.

In this century one of the most influential educators and writers in the cause of increased individualism in education has been Italian educator Maria Montessori (1870-1952). The Montessori system which is presently in use in numerous schools throughout North America and Western Europe is based on two fundamental principles - respect for the child's individuality and encouragement of his personal freedom. These determine not only the atmosphere of the schoolroom but also the

12. Ashton-Warner, Sylvia, Teacher, New York, Simon and Shuster, 1963.

13. Ibid, p. 152.

relation of the teacher and pupil, the arrangement of the schoolroom, and the nature of the instructional procedures. Those two principles of individualism and personal freedom together, with her methodology emphasizing sense education, give the Montessori method its distinct character.

Although Montessori's system has been criticized for its strong emphasis on intellectual development to the exclusion of training of the emotions and also in its lack of recognition of the child's spontaneous desire to play; nevertheless, it is a great stride forward in the cause of individualism as its first principle consists of an attempt to adapt school work to the individuality of each child.

Montessori considered freedom an essential requirement for any true education, both the teacher and the pupil must be free, the former should not dominate the latter, nor should the latter depend more than absolutely necessary upon the former. As she writes "No one can be free unless he is independent; therefore the first active manifestations of the child's individual liberty must be so guided that through this activity he may arrive at independance.[14] Elsewhere she writes: "We cannot know the consequences of stifling a spontaneous action when the child is just beginning to be active, perhaps we stifle life itself."[15] My method is established upon one fundamental base- the liberty of the pupils in their spontaneous manifestations."[16]

14. Montessori, M., The Montessori Method translated by A.E. George; J.B. Lippincott, 1912, p. 95.
15. Ibid., p. 87.
16. Ibid., p. 80.

In this century, if there has been some movement toward more individualism and freedom in the schoolroom as well as a recognition of the natural development of children and the increasing use of self instructional material, then we are greatly indebted to the work of Montessori.

But certainly the most dominant (and perhaps the most misinterpreted) influence in North American education in this century has been the educational writing of John Dewey.

Although Dewey may be criticised by some, and most particularly existentialist educators, for his emphasis on the socialization of the child, nevertheless, the recognition of the individuality of each child and more freedom for the child constitute a large part of his educational philosophy.

> There is, I think, no point in the philosophy of progressive education which is sounder than its emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process, just as there is no defect in traditional education greater than its failure to secure the active co-operaton of the pupil in construction of the purposes involved in his studying 17

Dewey believed that the true meaning of preparation in the educational scheme means that a person, young or old, gets out of his present experience all that there is in it for him at the time in which he has it. The idea of using the present simply to get ready for the future contradicts itself. It omits and even shuts out, the very conditions by which a person can be prepared for his future. We

17. Dewey, John, Experience and Education: New York; MacMillan, 1963.

always live at the time we live and not at some other time and only by extracting at each present time the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same thing in the future. To Dewey, this is the only preparation which in the long run amounts to anything.

> It is not the subject per se that is educative to growth. There is no subject that is in and of itself, or without regard to the stage of growth attained by the learner, such that inherent educational value can be attributed to it...The notion that some subjects and methods and that acquaintance with certain facts and truths possess educational value in and of themselves is the reason why traditional education reduced the material of education so largely to a diet of predigested materials...The principle of interaction makes it clear that failure of adaptation of material to needs and capacities of individuals may cause an experience to be non educative quite as much as failure of an individual to adapt himself to the material.18

To Dewey, the most important attitude that can be formed is that of the desire to go on learning. Certainly existentialist educators can find immense encouragement and support in the works of Dewey. As Dewey says:

> What avail is it to win prescribed amounts of information about geography and history, to win ability to read and write, if in the process, the individual loses his own soul: loses his appreciation of things worthwhile, of the values to which these things are relative; if he loses desire to apply what he has learned and above all, loses the ability to extract meaning from his future experiences as they occur? 19

In our own time, A.S. Neill's Summerhill school is still regarded as a daring experiment even fifty years after its beginning

18. Ibid., p. 46-47.
19. Ibid., p. 49.

in 1921. Neill has given us some of his theories on education in his book Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing:

> The children have classes usually according to their age, but sometimes according to their interests. We have no new methods of teaching, because we do not consider that teaching in itself matters very much. Whether a school has or has not a special method for teaching long division is of no significance, for long division is of no importance except to those who want to learn it. And the child who wants to learn long division will learn it no matter how it is taught.[20]
>
> Parents are slow in realizing how unimportant the learning side of school is. Children, like adults, learn what they want to learn. All prize-giving and marks and exams sidetrack proper personality development. Only pedants claim that learning from books is education.
>
> Creators learn what they want to learn in order to have the tools that their originality and genius demand. We do not know how much creation is killed in the classroom with its emphasis on learning. [21]

In recent years probably the strongest support for increased individualism in education can be derived from the work of the Swiss biologist-psychologist-epistomologist, Jean Piaget.[22] Piaget's more than forty years of study of the development of children's mental processes have demonstrated that the child is the principal agent in his own education and mental development. To Piaget the critical factor in education is the child's own activity in assimilating his experiences and accomodating to them.

[20] Neill, A.S., Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing, New York: Hart, 1960, P. 26.

[21] Ibid., P. 28.

[22] Piaget, Jean and Inhelder, B., The Psychology of the Child, New York: Basic Books, 1969. Piaget, Jean, The Language and Thought of the Child, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952.

We shall examine Piaget's work in more detail in the next chapter which is devoted to activism in education, but certainly one of the main implications for education from Piaget's studies is the realization of the crucial importance of recognizing the individual differences in children.

From Piaget one can see that the important part, perhaps the most important part, of a teacher's task must be to find an appropriate relationship between what is to be learned, the way it is to be learned and the stage each child is in at a particular moment. This match requires a high degree of individualization, since Piaget notes the developmental age corresponds only very roughly with chronological age. Exactly when a child moves from stage to stage is a function of both his own native environment and his own experience. Any school class will therefore contain a wide range; the spectrum of developmental ages is bound to be wider than the chronological ages.[23] Thus any educational situation must be properly grounded on a recognition of the individual differences in children.

In the last decade, increased freedom and individualism in education has been the theme of numerous writers such as John Holt,[24]

23. Flavell, John H., The Developmental Psychology of Jean Piaget, Princton, New Jersey: Van Nostrand, 1963. p. 112.
24. Holt, John, How Children Fail, New York, Pitman, 1964. Holt, John, How Children Learn, New York, Dell, 1967. Holt, John, The Under-Achieving School, New York, Dell, 1969. Holt, John, What Do I Do Monday, New York, Dell, 1970.

Jonathon Kozol,[25] Herbert Kohl[26] and George Dennison[27] who have been sometimes referred to as the "romantic free schoolers". They are referred to in this way because their criticisms of present schools are based, for the most part, not on controlled emp rical studies, but rather on their own emotional, commonsense, "gut reactions" to the emotional, and psychic damage which they believe is being inflicted on children by the stultifying regimentation of our traditional school system. Many such as Kozol and Dennison have despaired of changing the present educational structure and are attempting new alternatives in the form of privately founded free schools which are based on the principles of individualism and activism. In his most recent book, Free Schools,[28] Kozol estimates the number of such free schools in North America to be now over eight hundred. In a later chapter we shall examine more closely the alternatives to the present public school system.

Perhaps the best known of these free schoolers is John Holt. In his book, How Children Learn, he replies to the Essentialists who are concerned that children would not learn the things which they feel are necessary and the school's obligation to impart to their students.

25. Kozol, Jonathon, Death at an Early Age, Boston, Houghton-Mifflen, 1967. Kozol, Jonathon, Free Schools, Boston, Houghton-Mifflen, 1972.
26. Kohl, Herbert, 36 Children, New York, New American Library, 1967. Kohl, Herbert, The Open Classroom, New York Vintage, 1969.
27. Dennison, George, The Lives of Children, New York, Random House, 1970.
28. Kozol, Op.Cit., P. 173.

> "Will the children be learning in a free school situation? The answer is simple; we can't tell: We can't be sure. What I am trying to say about education rests on a belief that, though there is much evidence to support it, I cannot prove, and that may never be proved. Call it a faith. This faith is that man is by nature a learning animal. Birds fly, fish swim; man thinks and learns. Therefore, we do not need to "motivate" children into learning, by wheedling, bribing, or bullying. We do not need to keep picking away at their minds to make sure they are learning. What we need to do, and all we need to do, is bring as much of the world as we can into the school and the classroom; give children as much help and guidance as they need and ask for; listen respectfully when they feel like talking; and then get out of the way. We can trust them to do the rest.[29]

Many educators regard the idea of freedom and individualism simply as the radical rhetoric of misguided idealists, who can be easily dismissed as a force in the mainstream of present educational planning. Those who entertain this view should examine closely the recommendations contained in the recent reports of the Hall-Dennis[30] and the Parent[31] Commissions compiled under the auspices of the provincial governments of Ontario and Quebec.

In both these reports, the supporters of increased freedom and individualism in education can find much that is encouraging.

The Hall-Dennis Committee believesthat each child's development in the full sense should be appreciated and given consideration in our ideal school learning situation. Such opportunities should

29. Holt, How Children Learn, Op.Cit., p. 156.
30. Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario, Ontario Department of Education, 1968, .
31. Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec, Government of the Province of Quebec, Vol. 2, 1964.

make it possible for every child who enters school to grow physically, intellectually and emotionally. The Committee stresses the point that the core of the learning situation does not lie in the expenditures on educational hardware but within each child's mind and heart. If each child is learning, if each day leads to a new learning challenge for each child, if each child displays enthusiasm, talks comfortably with his teachers and his classmates and goes happily about his work, then the Committee feels these are signs that the school is a good place for learning. A school should serve all its children comfortably and humanely in its on-going child-centered programs and a learning experience should be found to meet the needs of each.

In the words of the Report:

> Children need to feel that they are accepted, and that their efforts are appreciated. Failure in our society too often takes on the form of a public stigma and unfortunately the 'loser' in the early years of school acquires an image of himself as a failure, which becomes deeply ingrained in his psyche. Children can be helped to cope with the stress of real failure if their differences are understood, if they are loved despite their inabilities, and if they are given the courage to try again.
>
> Every child can be given a feeling of success at something if the choices are broad, the requirements feasible for him, and if all learning for each child is viewed positively and in terms of his individual development.

> Shifting to each child's learning experience as the basic nucleus of teaching makes it possible to dissolve the psychological and physical walls around children and the teacher himself. 32

Upon reading the Parent Report in Quebec, which preceded the Hall-Dennis Report by a few years, one sees in the aims and objectives section of the report many similar observations. Although the Parent Report stresses the need for more activism in education, there is ample evidence indicating the Committee's concern about the importance of recognizing the individual differences in children and the need for more diversity and individual choice in the courses offered.

> (Activist education is education) which always tries to begin with the child, with his interests, with his play, with his imagination in order to develop in him curiosity and personal initiative. The object is to eliminate the formalism of the teacher, the restraint of fixed programmes, the passivity of the child.33

Certainly the existentialist educator can find in these two influential reports much that is encouraging for the future education of our children. If the recommendations of these two reports are implemented in our schools in the future, a large step will have been taken towards the ultimate realization of the existentialist educational ideals of awareness, freedom, choosing, and responsibility.

32. Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario, Op.Cit., p. 56.
33. Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec, Op.Cit., p. 15.

CHAPTER FOUR ACTIVISM

> The activist school must be regarded as the best realization of the genuinely child-centered education. The school today must at a very early stage develop in the child independence of thought, habits of personal initiative, and a sense of responsibility.
>
> Teachers well versed in child psychology and aware of the needs of our day can very largely infuse into their teaching the spirit of the activist school which depends on the curiosity of the child and accustoms him to work on his own. [1]

This view in favour of the activity school movement is expressed in the Report of the Parent Royal Commission on Education in Quebec.

If one reads the equivalent report in Ontario, commonly referred to as the Hall-Dennis Report, similar statements in support of the activity movement can be found. On page fifty-seven the Committee writes:

> Children need to play. Despite the belief held by many adults that learning must be painful and serious, it is the joy and pleasure of play which often sets the stage for learning. Play provides a psychological safety zone in which children can test their competence without fear of failure. It is out of play that children develop rules of a game and a sense of order. Work and play areas are so closely interwoven in learning situations that it is often impossible to separate one from the other, and teachers aware of the learning process should not feel guilty about the fun and noisy atmosphere that may be engendered. There is nothing sinful about laughter, and serious, silent rooms are not necessarily working chambers for teaching. [2]

1. Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec, Government of the Province of Quebec, Vol. 2, 1964, pp. 90-91.
2. Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario, Ontario Department of Education, 1968, p. 57.

It seems apparent then, that if the recommendations of these two influential provincial reports are implemented, the schools of Quebec and Ontario will be adopting activist principles to an increasing degree in the future. This is certainly encouraging for the development of existentialist ideals in our schools.

This move in the direction of more activism in the schools is certainly not the result of radical or avant-garde developments in pedagogical theory. The activist movement has a strong foundation in the thought of the great educators of the past.

Gustave Schoenchen has shown this in his work. The Activity School: A Basic Philosophy For Teachers.[3] He has traced the origin and the development of the activity school in chronological or genetic order. He takes each one of the historically significant educators of educational movements in turn and notes what each has contributed to the activity school as we now know it.

Each of the permanent contributions is stated as a partial description of the activity school and each is numbered consecutively in the order in which it appears in the discussion. As Schoenchen sees it, there are twenty-two distinct contributions or steps in the development of the activity school.

John Amos Comenius (1592-1670) is recognized as having laid the first foundations of activity pedagogy by advocating that the pupil be required to do things for himself. The Didactica Magna enunciated a three-fold method of instruction for the eye, the tongue and the hand. In his Schola Pansophica he repeats this dictum and calls the forms of instruction ratio, oratio, and operatio. In

[3]Schoenchen, G.G., The Activity School: A Basic Philosophy For Teachers, Toronto, Longmans, Green, 1940.

other words, he advocates pupil activity of the body. In Comenius' own words:

> Everything should, as far as is possible, be placed before the senses. Everything visible should be brought before the organ of sight, everything audible before that of hearing. Odours should be placed before the sense of smell, and things that are tastable and tangible before the sense of taste and of touch respectively. If an object can make an impression on several senses at once, it should be brought into contact with several.....Surely, them, the beginning of wisdom should consist, not in the mere learning the names of things, but in the actual perception of the things themselves! It is when the thing has been grasped by the senses that language should fulfil its function of explaining it still further...
>
> Since the senses are the most trusty servants of the memory, this method of sensuous perception, if universally applied, will lead to the permanent retention of knowledge that has once been acquired. For instance, if I have once tasted sugar, seen a camel, heard a nightingale sing, or been in Rome and have on each occasion attentively impressed the fact on my memory, the incidents will remain fresh and permanent.
>
> If the objects themselves cannot be procured, representations of them may be used. Copies or models may be constructed for teaching purposes, and the same principle may be adopted by botonists, geometricians, zoologists, and geographers, who should illustrate their descriptions by engraving of the objects described. The same thing should be done in books on physics and elsewhere....It is true that expense and labour will be necessary to produce models, but the result will amply reward the effort.[4]

From Comenius then, is taken the first partial statement of what an activity school is:

1. An activity school makes use of pupil activity as a principle of instruction.

Schoenchen next refers to the writing of Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), and here he finds so many fundamentals of the

4. Keatinge, The Great Didactic of John Amos Comenius, A & C Black Ltd.; pp. 184-185

activity movement that it leads him to acknowledge Rousseau as the father of the activity school.

In Emile, Rousseau advocates manual training of several kinds for its utilitarian value, for its spiritual value, and for its educational value in leading to reflection and planning. He bases instruction on the instinct of the child, and would arrange instruction so as to correspond with the child's developing and expanding interests. He sees experience and pupil activity as the chief means of education, thus making pupil activity of far greater importance to education than Comenius indicated. He sets himself against verbal teaching, and emphasizes training of the senses and learning through the senses. Finally, he sees education not only as preparing for life, but also as living. Although Emile had no companion, Rousseau realizes that education must be social as well as individual, and he advises that Emile be allowed to visit factories and, through direct observation, to learn to appreciate the importance of social interdependence.[5]

In Rousseau's own words:

> Now if nature gives to a child's mind this suppleness that renders it capable of receiving all sorts of impressions, it is not for the purpose of engraving upon it the names of kings, dates, terms of heraldry, of the sphere, or of geography and all those words without sense for his age and without utility for any age whatsoever, with which one overwhelms his sad and sterile childhood, but it is for engraving all the ideas that he can understand that are useful, all those that contribute to his happiness and ought some day to shed light upon his duties; they trace themselves in his mind early in ineffaceable characters and help him to conduct himself during his life in a manner suitable to his nature and his abilities.[6]

5. Schoenchen, Op. Cit., P. 6.
6. Rousseau, Emile ou de l'Education (translated by W.H. Payne as Emile or Education According to Nature), Appleton-Century-Crofts Co., 1908; p. 100-101.

> Whether he works or plays, both are the same to him; his games are his occupations and he feels no difference between them. He puts into everything he does an interest that makes him laugh and a liberty that pleases, showing at the time the bent of his mind and the range of his knowledge. Is it not a sweet and charming sight at the age to see a handsome child, his eye lively and gay, his manner contented and serene, his face open and smiling - a child who, while amusing himself, does the most serious things or works hard at the most frivolous games? [7]

> I do not at all like explanations in words; young people give them little attention and hardly retain them. Things! Objects! I cannot ever repeat often enough that we give too much authority to words with our babbling education that produces only babblers.[8]

From this most condensed summary of Rousseau's teaching, Schoenchen garners as factors for the activity school the following seven dicta:

2. The activity school advocates many forms of manual training for their cultural values.

3. The activity school arranges the subject matter of instruction in accordance with the natural interests of the child.

4. The activity school advocates direct experience as preferable to vicarious experience.

5. The activity school is opposed to merely verbal teaching or indoctrination.

6. The activity school emphasizes the need of training the senses so that learning through the senses may be furthered.

7. The activity school would modify the learning process so as to take account of individual differences among the pupils.

8. The activity school recognizes that education is life, and must therefore be lived in a communal environment.[9]

7. Ibid., p. 166.
8. Ibid., p. 188-189.
9. Schoenchen, Op.Cit.; p. 7.

Rousseau and Comenius are educationally the giants of the age of empiricism, but there were others who also contributed. The activities of the scientific empiricists from Bacon to Newton - 250 years of scientific discovery - had their effects upon education, as might be expected. This influence was chiefly antagonistic to verbalism in that it advocated experimentation and the use of the inductive method to increase our store of facts.

Ferdinand Kindermann (1740-1801) first applied the principles of activity education to vocational training, thereby creating the vocational school. He found that children were taught useless things, while more essential factors were being neglected. He found teaching poor, and saw in this the cause of much laziness, poverty, mendicancy and irreligion. He recommended industrial training, not only for its economic value but also on the basis of its value for increasing human happiness. He struggled against great odds, but he won the children over to his program, and, through them, their parents. He believed in mild discipline, and allowed the children to talk or sing at manual work. This freedom, together with the alternation of academic and industrial subjects, made children love their school. Schoenchen believes that it is not as a polemic writer, but as an organizer and agitator, that Kindermann takes an important place in the history of activity pedagogy. He represents two distinct steps in advance.

9. The activity school believes that one of the proper aims of education is vocational efficiency.

10. The activity school advocates a natural form of discipline based on children's interest in their work, and operative through social control; it is opposed to order, imposed upon the pupil from without by the teacher.[10]

10. Ibid., p. 9.

Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814), the philosopher of ethical idealism, did much to further the activity school. For Fichte, matter was but a function of spirit; the spirit was absolute, but it was also operative or active. Hence doing is eternal, and being is merely a function of doing. Doing, or activity, is based upon a innate, absolute instinct for self-activity; hence education is the development of this instinct, and the activity of the pupils the chief instrument of education.

The importance of this for the activity school cannot be overestimated. Activity had heretofore been recognized as instinctive, but Fichte shows that is is not only that, but an insistent urge - a drive. Activity has heretofore been regarded as one of the means of education; but for Fichte it is the most important means. Finally, activity is not only a subject in the curriculum, but has become also a method of instruction.[11]

In Fichte, Schoenchen finds explicit an important aim of the activity school; the aim to make the child independent. Through independence the child adds to his moral stature; hence vocational training should be given him on the ethical ground that it will enable him to achieve this independence; finally by being self-sufficient, by being independent, the individual will be enabled to contribute to the independence of society. In other words, pedagogical activity is morally important, not only from the standpoint of the individual but also from that of society.

11. Ibid., p. 10.

From Fichte, then, Schoenchen takes the following:

11. The activity school regards pupil activity as the chief means of education.

12. The activity school uses the principle of activity not only as a subject (manual training) but also as a method of teaching.

13. The activity school advocates many forms of manual training for their moral value.

14. The activity school advocates self-activity as a means of achieving self-independence.

15. The activity school recognizes the need of training the individual for membership in society.

Schoenchen believes that the activity school owes more to Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) than to any other educator; indeed contemporary activity pedagogy has been described as a return to true Pestalozzianism.

Coming after Comenius and Rousseau, Pestalozzi found that these mighty predecessors had anticipated him in many respects; but he nevertheless remains the greatest figure in activity pedagogy because he not only recombined the teachings of the founders of activity pedagogy in ways which make them seem almost like original contributions, but also because he actually illustrated these teachings in practice. To summarize Pestalozzi's influence upon activity education is a task so great that volumes would have to be written to do it adequately.[12]

The central idea of Pestalozzi's pedagogy is his concept of the nature of man as having two aspects, the individual and the social. This fundamental concept combines the educational doctrines of Rousseau, who emphasized the individual, with those of Fichte, who

12. Ibid., p. 12.

stressed the social side. This is, of course, also the central idea of modern activity pedagogy; with this idea in mind Schoenchen notes the following points of Pestalozzian doctrine with which modern activity education is in complete agreement:

a. Instruction arises out of the daily work - not vice versa.

b. Verbalism is condemned.

c. Vocational training is advocated to insure the pupil's independence.

d. The chief aim of education is to train for human living; hence education is not only preparation for life, but itself is life. Life itself educates.

e. Manual training should be combined with academic subjects.

f. Manual training is a means of training through self-activity.

g. Such self-activity is the means of universal culture.

h. Through manual training the senses are trained, thereby increasing the store of knowledge, and leading to the thoughtful life.

i. Training for career and training for life should be thought of as synonymous.

j. The object lesson is a fundamental method for acquiring all knowledge.

k. Train all the senses, not merely the eyes.

l. The didactic value of a activity resides in the fact that activity is the expression of an innate, universal drive.

m. Children should not be told to sit still. Artificial "order" is contrary to the nature of the child; control so exercised by the teacher is like applying a brake to a spinning wheel

n. The value of doing a thing by hand, that is, by experiment, is that it is directly perceivable that it is either right or wrong. Hence experimentation trains the judgment, discovers objective truth, and counteracts the effect of emotion upon thinking.

o. Education should develop all our resources.

In the master's own words:

> Teach him absolutely nothing by words that you can teach him by the things themselves; let him see for himself, hear, find out, fall, pick himself up, make mistakes; no work, in short, when action is possible. What he can do for himself, let him do; let him be always occupied, always active, and let the time you leave him to himself represent by far the greatest part of his childhood. You will see that Nature teaches him better than men. 13

From the above summary it may be regarded as established that Pestalozzi is a giant among activity pedagogues. His original contributions to the activity school are:

16. The activity school is organized on the basis of pupil self-activity.
17. The psychological basis of the activity school is the truth that pupil self-activity affects the three categories of consciousness - the ideational, the judgment, and the interest-volitional.
18. The activity school values experimentation as a means of education because experimentation applies a pragmatic test to ideas. 14

August Friedrich Wilhelm Froebel (1782-1852) is likewise a figure of great importance in the history of the activity school. Froebel stands midway between Pestalozzi and Fichte, having taken from the former the principle of sense training, and from the latter the principle of the importance of doing. These two principles he combines in so unique a way that he makes an original contribution to the activity school. Through self-activity sense perception takes place; Self-activity, or doing, should therefore at all times go hand in hand with sense training (object lesson). In gaining sense imporssions, not only is the eye involved but the object to be sensed must be

13. De Guimps, R., Pestolozzi: His Life and Work, Appleton-Century-Crofts Inc., 1892, p. 46.
14. Schoenchen, Op. Cit., p. 15.

heard, felt, tasted, weighed, played with, manipulated - in a word, a complete sensing of an object involves making use of as large a number of different sense appeals as possible. Knowledge gained as a result will be valid, and will affect thinking, judgment, and the ethical and aesthetic factors in the mind. From this point of view, self-activity, or doing, leads to feeling and knowing, and is therefore the dynamic factor in education.

Another contribution of Froebel to the activity school is his recognition of the pedagogical importance of play. Play has for its purpose the activity itself; when the purpose of the activity merges into the production of the activity, then play merges into work. It is therefore, at this point that instruction begins; the duty of the instructor is to blend into the spontaneous self-activity of the child whatever tends toward the development of the child. In play, as in work, the child automatically learns the value of social cooperation.[15]

A third contribution to the activity school is Froebel's acceptance of the so-called "Culture-Epoch" or "Recapitulation" theory, which holds that the individual recapitulates the experience of the race. This theory rests on some questionable evidence, it is true; furthermore, it is not essential to the activity school. However, most educators at present accept it, especially with the modification that Froebel himself advocated. This is that while each man in himself recapitulates the experience of the race, each man, nevertheless,

15. Ibid., p. 16

differs from every other in that the representation of the recapitulation is different. In other words, this theory need not be at variance with the observed facts of human individualization. This modification of the theory is also expounded by existentialist writers. Nikolai Berdyaev believes that "the eternal principles of social life are values which can be realized in subjective spirit and not concrete forms which can be realized in the objectivization of history". Berdyaev writes:

> Society is always a society not only of the living but also of the dead; and this memory of the dead which the usual theory of progress lacks, is by no means a conservatively static memory, it is a creative dynamic memory. The last word belongs not to death but to resurrection. But resurrection is not a restoration of the past in its evil and untruth, but transfiguration. We are linked with the creatively transfigured past, and it cannot be a burden of enslaving determination for us. We desire to enter with the past and with the departed people of the past into a new transfigured order, into the existential order.[16]

The practical value of the theory for educators lies in the fact that it gives them a hint as to how to arrange the materials of instruction so as to make them conform to the expanding, developing powers of the child, rather than reversing the process and fitting the child to the curriculum. Such favorable arrangement of the materials of instruction is called the "psychological order" in contrast to the older "logical order" of arrangement. The underlying principle is far-reaching in its effects, for it not only determines the order in which whole curricular subjects are arranged to each other, but also regulates the arrangement of specific parts

16. Berdyaev, Nikolai, Slavery and Freedom (translated from the Russian by R.M. French), Charles Scribner's Sons Ltd., New York, 1944, p. 111.

of any given subject.[17]

A final contribution of Froebel to the activity school is one for which he is partly indebted to Rousseau. Rousseau stressed the importance of arranging subject matter in accordance with the growing interests and powers of the child. Froebel carries this principle further and states it explicity: The development of the child at any particular level is conditioned by his development at lower, preceding levels. In this principle Froebel crystallizes several important pedagogical considerations: that, for the child, education is life; that the right of the child to live his own life at his own state of development cannot be gainsaid; that the materials of instruction must be fitted to the child, not the child to them.

Froebel's reknown suffers from the fact that his work has been so completely identified with the kindergarten that he is often overlooked as an educator whose pedagogical principles have a universal applicability.[18]

Schoenchen summarizes Froebel's original contributions in the following four propositions:

19. The activity school maintains the sense training and self-activity must go hand in hand, pedagogically.

20. The activity school recognizes the pedagogical importance of play.

21. The activity school tentatively accepts the recapitulation theory.

22. The activity school recognizes that the development of the child at any level is conditioned by the development of the child at lower levels.[19]

17. Schoenchen, Op.Cit.; p. 17.
18. Ibid., p. 18.
19. Ibid., p. 18.

These then, are the twenty-two distinct forward steps which Gustave Schoenchen believes constitute the historical development of the activity school. This brief account does not, however take into consideration modifications which the activity school has undergone in its spread to countries throughout Europe and in North America.

In the last chapter we noted the influence in this century of Maria Montessori and John Dewey in the course of increased freedom and individualism in the schools. However, both are equally famous for their contributions to the activist movement as well.

In the case of Mme. Montessori, her emphasis upon sensory education is perhaps the most distinguishing mark of her system. Sensory training is used not only as a means of development but also as an introduction to reading, writing and arithmetic. Training in sensory discrimination was given so prominent a place because Montessori believed there was a close relationship between the senses and the intellect and if the senses were neglected during the early years, the intellect would not develop as it should.

Mme. Montessori's own statement of the objective in sense education was as follows: "The education of the senses has as its aim the refinement of the differential perception of stimuli by means of repeated exercises."[20]

These exercises are necessarily self educative, since no teacher can do a pupil's seeing, hearing and touching for him. Montessori's exercises were also self-corrective. This is accomplished

20. Montessori, Op.Cit., p. 173.

by employing materials which by their very nature, automatically inform the child when he makes an error. She is also noted for her development of further exercises that furnish a transfer from purely sensory training to the school subjects. In her system she pioneered a method of transition from sense training to the teaching of writing which is still regarded as one of the best possible introductions to the subject.[21]

Montessori's method is perhaps as famous for its emphasis on the training of the senses as it is for individualism and respect for the child.

In our time, every educator is or should be, familiar with the emphasis which John Dewey placed on activism in his educational philosophy. Dewey condemned the traditional methods of education which placed a premium upon the passivity and receptivity of the child. The only escape from them in the traditional school involved on activity by the child which was usually regarded as iregular and perhaps disobedient. Dewey deplored this attitude:

> There cannot be complete quietude in a laboratory or workshop. The non-social character of the traditional school is seen in the fact that it erected silence into one of its prime virtues....
>
> There should be brief intervals of time for quiet reflection provided for even the young. But they are periods of genuine reflection only when they follow after times of more overt action and are used to organize what has been gained in periods of activity in which the hands and other parts of the body beside the brain are used.[22]

Dewey regarded freedom of movement for young children as an important means of maintaining normal physical and mental

21. Ibid., Chapter 16.
22. Dewey, John, Experience and Education, London, Collier-MacMillan, 1963. p. 62.

health. He believed we can still learn from the example of the Greeks who say clearly the relation between a sound body and a sound mind.

> But in all the respects mentioned, freedom of action is a means to freedom of judgement and of power to carry deliberately chosen ends into execution. The amount of external freedom which is needed varies from individual to individual. It naturally tends to decrease with increasing maturity, though its complete absence prevents even a mature individual from having the contacts which will provide him with new materials upon which his intelligence may exercise itself. The amount and quality of this kind of free activity as a means of growth is a problem that must engage the thought of the educator at every stage of development. 23

In the previous chapter devoted to Individualism we noted how Jean Piaget's studies supported this concept in education. However, Piaget's work can be said to have also as great a significance in support of increased activism in education.

Piaget noted that at each age in his development, the child has his own mental apparatus, however primitive, that is the result of the interaction that has already occurred between the unfolding of his innate mental structures and his experiences. At each stage or moment of time the child is extending that apparatus through probing and testing his environment - in infancy, exploring with his eyes, his mouth, his hands, his feet, his lungs, later on through babbling, walking, talking, playing, reading etc. He not only stores information in his mental files, but also continually modifies and reconstitutes the filing system or mental apparatus through using it. In John Dewey's phrase he learns through doing - his doing and no one else's. Thus the child learns to hear, then to speak,

23. Ibid., P. 63.

by hearing and speaking, and not until much later by being told how to speak. He learns to think mathematically or in terms of cause and effect through his engagement with things that embody causal or mathematical relationships; it is only much later, after he has learned to think causably, that he begins to think about causality.[24]

Piaget states that this sequence is not random; all children go through the same stages as, bit by bit, they construct their mental images of the world. Each stage sees the development of new mental abilities that determine the nature, but also set the limits of what the child can learn at that point.

According to Piaget what enables the child to progress from one stage to another is his own activity. Learning, indeed the development of intelligence itself, is a continuous process of assimilating the external facts of experience and integrating them into the individual's internal mental structures. To Piaget, the activity is crucial: the child, or for that matter, the adult must discover understanding for himself. He must actively invent and reinvent what he wants to understand, for understanding is a transformation of reality. To know something is not merely to be told it or to see it but to act upon it, to modify and transform it and to understand the process and consequences of the transformation.[25]

Teaching to Piaget means creating situations where structures can be discovered, it does not mean transmitting structures which may be assimilated at nothing other than a verbal level. Piaget

24. Flavell, John H., The Developmental Psychology of Jean Piaget, New Jersey: Van Nostrand, 1963, p. 112.
25. Ibid., p. 115.

does not believe children handle verbal abstractions easily until they have reached what he calls the stage of "formal operatinns" which is for most children between the twelth and fifteenth years. The teachers job then is to present the child with situations that encourage him to experiment, to manipulate things and symbols trying them out to see what results they produce.

The child must then be allowed to "do" at his own rate, with the teacher arranging the classroom environment in such a way as to permit children to learn at their own pace as well as in their own way. Piaget believes children have real understanding only of that which they invent themselves, and each time one attempts to teach them too quickly, we keep them from reinventing it themselves.[26]

Piaget warns that there is no good reason to accelerate this development too much. He maintains the time that appears to be "wasted" in personal investigation is really time gained, that is time devoted to securing deeper understanding which sould be the aim to understanding.

In a statement which existentialist educators would certainly applaud, Piaget writes "The principal goal of education is to create men who are capable of doing new things not simply repeating what other generations have done - men who are creative, inventive and discoverers who have minds which can be critical, can verify and not accept everything they are offered."

26. David Elkind, "Piaget and Montessori", Harvard Education Review, Fall, 1967.

> The great danger today is of slogans, collective opinions, readymade trends of thought. We have to be able to resist individually, to criticize, to distinguish between what is proven and what is not. So we need pupils who are active, who learn early to find out by themselves, partly by their own spontaneous activity and partly through material we set up for them; who learn early to tell what is verifiable and what is simply the first idea to come to them.[27]

This means providing young children with an abundance of concrete materials they can explore, manipulate and handle - materials they can play with, for play is a child's work.

From the sources quoted in this chapter and the preceding one, it can be seen that the existentialist educational ideals of freedom, individualism and activism, certainly do not appear to be a radical or avant garde departure from the educational ideals envisioned by the acknowledged educational authorities of the past. In fact, it may be said, that the dominant themes which recur again and again in their educational thought are freedom, individualism and activism.

It is left to the advocates of our traditional educational system to present equally convincing support in favour of the passivity and regimentation which has characterized the traditional classroom.

27. Piaget Rediscovered, edited by Richard E. Ripple and Verne N. Rockcastle, Cornell University Press, 1964.

CHAPTER FIVE TECHNOLOGY AND THE FREE SCHOOL

In Understanding Media[1] and The Medium is the Massage,[2] Marshall McLuhan has written of our educational system in the light of the new technology.

> The young today live mythically and in depth. But they encounter instruction in situations organized by means of classified information - subjects are unrelated, they are visually conceived in terms of a blue print. Many of our institutions suppress all the natural direct experience of youth, who respond with untaught delight to the poetry and the beauty of the new technological environment, the environment of the popular culture. It could be their door to all past achievement if studied as an active (and not necessarily benign) force.
>
> The student finds no means of involvement for himself and cannot discover how the educational scheme relates to his mythic world of electronically processed data and experience that his clear and direct responses report. It is a matter of the greatest urgency that our educational institutions realize that we now have civil war among these environments created by media other than the printed word. The classroom is now in a vital struggle for survival with the immensely persuasive "outside" world created by new informational media. Education must shift from instruction, from imposing of stencils, to discovery - to probing and exploration and to the recognition of the language of forms.
>
> The drop out represents a rejection of nineteenth-century technology as manifested in our educational establishments. The teach-in represents a creative effort, switching the educational process from package to discovery. As the audience becomes a participant in the total electric drama, the classroom can become a scene in which the audience performs an enormous amount of work.3

1. McLuhan, Marshall; Understanding Media:
2. McLuhan, Marshall; The Medium is the Massage, Toronto: Bantam Books, 1967.
3. Ibid., p. 42.

Many people in modern society long nostalgically for the tranquility and simplicity which they believe existed in a pre-technological age. They deplore the apparently relentless march of technological "progress" and they fear that the life of man is increasingly being ruled by his technological creations. Among the most influential contemporary critics of technological "progress" is the French writer, Jacques Ellul whose thoughts concerning the dangers of technology we shall consider later in this chapter.

At present, however, it appears that the tide of technological change cannot be simply halted. The question is not whether man requires this technology but rather how he is going to master it; since there are apparently few signs of the trend being reversed in the foreseeable future.

In his provocative book, Education and Ecstasy,[4] George B. Leonard has offered us a view of how future education may appear if we employ our developing technology in the service of our schools. In so doing, he still retains the basic qualities of individual freedom, choosing and personal responsibility which are the necessary components of an existential school as discussed in the previous chapter.

Leonard's school of the future, physically consists of gleaming geodesic domes and translucent tent-like structures scattered randomly among graceful trees and a large grassy play field encircled with flowers. Approximately eight hundred children are enrolled in the school, but on any typical day only about six hundred are in the school grounds. Most of the educational environments are in operation from eight in the morning until six in the afternoon.

4. Leonard, George B, Education and Ecstasy, New York: Dell, 1968.

Children can come when and if they please; there is no problem at all of parents wishing to take their children on extended trips or simply keeping them home for something that's going on there.

While the children are in the school grounds, they are absolutely free to go anywhere and do anything they wish that does not hurt someone else. They are free learners.

The Administrative centre of the school is located in a Central Dome. Every child wears an electronic identity card. Whenever he is on the school grounds, a central computer continually tabulates how much time he spends in each educational environment. This allows the schools educators not only to keep track of each child's educational development with a minimum of effort, but also to evaluate the drawing power and effectiveness of each environment. The first principle of free learning is that if the environment fails to draw or educate, it is the environment, not the learner's fault.[5]

The main learning environment for the youngest children (from three to seven years of age) is the Basics Dome. It is entered by one of three tunnel-like entrances which emerge near the centre of the great dome lit only by the glow of laser learning displays, that completely surround one of the dome's periphery. On first entering one is almostoverwhelmed by the sensory bombardment that comes from every side. Around the dome there are forty learning consoles, at each of which is seated a child facing outward toward the learning displays. Each child sits at a keyboard, essentially less complex than that of an old fashioned typewriter, but fitted with a number of shifts so that almost every symbol known to human cultures can be produced. The child's learning display, about ten feet square, is

5. Ibid., p. 146.

reflected from the hologram-conversion screen that runs all the way around the inner surface of the dome. The image appears to stand out from the screen in sometimes startling colours and dimensions. The screen is slightly elevated above the child's horizontal eye level so that everyone in the dome by turning all the way round can view all of the learning displays. Each display joins one on the other side of it, so that the total effect is panoramic. And each has its own set of stereo speakers, joining in a panorama of sound.

A small electronic tablet on the back of each chair shows the name of the child in the chair and the number of minutes he has left in his learning session. The amount of time allotted for each session varies; it is calculated electronically according to the total number of children waiting in the dome, but it is never less than twenty minutes.[6]

When a child takes the chair to begin learning, another radio receiver senses his presence through his EID and signals the central learning computer to plug in the particular child's learning history. The child puts on his combination ear phones and brain wave sensors. Once the computer picks up the child's ongoing brain-waves, it immediately begins reiterating (in drastically abreviated form) his last learning session. The child watches his most recent lesson reeling by on his display. If he wants to continue where he left off last time he holds down his "yes" key until the reiteration is finished. If not, he presses "no" and the computer begins searching for other material appropriate to the child's level of learning; material which is flashed onto the display until the child presses

6. Ibid., p. 148.

"yes". The selection process generally takes less than two minutes. The dialogue then begins.

1. A full bank of the basic, commonly agreed-upon cultural knowledge, arranged in dialogue form. Most children go through the entire basics bank in the four years from age three through six.
2. Basic material arranged in Cross-Matrix Stimulus and Response form. This material appears at random intervals along with the dialogued material to provide novelty and surprise and to help the child learn to make these unexpected leaps which are so much a part of discovery.
3. The child's brain-wave pattern, analyzed in terms of general consciousness state and short term memory strength.
4. The child's overt motor responses as typed on the keyboard or spoken into a directional microphone mounted on the console.
5. Communal Interconnect. Through CI, the material on one learning display sometimes influences and is influenced by the material on nearby displays. This makes the learning process far more communal. It also helps bring together all forty displays into a single learning-art object, enhancing learning and appreciation, not only for the children at the consoles but for the many spectators in the dome as well.[7]

7. Ibid., p. 151.

On another part of the campus there is a smaller dome known as the Quiet Dome, made of a translucent milky-white material. One enters by pushing his way in through three spearate sets of heavy, sound absorbing curtains, and steps onto a spongy floor that floats free from the earth on hydraulic mounts.

Just as the Basics Dome shocks the senses which an initial overload of stimuli, the Quiet Dome shocks with the lack of them. Everything is designed to give a feeling of being neutral, direction-less, without dimension. Some students might be practicing the omega form of meditation they have been recently learning or shifting from one mode of consciousness to another in quiet contemplation.

Elsewhere on the campus there are the Water and Body Domes containing a swimming pool, gymnasium and dance floor. Here two educators are always on hand to counsel learners about the all important relationship between the body - its posture, tension, movements and coordination - to everything else in life and learning.

Scattered throughout the campus one would find several Discovery Tents - structures of translucent plastic erected on skeletal frameworks over light weight plastic floors. Their character is tentative, temporary. Usually one educator is responsible for each tent. His function is to set up and constantly revise educational environments that will encourage children to make their own discoveries. For example one educator handles both of the current Matter-Energy Manipulation projects, making sure the appropriate apparatus and instructions are available everyday.[8] Other Discovery tents are devoted to the study of projects in history, sociology, psychology and the arts.

8. Ibid., p. 163.

Only a few electronic or printed reference materials are needed inside the Discovery Tents. Every learner in the school, once he has finished enough of the Basics, is given a Remote Readout device through which he can query the Central Computer at any time. The device is slightly larger than an old fashioned cigarette pack. It has a visual display screen large enough for several lines of type at a time or for small diagrams and pictures. It is fitted with a miniature microphone, slimmer than a pencil, and an earplug. The learner thus has voice access to the computer. He can also contact the educator in charge of the project. Most of the children, however are reluctant to do so. They have found that the real joy of learning lies in finding out for themselves, either alone or in concert with other children.

The campus playing field is entered through a border of flowering shrubs. It is a large grassy expanse of flat and rolling land. It is unmarked by lines or artificial boundaries of any kind. The games of limitation such as baseball and football, encouraging agression and competition have been replaced by games of expansion requiring improvisation and revision by the children themselves.

Throughout the school day refreshments are served to parents and educators in the computer read-out room. Comfortable chairs and lounges are arranged in informal clusters. Multiple stereo fills the room with music. One wall is lined with read-out consoles, at which parents and educators alike can request data about the school's children. Parents are granted information only about their own child, while educators can learn about any child in the school. In seconds the computer will provide up to the moment

data on how much time a child has been spending in each of the environments. It will analyze a young child's progress in the Basics Dome or will show what kinds of information an older child has been requesting on his Remote Readout. It will also upon request provide a Uniqueness Profile for a number of other profiles including Empathy, Joy of learning, Body Development, Awareness, Consciousness, Control, and the like. Parents and children are cautioned, however, not to take these profiles very seriously. They are only a rough guide to development, not evaluations in the old sense. The best thing about the computer read-out room, most parents feel, is not the computer read-out, but the happy atmosphere of relatedness between parents and educators.[9]

Upon first glance, to many, Leonard's school of the future may have a distasteful "Brave New World" aura about it. As stated at the outset of this chapter, there are many who deplore the apparently relentless march of technological "progress".

In his book, The Technological Society, Jacques Ellul has described technology (or as he calls it, technique) as a "blind force, but one which unfortunately seems to be more perspicacious than the best discernible human intelligences". There are ways out, Ellul maintains, but nobody wants any part of them. He believes since technique has become indifferent to all the traditional human ends and values by becoming an end-in-itself our, erstwhile means have all become an end, an end, furthermore, which has nothing human in it and to which we must accommodate ourselves as best we may. We cannot pretend to act as though the ends justified the means, which

9. Ibid., p. 170.

would still be recognizably human, if not particularly virtuous. The Technological Society is a description of the way in which an autonomous technology is in process of taking over the traditional values of every society without exception, subverting and suppressing these values to produce at last a monolithic world culture in which all non-technological difference and variety is mere appearance.[10]

Ellul envisions the technological state of the future as a universal concentration camp. However, it will be one in which the inhabitants will have everything their hearts ever desired, except of course their freedom. Modern man, forced by technique to become in reality and without residue the imaginary producer-consumer of the classical economists, shows disconcertingly little regard for his lost freedom, but, according to Ellul, there are ominous signs that human spontaneity, which in the rational and ordered technical society has no expression except madness, is only too capable of outbreaks of irrational suicidal destructivness.[11]

Ellul does not, however, believe that the continuing development of technology is a deterministic phenomenon from which man cannot hope to escape. His view of how man may transcend technology is of particular interest to existentialist educators.

> In the modern world, the most dangerous form of determinism is the technological phenomenon. It is not a question of getting rid of it, but, by an act

10. Ellul, Jacques, The Technological Society, The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961.
11. Ibid., p. 314.

> of freedom, of transcending it. How is this to be done? I do not yet know. That is why this book is an appeal to the individual's sense of responsibility. The first step in the quest, the first act of freedom, is to become aware of the necessity. The very fact that man can see, measure, and analyze the determinisms that press on him means that he can face them and, by so doing, act as a free man. If man were to say: "These are not necessities; I am free because of technique, or despite technique," this would prove that he is totally determined. However, by grasping the real nature of the technological phenomenon, and the extent to which it is robbing him of freedom, he confronts the blind mechanisms as a conscious being.[12]

Certainly it would appear that the type of "conscious beings" best capable of making such a transcendence of technology in the future would be those who have experienced the type of existential education described here earlier.

Although Ellul continually apostrophizes technique as "unnatural" (except when he calls it the "new nature"), it might be thought surprising that he has no fixed conception of nature or of the natural. The best answer seems to be that he considers "natural" (in the good sense) any environment able to satisfy man's material needs, if it leaves him free to use it as means to achieve his individual, internally generated ends. The necessary and sufficient condition for this state of affairs is that man's means should be (qualitatively and quantitatively) "at the level" of man's capacities. Under these dubiously relizable circumstances, Ellul apparently thinks of techniques as so many blessings.[13]

12. Ibid., p. 403.
13. Ibid., p. 408.

Upon close examination one can see that the technology which Leonard envisions in the school of the future appears to be (though some including Ellul, would no doubt dispute this) still at the level of man's capacity to control it. However, there appears to be an interesting paradoxical situation inherent in Leonard's ideal.

The type of technology which Leonard envisions in his future school would require a tremendous industrial effort involving thousands of technicians and industrial workers. Yet the aim of his free school seems designed to free people from the boring, soul destroying work which such technology would require in order to be established and maintained. Leonard's school may well produce adults who will not wish to spend their lives in the service of technology - thus after a few generations there might be no one to support the continued production and servicing of such a highly technological school system.

However, keeping in mind the dangers of technology as outlined by Ellul and the possible paradoxical situation just described, Leonard has presented us with a vision of how technology may be employed in the service of the student to create a stimulating educational environment. In the school he foresees, the existentialist ideals of freedom, individualism and activism are still retained within a highly technological environment.

In the next chapter we shall examine free schools as they presently exist and some of the reasons why they have not achieved a significant wide measure of public acceptance.

CHAPTER SIX FREE SCHOOLS AT PRESENT

Earlier in this paper, we noted Van Cleve Morris' contention that the paradigm existential school might be constructed along the lines of A.W. Neill's free school at Summerhill.

In recent years, there have been numerous private free schools established throughout the United States and Canada based in varying degrees on the Summerhill model. In nearly every city in North America there is at least one so-called free school in existence. In most major metropolitan areas a number of such schools can be found.[1] The schools are usually privately funded and enrollment normally consists of less than a hundred students (in many cases as low as 10 or even less).

The student enrollment, faculty and physical conditions under which these schools operate varies considerably; however, most of them operate on the theory that education should be child centered, open structured, individualized and unopressive.

A good example of one of the more successful of such free schools, employing very ordinary facilities, is the Fifteenth Street School in New York City. The School was first conceived by actor

]. Kozol, Jonathan, Free Schools, notes that there are now over eight hundred of these schools in North America; Boston, Houghton-Mifflen, 1972.

Orson Bean as a Summerhill-type institution, but it has gone beyond the Summerhill concept.[2]

Summerhill concentrated, for the most part, on merely removing the coercive aspects of conventional schooling. It did not make a corresponding effort to create new motivations. The Fifteenth Street School does make this attempt without compromising the principle of the free learner.

From the moment a child enters the building until he leaves, he is free to go anywhere and do anything he pleases, so long as he does not harm himself or his fellow students. The buildings entire ground floor is the "gym", a large rectangular space with composition floor. In the gym, children may find various play objects - balls, bats of foam rubber, blankets, large cardboard containers. Two old upright pianos are there, and a jukebox that plays a selection of music for free. At the gym's far end is a low platform and old costumes. Throughout the day children come and go freely and the mood of the gym constantly changes.

The staff of the school has found that children do not spend all their time in the gym, although they are free to do so. They do not do so because their bodies and minds tell them they have had enough and because other fascinating and deeply involving educational environments are available.

In another part of the school there is a room where children may lounge around and read. It is a pleasant place with chairs

2. Leonard, Op.Cit., P. 176.

arranged informally at a table, and cushions on the floor around the walls. A teacher may be there, but the child receives no instruction in the conventional sense. He uses self-teaching programs, so he can start where he left off last time. If he needs help there are other children around to help him. The school has discovered that quite often when a child runs up against a block in some subject such as reading, he overcomes it most easily with the help of another child rather than an adult.[3]

There are other rooms, other environments - a wood-shop, a math room, a kitchen, a quiet room, two balconies, a roof top playground. One large room on the third floor is set aside for the arts. Every obtainable art material is made available to the children. Another large room on the same floor contains tables, reference books, and charts as well as a variety of children's books. The most striking characteristic of this room is the profusion of things that might be labeled "junk" - large wood blocks of various shapes, wires, ropes, all sorts of surplus electronic equipment and other machinery. Here, children can create their own worlds, their own learning environments.

The teacher - pupil ratio at the Fifteenth Street School is one to twelve (sixty students and five staff). Individual teachers are responsible for setting up stimulating educational environments within the rooms for which they are responsible. Any instruction in the various rooms such as geography, art, science etc. is carried out through projects and assignments according to activity school principles.[4]

3. Ibid., p. 178.
4. Ibid., p. 182.

It is not difficult to see how this type of school could satisfy both the requirements of self-activity and individualism in the education of its students.

Although the Fifteenth Street School has operated successfully for a number of years, unfortunately most such free schools have not fared as well.

In Free Schools,[5] Jonathon Kozol, a former teacher in the Boston School System and the author of the previously mentioned book, Death at an Early Age, has offered his analysis of why free schools so often fail. He contends that the major cause for failure in the free school is their unwillingness or inability to teach the hard skills such as reading and writing.

Most free schools end on a bitter note. The participants often claiming that harrassment by public officals caused the schools collapse. In fact however, most such schools collapse because parents were removing their children from the schools. This has been true of most such schools serving the middle class, but it has been particularly true of urban free schools established by young whites in American cities to assist the black or Spanish speaking communities.

As Kozol states:

> It is a bitter pill for many young white persons to swallow, but in many cases the very rewards and skills that we - who possess them - now consider rotten and corrupt are attractive and often irresistable to poor people. Often enough it is not material greed that motivates them - it is the more immediate matter of survival. There's not much that a poor, black

5. Kozol, Op.Cit.

> 14-year-old can do in cities like New York or Boston if he cannot read and write enough to understand a street sign or to read a phone book. It is too often the rich college graduate who speaks three languages with native fluency, at the price of 16 years of high-cost, rigorous and sequential education, who is most determined that poor kids should make clay vases, weave Indian headbands, play with Polaroid cameras, and climb over geodesic domes. [6]

Kozol believes that free schools need not adhere to irresponsible positions, particularly in regard to the acquisition of skills as basic as reading and writing. He believes it is much an error to say that learning is never the consequence of conscious teaching as it is to imagine that it always is.

He believes that reading can be taught. As examples of how reading may be properly taught he offers the specific approaches of well known educators such as George Dennison, Sylvia Ashton-Warner, James Herndon, Herbert Kohl and Brazilian scholar, Paulo Freire as models.

Kozol contends that it is unwise for young white teachers to impose their version of the counter-culture upon poor children and their families. It is especially dangerous if they do this while they neglect certain obvious survival matters.

> Frequently a young newcomer to the free-school movement refuses to recognize that to a very considerable degree his own risk-taking attitudes and antisystem, antiskill, anticredential confidence is based upon the deepdown knowledge that in a single hour he can put on shoes, cut his hair, fish out an old, but still familiar, piece of plastic from his wallet, go over to Brattle Street, go into Brooks Brothers, buy new clothes, and walk into a brand-new job.
>
> Some of us do not like to admit that we have this sense of intellectual and financial back-up. The

6. Ibid., p. 72.

parents of poor children, however, recognize this sort of thing quite clearly.

> Sane and sober parents, in such cities as New York and Boston, draw back in fear or anger at the condescending, if often idealistic, statements of young teachers who tell them to forget about English syntax and the Mathematics College Boards, but send away for bean seeds and for organic food supplies and get into grouptalk and encounter.
>
> It seems to me that the parents of poor children are less backward and more realistic than some of their white co-workers are prepared to recognize. Survival skills are desperately important for the children of the powerless and the poor within this cold, efficient nation; they must not be sarcastically and ignorantly scorned by rich young white boys in blue jeans and boots with good degrees from Princeton, Oberlin and Yale.[7]

Kozol states that he cannot draw a perfect blueprint for "passionate, angry, realistic education". He does say, however, that it is within our reach and that some of the free schools come extremely close. He believes that this is the kind of goal that is most worthy of our pursuit. He feels there has to be a way to find pragmatic competence, internal peace, and ethical passion all in the same process. In the next chapter we shall examine in detail a public school system which I believe offers tangible evidence of success in achieving just such goals as Kozol desires, as well as fostering the existential educational ideals described here earlier.

It seems apparent that if existentialist or free school ideals are to have any significant wide spread effect on the population as a whole, then these ideals must be somehow incorporated into the public school systems on a wide scale basis.

7. Ibid., p. 77.

However, in the history of education it is difficult to find many large scale attempts within any major school association to incorporate clearly both activity and individualism along the lines suggested by existentialist ideals. One such example, however, which approaches such ideals, is the Pre-World War Two, Leipziger Lehrer Verein (Leipzig Teacher's Association).[8]

It may be of value to consider for a few moments the recommendations made by this Association in regard to the Leipzig School System. For them the Froebelian doctrine of development was fundamental: namely, that effective training at any given stage of the child's development rests upon effective training at every preceding stage. Hence, development of the school child is a present, not a future, consideration, and a system of education which, like career education, constantly regards the future needs of the child, and never sees the present needs, must be rejected. As the environment of the child determines the needs of his present development, and as that environment is everything that touches the child's life, the Association advocated, not a few subjects thoroughly drilled, but as broad an experiential basis for child activity as possible.

But this experiential activity should not be broken up into bits, or analyzed out into separate subjects of the curriculum. Instead, the Association advocated one undifferentiated subject: Home-and Civilization, broadly conceived, and taught through pupil self-activity until the child's thirteenth year. This proposal is based upon the idea that until about thirteen years of age the child cannot think synthetically; hence if we were to present the body of

8. Schoenchen, G.G., The Activity School: A Basic Philosophy For Teachers, Toronto: Longman, Green; 1940.

instruction dissected into logical subject divisions, the child, being unable to synthesize properly, would never see the unity underlying all. Up to the thirteenth year, instruction in the formal subjects should be largely opportunistic, casual, incidental. After the thirteenth year a single subject becomes central - a concentration subject - but the central subject is changed from time to time, each of the traditional subjects of the curriculum occupying central place in turn.[9] In this regard the Associations recommendations appear quite similar to the educational directives of Alfred North Whitehead in his book, The Aims of Education,[10] and those expounded by Jerome Bruner in a more recent article entitled, The Rhythm of Education.[11]

The Association believed that a form of instruction based outwardly upon the developmental principle must be inwardly or psychologically organized on the same principle. This becomes possible by utilizing the child's innate drive for self-activity. As the child develops. the forms of his self-activity change, but the learnings appropriate to the child's development at any given stage should not be inculcated or told; rather, they should take place through the child's own seeing, observing, and experience. The goal is not motor activity as such, but the union of physical and mental activity. This is true activity pedagogy.

9. Ibid., p. 35.
10. Whitehead, Alfred North., The Aims of Education, New York: The New American Library, 1965.
11. Bruner, Jerome S. "The Rhythm of Education" The American Psychologist 11, (1962) pp. 463-466.

According to the Association there are three rules of method which are important for an activity school: (a) discovery by the child himself rather than indoctrination; (b) impression should always be accompanied by expression; (c) pupil self-sctivity as the pedagogical basis of instruction?[12]

The acquisition of knowledge is always to be united with expression. But such expression may be on one of three levels. For the young child it is conceptual, in the sense that the child has the concept of, say, a man, but expresses it merely in a schematic representation of two circles for head and torso and two pairs of lines for arms and legs. At a more advanced level the expression becomes "naturalistic," that is, more closely following the object as found in nature. Finally for the talented child, the expression may reach the plane of the artistic. The unity of the entire learning process, a unity which includes the organization of the subject matter, the experiential type of acquisition of knowledge and skills, and expression on the three levels of technical activity, is achieved by basing it all on the psychological law of child development as that law becomes operative in pupil self-activity.[13]

In summary: The Leipziger Lehrer Verein proposed a child centered school; it is thoroughgoing in its application of the Froebelian principle of child development even to the extent of showing how the activity school may be further developed; it widens the meaning of pupil activity to include not only physical but mental activity.

12. Schoenchen, Op.Cit., p. 37.
13. Ibid., p. 38.

I have been unable to find any sources of information concerning the extent to which the Associations recommendations were implemented in the schools of Leipzig during the 1930's. It is safe to assume however that the results of the Nazi period and the holocaust of World War II plus the subsequent doctrinaire formalism of the Communist Regime have probably left few traces of the Associations's educational directives in the schools of the German Democratic Republic (East Germany).

In passing, it is of interest to existentialist educators to note the educational theories of another German writer of the earlier part of this century, Hugo Gaudig (b. 1860).[14]

Gaudig believed that the unifying principle of education, and its cardinal duty was the development of the personality of the individual. The individual's abilities are self-developmental, and their purpose is to increase themselves. It is the business of education to find them when latent, stimulate them, and give them means of self-expression. The goal of the educator, therefore, is to give the pupil the opportunity for self-activity. The result of this activity is a personality gain for the individual - in feelings, emotions, attitudes, skills and knowledge.

Gaudig, then, is an example of someone who was clearly an individualist and activity educator whose thought could have important implications for existentialist education.

14. Ibid., p. 46.

It seems apparent, however, that the public is not at present prepared to accept significant changes in education through the medium of the independent school movement. Noting Kozol's criticisms of present free schools, perhaps their negative reaction to these schools is justifiable.

For the present, any significant, wide spread reforms of education along the lines of the existential ideals will have to take place through a restructuring of the present public school system. Fortunately, in some areas, this hoped for restructuring is already occurring: In the next chapter we shall examine a public school system which has already taken large steps towards a more existentialist education, while at the same time maintaining the academic standards which the general public still demands from their schools.

CHAPTER SEVEN THE ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOL AND INFORMAL EDUCATION

Can schools be humane and still educate well? Can they be genuinely concerned with gaiety and joy and individual growth and fulfillment without sacrificing concern for intellectual discipline and development? Can they be simultaneously child-centered and subject - or knowledge-centered? Can they stress asthetic and moral education without weakening the three R's? They can do all these things if - but only if - their structure, content, and objectives are transformed.

Such schools do exist on a wide scale in England. Their rapid growth after World War II went largely unnoticed in this country, and to a surprising degree, in England itself, until 1967, when a Parliamentary Commission, the so-called Plowden Committee, called attention to the new approach and urged its adoption by all English primary schools.[1] The approach has a variety of labels, the "free day," the "integrated day," the "integrated curriculum" the "free school," the "open school," "informal education." The multiplicity of labels reflects the wide range of specific school practices and organization; there is no monolithic system or approach.

1. Central Advisory Council for Education (England), Children and Their Primary Schools, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1967 (2 vols). The report is generally referred to as the Plowden Report, after the chairman of the Council, Lady Bridget Plowden.

The "free day," or "informal education," is less an approach or method than a set of shared attitudes and convictions about the nature of childhood, learning, and schooling. Advocates of informal education begin with a conception of childhood as something to be cherished, a conception that leads in turn to a concern with the quality of the school experience in its own right, not merely as preparation for later schooling or for later life. As the members of the Plowden Committee state in their report, "Children need to be themselves, to live with other children and with grownups, to learn from their environment, to enjoy the present, to get ready for the future, to create and to love, to learn to face adversity, to behave responsibly, in a word, to be human beings."

There is, in addition, a conviction that learning is likely to be more effective if it grows out of what interests the learner, rather than what interests the teacher. Hence informal schools generally abandon the traditional rigid timetable which divides the day into a succession of short periods. In its place there are longer periods during which, at the teacher's discretion and under his supervision, students may be engaged individually or in small groups in a wider variety of activities.

To suggest that learning evolve from the child's interests is not to propose an abdication of adult authority, only a change in the way it is exercised. "From the start," the Plowden Committee firmly declares, "there must be teaching as well as learning: children are not 'free' to develop interests or skills of which they have no knowledge. They must have guidance from their teachers." Since what children are interested in is a function of their environment as well as of their native endowment, it is the teacher's responsibility to structure that environment in the

best possible way, and to help it change and grow in response to each child's evolving interests and needs.[2]

With rare exceptions, teachers and administrators are careful to avoid confusing sentiment for children with sentimentality about them. "We must avoid being sentimental," declares Sir Alec Clegg, Chief Education Officer of the West Riding of Yorkshire and one of the most child-centered English educators. "Happiness has got to derive from achievement and success, not just having a good time." Concern for the needs of each child, writes John Blackie, a former Chief Inspector of Primary Schools, "does not mean being sentimental about children ('dear little things') or foolishly indulgent ('the child is always right') or forcing them into premature and precocious importance, mistakes that many have made in England and elsewhere. It means regarding them as our responsibility.[3] And that responsibility means educating them: transmitting, creating, and evoking the skills, values, attitudes, and knowledge that will help them grow into mature, creative, and happy adults.

Most advocates and practitioners of informal education, in short, reject John Holt's romantic notion that children should simply be turned loose to do their own thing, that as soon as one introduces adult priorities and adult notions of what is worth learning, one destroys the fidelity of the child. What the child wants and how much he wants is largely determined by his environment; the school and the teacher must play a vital role in this choice.

2. Ibid.
3. Blackie, John, Inside the Primary School, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1967.

These views of childhood and of schooling are strongly influencing English primary education. A 1964 survey made for the Plowden Committee by the education inspectorate indicated that roughly one-third of English primary schools had been "substantially affected" by the new approach, with another third "somewhat affected"; the proportions have increased since then. Terms such as "substantially affected" and "somewhat affected" are ambiguous, to be sure, and statistics applying to English primary education as a whole can be misleading in view of the fact that many school authorities maintain separate infant and junior schools, the former enrolling children aged five to seven; the latter, children aged seven to eleven. (Some districts have mixed infant and junior schools with a separate infant department; others have single primary schools enrolling the whole age span.) But is is safe to say that about 25 percent of English primary schools fit the model described in this chapter, and that another third are in one or another stage of moving toward it.[4]

What is crucial, in any case, is not the precise number of informal schools but the fact that the approach is widely used in state schools (what we call public schools) in every part of England, staffed by every kind of teacher in every kind of building and serving every kind of student. Informal schools exist in the wealthiest neighborhoods in London, in the poorest Cockney slums, in rapidly changing immigrant neighborhoods, in depressed coal mining towns in Yorkshire, in middle-class and lower-class industrial areas in Midlands and in more rural Oxfordshire. The

4. Ibid., P. 12., Rogers, Vincent R., Teaching in the British Primary School, New York: MacMillan, 1970, P.V.

buildings in which these schools are housed run the gamut from modern new glass enclosed buildings designed specifically for informal education to dark and dingy three story buildings erected in the 19th century and designed for traditional formal education. The teachers and headmasters or headmistresses range from veterans of forty years of teaching to mini-skirted women fresh out of training school.[5]

The trend toward informal education in England is not a sudden departure from the past. It has developed gradually over the last half century, out of the insights and experiments of innumerable teachers, "heads" (principals), local and national school inspectors and advisors, and college and university professors. The revolution came about because teachers in infant classes everywhere began to act on a professional instinct that told them a happy child actively involved in something he wanted to do was getting more out of his educational opportunities than a passive, bored child politely resisting most of the instruction dished out to him in 30-minute parcels.

That professional instinct gained official encouragement in 1934 with the publication of the "Hadow Committee" Report on Infant and Nursery Schools.[6] The instinct was heightened again during World War II, when urban teachers and their pupils were evacuated because of the bombing raids. The rethinking was made necessary by the fact that the teachers found themselves with the children twenty-four hours a day; forced into a

5. Silberman, Charles E., Crisis in the Classroom, New York: Random House, 1971, p. 213.
6. Report of the Consultive Committee on Infant and Nursery Schools, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1934.

new relationship with their students, they began to see them in a different light. Learning clearly was something that went on all the time, not just during school hours, hence the teachers were persuaded that it is fruitless to try to segment and compartmentalize children or learning.

While the change in primary education grew out of the pragmatic responses of a great many teachers, it is backed by a substantial body of theory about the nature of children and the ways in which they grow and learn, as well as about the nature of knowledge, the processes of instruction, and the aims of education. As we have already shown in earlier chapters, the intuitive responses of the English teachers have strong theoretical support in the writings and work of Rousseau, Froebel, Montessori, Dewey, Bruner and, most importantly, Jean Piaget.

Two of the leading expondents in North America of the British Informal Schools are Lillian Weber and Charles E. Silberman.

Professor Weber is presently Associate Professor of Early Childhood at the City College of the University of New York. She has noted her observations and analysis of informal schools in her recent book, The English Infant School and Informal Education. She is presently actively encouraging the adaptation of English informal methods in large urban schools in America. Her Open Door or Open Corridor projects, now established in more than ten public schools in New York City, have been highly praised by the Chancellor Schools, Harvey B. Scribner, and New York State Commissioner of Education, Ewald B. Nyquist.[7]

7. Weber, Lillian, The English Infant School and Informal Education, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1971

Charles E. Silberman, the former Director of the Carnegie Study of the Education of Educators and the author of the influential work, Crisis in the Classroom,[8] has devoted a large part of his book to a description and analysis of English Informal Schools while advocating the adoption of their methods in American School Systems.

Both Silberman and Weber spent considerable time in Britain observing Informal Schools in action and the following description of these schools is the result of their observations.

Silberman notes, to begin with, that the English informal classroom does not look like a classroom. Not even the most informal American kindergartens have the incredible richness and variety of materials found in the average informal English infant or junior school classroom. The reading corner, for example, typically is an inviting place, with a rug or piece of old carpet on which children may sprawl, a couple of easy chairs or perhaps a cot or old couch for additional comfort, and a large and tempting display of books at child's height. The arithmetic (or "maths," as the English call it) area most likely will have several tables pushed together to form a large working space. On the tables, in addition to a variety of math texts and workbooks, will be a box containing rulers, measuring tapes and sticks, yardsticks, string, and the like; other boxes, containing pebbles, shells, stones, rocks, acorns, conkers (the acorn of a chestnut tree), bottle tops, pine cones, and anything else that can be used for counting, along with more formal arithmetical and mathematical materials, such as Cruisenaire rods, Dienes blocks, Stern rods, and Unifisc cubes. There will be several balance

8. Silberman, Op.Cit.

scales, too, with boxes of weights, as well as more pebbles, stones, rocks, feathers, and anything else that can be used for weighing.

Near the maths area in an infant school room, and frequently in the lower grades of a junior school, there is likely to be a large table-height sandbox and a specially constructed table, at about the same height, for water play. The water table comes "equipped" with an assortment of empty milk cartons and bottles, plastic detergent bottles, pitchers, plastic containers, and the like, all with their volume (1/3 pint, 1/2 pint, quart, gallon) marked on them, for practice in maths. There may also be an oven; following a recipe for muffins or cookies provides still another application of simple mathematical notions, along with practice in reading.

Nearby will be a table, or perhaps several cartons on the floor, some with blocks, tinkertoys, and the like, some containing "junk" (so marked), i.e. empty cereal and soap boxes, egg cartons, toilet paper and paper towel rollers, cardboard, pieces of wood, scraps of wallpaper and fabric, oaktag, cigar boxes - anything children might use for constructing things (airplanes, trucks, cars, steamrollers, robots, spaceships, houses, office buildings, bridges) or for making collages or murals. Somewhere in the room, or perhaps in the hall outside, there will be some large easels with jars of paints and large brushes. In one corner, or perhaps in a converted closet, a child-size play house, furnished with dolls, furniture, dishes, kitchenware, and a pile of castoff adult clothing for children to dress up in.[9]

There is typically, a music area with xylophones, drums, cymbals, castanets, recorders, and other (sometimes homemade) instruments. Somewhere or other, too, there is a science area, with rocks and shells,

9. Ibid., p. 223.

leaves and other local flora, candles and jars, perhaps some small motors, batteries, bulbs, and wire, and in all probability, an animal or two or three, be it rabbit, turtle, hamster, or kitten. And this in classrooms which more often than not contain as many as forty children.

They find the room in good measure by replacing the desks and chairs with a smaller number of tables and chairs. There is no need to have a seat and desk for each child: the teacher seldom instructs the class as a whole, and when she does, the children simply gather around her or him, pulling up chairs or sitting on the floor. But teachers also create space for the various interest areas and activities by using closets, cloakrooms, indeed, every conceivable nook and cranny, and by spilling over into the halls, lobbies, playgrounds, and other common space.

The initial impression of a visitor to an informal classroom is that the children are all in motion. At any one moment, some children may be hammering and sawing at a workbench, some may be playing musical instruments or painting, others may be reading aloud to the teacher or to a friend, still others may be curled up on a cot or piece of carpet reading in solitary absorption, oblivious to the sounds around them.

Elsewhere in the room, moreover, there are likely to be children seated at a table or sprawled on the floor, writing a story. Other children are in the maths area, counting or weighing acorns, bottle caps, pebbles, cones, shells, and what have you, or measuring the perimeter of the room, or the teacher's desk, or the length of a visitor's shoes, or one another's height, and writing it all down; others are measuring the ingredients of a cookie recipe, getting them ready for the oven. There are

children playing in the sandbox, and others at the water table, filling the various-sized containers and enjoying the feel of the water, and there are children acting out various roles as they play at being grown-ups. And always there is the sound of children talking - to themselves, to their friends, to the teacher, to the headmistress or master, as she or he walks around, to the visitors from America, in sharp contrast to the United States (or to formal classrooms in England), where children and visitors usually are carefully segregated from each other.

The sound and movement are not limited to the classroom itself. There is a continuous ebb and flow of children into and out of the room - into the halls and corridors, the stairs, the cloakrooms, the library, the halls, the head's office, other classrooms, the lobby or entrance hall and out of doors, as well; into the playground, if it is a city school, and perhaps into the surrounding fields, if it is a rural school.[10]

In view of all the sound and motion, the first impression of an informal classroom may be one of chaos. In most schools, it is a false impression. "You always have to assess the nature of the noise," the headmistress of the first school Silberman visited helpfully explained. "Is it just aimless chatter, or does it reflect purposeful activity?" And as the visitor becomes acclimitized, it becomes clear that the activity usually is purposeful; it does not take very long to be able to assess the nature of the noise, and to distinguish classes where the children's play is leading to learning from those where it is pleasant but aimless.[11]

10. Ibid., p. 224.
11. Ibid., p. 225.

The visitor begins to see that the teacher is very much there and very much in charge. She seems always to be in motion, and always to be in contact with the children - talking, listening, watching, comforting, chiding, suggesting, encouraging - although from time to time she stops for a minute to jot down a comment in the record book she keeps for each child.

Silberman observed:

> An infant school in London. The classroom is buzzing with activity and conversation. As unobtrusively as possible, the visitor follows the teacher around, recording her conversation as she moves from cluster to cluster and from child to child. What initially appears to be casual chitchat turns out to be purposeful, if informal, teaching. As she talks to the children at the water table, absorbed with the feel of water on their hands, with pouring water from one container to another, with dropping objects in the water to see them splash, or to see whether they sink or float, the teacher casually injects words and concepts such as "sink," "float," "heavy," "light," "full," "empty," "bigger," "smaller," "taller," "shorter," and the like. With the children who are painting and sculpting, the teacher discusses subtleties of color, shade, texture, and design. With the children at the junk box - one is making a tractor out of an empty cornflakes box, two paper towel rollers, and a smaller box; another is building a steamship, with large detergent box serving as the hull and two empty cans of Heinz vegetable soup as the smokestacks - a discussion ensues about where tractors and ships are used, how they are propelled, what kinds of people use them or travel on them.and so it goes.[12]

One becomes aware, too, of the sense of structure. For all the freedom the children enjoy, for all the ease and informality, for all the child-centeredness, there is no ambivalence about authority and no confusion

12. Ibid., p. 226.

about roles. "Children like to know where they stand and what to expect," the Plowden Committee remarks. "They must depend upon adults for their moral standards and for guidance on what behavior is tolerable in society; an adult who withholds such guidance is in fact making a decision which involves as heavy a claim for his own judgment as is made by the martinet. There may be occasions, as the children grow older, when such guidance ought to be withheld so that children can think out problems for themselves," the Committee adds, "but this only underlines the fact that the teacher has a crucial role to play at every point in the 'free' school."[13]

And yet control is rarely harsh or punitive. An American visitor is struck, for example, by the atmosphere of civility that prevails; teachers are as polite to the children as they are to the visitors, in contrast to Canada or the United States, where it is the exception to hear a teacher say "please" or "thank you" to a student. Because control is exercised easily, moreover, teachers and heads in informal schools use their normal speaking voice when talking to the children, in contrast to formal teachers, who tend to adopt a special "teacher's voice" when addressing a class or an individual child.

Professor Weber observed the children in a London infant school dispersing after the morning prayer session, chattering to each other as they walk away, arm in arm. The headmistress, a gentle and maternal woman, suddenly remembers something and calls out. "Oh children, I've forgotten to tell you, would you please tell your Mums...." The children immediately stop talking and walking and stand there, listening attentively. Reporting

13. Ibid., p. 227.

the incident Professor Weber adds, "It is hard for me to imagine in a parallel United States situation, so easily regaining the children's attention in midstream."[14]

Silberman states that what impresses an observer the most is the combination of great joy and spontaneity and activity with equally great self-control and order. The joyfulness is pervasive: in almost every classroom visited, virtually every child appeared happy and engaged. One simply does not see bored or restless or unhappy youngsters, or youngsters with the glazed look so common in American or Canadian schools.

The joy is matched by an equally impressive self-discipline and relaxed self-confidence. There seem not to be any disruptive youngsters or even restless youngsters in informal classrooms - indeed, few of the behavior problems with which North American teachers are almost always coping.[15]

Silberman noted in every formal classroom that he went to visit in England, children were restless were whispering to one another when the teacher was not looking, were ignoring the lesson or baiting the teacher or annoying other children - in short, behaving just like North American youngsters. The formal classroom thus seems to produce its own discipline problems. It produces them by the unnatural insistence that children sit silently and motionless, by the unreasonable expectation that they will all be interested in the same thing at the same moment and for the same length of time, by the lack of trust the plethora of rules implies, which produces the misbehavior that is expected. It is not the children who are disruptive, it is the formal classroom that is disruptive - of childhood itself.

14. Weber, Op.Cit., p. 112.
15. Silberman, Op. Cit., p. 228.

Because informal schooling, as the Plowden Committee puts it, is "ideally suited to the needs and nature of young children and to their development as human beings," maintaining discipline is no longer a problem. The self-fulfilling prophecy works both ways: the expectation that children will behave properly produces the expected behavior; given courteous treatment, the children respond in kind.[16]

The children develop a capacity for self-control and self-direction that one rarely finds in children educated in formal schools. In most informal schools, for example, every teacher leaves the classroom at about 10:30 to go to the teacher's lounge, if there is one, or else to the head's office, for a fifteen-minute coffee or tea break. In some schools, the children go out into the playground for a break of their own at this time, with just a single teacher or teacher aide stationed there in case a child might be injured or some other emergency arise. In other schools, the children remain in their classrooms, completely unsupervised. (Even the student teachers and teacher aides, if the school has them, leave for the coffee break.) In formal classrooms, a teacher's absence is usually the signal for spitballs, loud talking, running about the room, and the like. In informal classrooms, the children simply "carry on," in the English, not the North American, sense of the term.

This self-control and autonomy are evident throughout the day.

Silverman observed a junior school in Leicestershire County, serving a working-class and lower-middle-class neighborhood:

16. Ibid., p. 229.

> A class of eight- and nine-year-olds, a happy, buzzing group, are returning to their room from physical education. A visitor engages the teacher in conversation as the children are putting their shoes and socks and clothes back on. (In infant and junior schools, boys and girls quite unselfconsciously strip down to their underwear for phys. ed.) The conversation continues for a while. Suddenly the visitor becomes aware that all thirty-eight children are busily at work: some are reading, some are writing essays and poems, some are filling in answers in workbooks; one cluster of youngsters are measuring one another's height and constructing graphs of the results; several others are in the science corner, performing an experiment.[17]

This ability of children to function on their own and largely organize their own activities and society was noted years ago by Colin Ward in his paper entitled Adventure Playground: A Parable of Anarchy.[18] In this article Ward described a number of playgrounds in different countries where children were provided with basic simple tools, equipment and materials and permitted freedom to organize their own activities. After initial periods of chaos and vandalism, the children soon recognize that it was to their own advantage to organize their activities in a spirit of cooperation and mutual tolerance. The playground experiments prove to be a reaffirmation of the anarchist thesis of the essential unity between tactics and goals.

Silberman noted that the children's self-discipline and self-direction was accompanied by a relaxed and easy self-confidence. He states that everywhere he went the children were open and friendly without being brash. In a formal school, youngsters feel compelled to ignore a visitor, even when they know him; a few bold ones may smile shyly or

17. Ibid., p. 235.
18. Ward, Colin, Adventure Playground: A Parable of Anarchy, printed in Leonard I. Krimerman and Lewis Perry, eds., Patterns in Anarchy, New York: Doubleday, 1966, p. 397.

venture a half-wave of the hand; most, if they feel free to acknowledge the visitor's presence at all, will do so with no more than a flicker of recognition in their eyes. None will talk to the visitor, and the visitor will feel constrained to keep silent, too.

In the informal English schools, by contrast, there was no room in which children did not come over to chat, to show the visitor a picture or a story, to ask quite unselfconsciously if he would like to hear them read or to see something they had made, or to inquire where he came from and how he had traveled.

The contact is not only social; every adult in sight, as well as every bit of "stuff," is pressed into service as part of the learning environment. Without exception in informal classrooms, one child would come over to ask how to spell a word he needed in a story he was writing, another to ask for advice in a science experiment he was conducting, another to help in some contraption he was putting together, another to check an answer to maths.

Children feel free to use adults in this way in good measure because their teachers and heads encourage them to do so; they, too regard anyone in sight as a potential source of learning.[19]

Central to the informal English primary schools, then, is a view of childhood as something precious in its own right, something to be cherished for itself and not merely as preparation for later life: there is a quality of caring, a concern for children qua children, that tends to be missing in American or Canadian schools. It is not that North Americans like children less - certainly we indulge them more - but

19. Silberman, Op. Cit., p. 236.

rather that we tend to see childhood as a corridor through which children should pass as rapidly as possible on the way to adulthood. Hence our schools are designed not to let children be children, but to speed them on the way to adult life.

CHAPTER EIGHT EVALUATION IN THE INFORMAL SCHOOL

How do children get any work accomplished if they do nothing but play all day? The answer lies in the realisation that play is a child's work; the distinction between work and play, so central to formal schooling, is not one that children make until adults force it upon them. On the contrary, play is one of the principal ways young children learn. In the words of the Plowden Report, "it is the way through which children reconcile their inner lives with external reality". In play, children gradually develop concepts of casual relationships, the power to discriminate, to make judgements, to analyze and synthesize, to imagine and to formulate. Children become absorbed in their play, and the satisfaction of bringing it to a satisfactory conclusion fixes habits of concentration which can be transferred to other learning."[1]

It is a mistake, however, to assume children can learn through play alone, without any assistance of "teaching" by adults. In a sense, teachers in formal classrooms do consciously and deliberately what parents do unconsciously and more or less instinctively. The teacher's job like the parent's, is to help children make the progression from purely random activity - messing around with blocks, paints, water, or sand, or imaginative or imitative play - to more structured and purposeful activity, and then to mastery through application. To do this, the

1. Ibid., p. 237.

teacher must know when to intervene and when to let the child alone; which is to say, she must always be aware and prepared - aware not only of what each child is doing but of what he is capable of doing, and ready to use whatever teaching-learning opportunity presents itself. The opportunity grows out of the child's interests and activity; the learning stems from the teacher's responses to that activity. The educator's task is to maximize the occasion.

The teacher does not just maximize the occasion; he or she makes the occasion; he or she makes the occasion possible in the first place by the kind of environment he creates and maintains. The order in the informal classroom grows out of the fact that the teacher creates a highly structured environment, organized around a space rather than a time framework, and then manages it so that it changes in response to children's interests, activities, and needs. In their practice, then, if not always in their rhetoric, most informal teachers and heads reject the romantic notion that children should simply be turned loose to do their own thing.

The child is part of the world, with its values, its past, and its present. One grows as a human being only by incorporating knowledge gained from others - teachers, parents, grandparents, friends, relatives - as well as that gained through one's own explorations.

Without such knowledge, moreover, the young are condemned to helplessness, forced to rediscover all knowledge for themselves. While "the sense of personal discovery influences the intensity of a child's experience, the vividness of his memory, and the probability of effective transfer of learning," the Plowden Committee observes, there is also a danger that if left too much to their own devices, children may discover

only the trivial, the inefficient, or the incorrect. Equally important, the Committee argues, "time does not allow children to find their way by discovery to all that they have to learn."[2]

However, it is this writer's contention, that it can make perfectly good sense to speak of personal discovery of that which we want the child to learn. In other words, though there clearly are skills and important facts that it is essential for the child to learn, we can construct an environment and a relationship with the child whereby he himself personally discovers what we want him to learn. This is an important point, for it answers the traditionalist's claim that we have to "teach" - in the old sense. We can get the children to learn without killing their curiosity and joy in learning. Discovery need not be random and inefficient.

Most informal teachers and heads reject the view that "one piece of learning is as good as any other." Their responsibility, as they see it, is to create an environment that will stimulate children's interest in and evoke their curiosity about all the things they should be interested in and curious about: reading, writing, talking, counting, weighing, measuring; art, music, dance, sculpture; the beauty and wonder of the world about them; relationships with adults and with other children; and above all, the process of learning itself. The object of teaching should be, not so much to convey knowledge as it is to excite a determination in the child to acquire it for himself, and to teach him how to go about acquiring it.

The teacher's job is to develop attitudes and values as well

2. Ibid., p. 239.

as skill - to make music, art, poetry, beauty, experiences that children will enjoy throughout their lives.

The way in which children learn to read and write in informal schools reflects these broad interests and concerns. The process begins with the conviction that since children have no inborn impulse to read, school must create an environment that will evoke it, that will make them want to read and write. It should be noted that though it is true that children do not have an inborn impulse to read, it is also true that in our society children realize that reading is an important thing that adults do. Thus they already have an interest in wanting to read. In a sense to most children in our society, it is natural to want to know how to read. The school does not necessarily have to force the child to read. It merely has to encourage and cultivate an interest already there in most cases.

First, however, children must be comfortable with language. Hence they are encouraged to talk, to communicate with each other and the adults around them about the things that interest and engage them. The incredible richness and variety of stuff in the classroom and the great diversity of activities going on at once provide that encouragement.

In informal schools headmistresses play a particularly important role in encouraging and facilitating this free and easy conversation. English heads are regarded, and regard themselves, as head teachers, not administrators, and they seem to spend the bulk of their time in the classrooms, watching, listening, talking to the children, helping the teachers with a suggestion, taking a few children aside for some help, etc. It is a rare head, at least in informal schools, who does not

seem to know every child.[3]

If richness and subtlety of language is an objective, then the child's relatively limited experience must be extended and supplemented. The teachers do this in a variety of ways. They read to the children with great frequency, sometimes to small groups of children, sometimes to the class as a whole. Most infant school teachers, for example, seem to end the day, and many the morning as well, with a story. They take the children on trips - nature walks, trips to the train station, or to a historic church or castle, or to the city hall. This is a familiar enough practice to American and Canadian primary teachers, but the English seem to take trips with far greater frequency. More important, the trips are used as a springboard for every kind of classroom activity: conversation about the trip, making a drawing, painting, or sculpture about it, constructing something with "junk" or building something with blocks, and ultimately, when children have gained the skill, writing a story or poem about the trip.[4]

Once a child is comfortable with language, the next step in teaching him how to read is to get him writing - to get him writing something he wants to say. Art, a major activity, often provides the opening wedge. When a teacher thinks a child is ready to start writing, she may admire a picture he is drawing and ask him what he wants to call it, or whether he would like to write something about it. If the child responds affirmatively, she will write what he dictates in large letters under the picture, e.g., "Me and Mum," "My house," "I had a party," and the child will then copy the words (his words, remember) letter by letter, directly

3. Ibid., p. 241.
4. Ibid., p. 242.

under the teacher's writing. If the child lacks the coordination to copy, the teacher will help him trace over her letters. Later, the teacher will help him read back what he has written, to help him understand that these strange symbols communicate something he wants to say. The process continues, the rate depending on the child's interest and ability.

At some point, the child will begin writing in his notebook, putting down measurements he has made, describing something he has built with blocks or made with junk, describing a trip he has taken or a party he has gone to, or whatever happens to interest him. He may begin doing this on his own initiative or as a result of some gentle prodding from the teacher; or he may be trying to imitate one of the other more advanced children in his class.[5]

In informal education, formal instruction is not dispensed with entirely. While the approach varies from school to school, and even sometimes from classroom to classroom within a given school, most teachers and heads agree that children need some training and drill in phonics to be able to read the unfamiliar, though they tend to postpone such teaching longer and do less of it than most American or Canadian teachers would think desirable. The children accept such drill because, normally, it is provided after the children have explored through their own activities. In this manner it could be said to conform to Whitehead's cycle from the Romantic to the Precision stage.[6]

Whatever the method of instruction, most classrooms are suffused with a wide variety of reading matter. In many schools there are now no

5. Ibid., p. 243.
6. Whitehead, Alfred, The Aims of Education, Op. Cit.

longer class readers, supplementary readers, group readers, text books and library books. Now, by contrast, there are simply books - to be used as and when they are needed. One of the main uses is to read aloud - to the teacher, to the head, to other children, and to any visitor who will listen.

However, reading is not confined to books, by any means. As soon as children gain some competence, they are likely to be reading much of the time. Almost every object in the room is labeled. More important, reading and writing are integrated into virtually every classroom activity.

In the informal schools the children appear to be writing constantly. Writing is no longer a "subject" to be studied for thirty minutes a day; it is a form of communication that pervades the entire curriculum. At first, the teacher suggests that the child write about what he had just done, that he translate one form of communication into another. And so the notebooks are filled - with measurements a child has taken, the counting he has done, an account of a trip he has gone on, a castle he has built with sand or blocks, a game he has played, emotions he has felt, an experiment he has performed. The amount of writing the children do is staggering by American or Canadian standards.[7]

The emphasis on communication extends beyond reading, writing, and talking to painting, drawing, sculpting, dancing, crafts - to all the forms of nonverbal expression. The arts "are not 'frills' but essentials just as much as the 3 Rs," John Blackie writes in Inside the Primary School. "Everything that we know about human beings generally, and children in particular, points to the importance of the arts in

7. Silberman, Op.Cit., p. 249.

education. They are the language of a whole range of human experience and to neglect them is to neglect ourselves."[8]

The Plowden Commiteee was even more explicit. "Art is both a form of communication and a means of expression of feeling which ought to permeate the whole curriculum and life of the school," the Committee declared. "A society which neglects or despises it is dangerously sick. It affects, or should affect, all of everyday life to the highest forms of individual expression."[9]

The concern for beauty permeates the life of almost every informal school. There are displays of the children's art everywhere - the freest and most imaginative kinds of paintings, murals, collages, illustrated stories, etc.

The most striking example of education as "the cultivation of modes of expression" is an activity that has no counterpart in American or Canadian schools, except perhaps in some private or drama schools. It is something the English call "Movement." In its most fundamental sense, Movement is an attempt to educate children in the use of their bodies - to provide them with an ease, grace, and agility of bodily movement that can carry over into sports, crafts, and dance.

The procedure is a blend of formal and informal instruction. As a rule, an entire class participates under the teacher's direction; but precisely how the teacher's directions are carried out is left to each child. There is, after all, no right way or wrong way to move as if you were a snowflake, or a leaf fluttering down from a tree, which are the kinds of things children may be asked to do. The purpose, as the Plowden

8. Blackie, Op. Cit.
9. Silberman, Op.Cit., p. 252.

Committee explains it, is "to develop each child's resources as fully as possible through exploratory stages and actions which will not be the same for any two children. When these ends are pursued successfully," the Committee continues, "the children are able to bring much more to any situation than that which is specifically asked of them; the results transcend the limits of what can be prescribed or 'produced,' and lead to a greater realization of the high potential of young children."[10]

As one headmistress explained, "A child who has moved like a snowflake or a falling leaf is bound to write more sensitively. He knows how it feels to be a snowflake or a leaf." He also knows that sensitivity to feelings and awareness of beauty are neither effeminate nor effete. Silberman wonders what it might mean for the quality of American life if this kind of schooling were widespread in the United States. A Canadian observer might make the same conjecture in terms of Canadian life.

For many years critics of informal education in England and North America have charged that informality and joyousness are provided at the expense of learning the basic fundamentals in the primary grades and subject-matter in the later years. Parents worry whether their children's future academic or vocational success may be harmed by informal education. The question of evaluation of the informal schools, then, is a crucial one to advocates who wish to see the informal education of Britain emulated on a large scale on this side of the Atlantic.

John Goodlad has commented on the problem of evaluating a "seminal innovation" in education. Goodlad warns, "the researcher simply

10. Ibid., p. 254.

cannot go on with his stable research - his conventional criteria, his timeworn measures -and expect to contribute to the advancement of educational practice and science. By doing so, he endangers both." What the researcher must do, Goodlad argues, is "come to grips with the conceptual underpinnings of the innovation," for if it is truly radical, it will have objectives the conventional instruments of evaluation simply are not designed to measure.[11]

More than forty years ago, John Dewey spoke on this same point while addressing the Progressive Education Association.

> Even if it be true that everything which exists could be measured - if only we knew how. That which does not exist cannot be measured; and it is no paradox to say that the teacher is deeply concerned with what does not exist. For a progressive school is primarily concerned with growth, with a moving and changing process, with transforming existing capacities and experiences; what already exists by way of native endowment and past achievement is subordinate to what it may become. Possibilities, are more important than what already exists, and knowledge of the latter counts only in its bearing upon possibilities. 12

Relying on known methods of evaluation presents the obvious danger of discrediting all progress in newly developed aims of education. A fixed evaluative instrument tends to force schools to achieve well on the evaluation rather than to strive for broader more meaningful ends. This is, of course, similar to the argument against "external" examinations. However, it does seem legitimate to expect some evaluative testing in the area of such basic skills as reading and writing.

11. Goodlad, John, "Thought, Invention, and Research in the Advancement of Education," in Committee for Economic Development. The Schools and the Challenge of Innovation, Supplementary Paper no. 28, 1969.
12. Dewey, John, "Progressive Education and the Science of Education reprinted in Martin S. Dworkin, ed., Dewey on Education, New York: Teachers College Press (Classics in Education No. 3), 1959.

Evaluation must be made if critics of informal education are to be silenced or won over to the cause of increased informality and freedom in the schools. Fortunately, in England evaluations have been made which show that the basic academic fundamentals such as the ability to read and write have not suffered as a result of the widespread use of informal methods in the schools.

The most striking piece of evidence in support of the informal schools is the fact as the Plowden Committee puts it, that "despite the dismal reports that appear from time to time in the press, the standard of reading in the country as a whole has been going up steadily since the war." According to standardized reading tests administered periodically by the Department of Education and Science, in 1964 eleven-year-old children on average were reading at a level seventeen months above that of eleven-year-olds in 1948. This is equivalent to a gain of almost two years of schooling: in 1964, eleven-year-olds were reading almost at the level thirteen-year-olds had reached in 1948. Furthermore, the median, or level of competence reached by half of the children tested in 1948, was reached by three-quarters of the eleven-year-olds in the 1964 testing. And corresponding gains were made by fifteen-year-old children.[13]

This conclusion was confirmed by several studies which have compared the reading attainment of matched groups of students in formal and informal schools and found no significant difference between the two at either the infant or the junior school level. In summarizing one such study, Professor K. Lovell concludes that "Overall there is no evidence

13. Children and Their Primary Schools, Vol. I, p. 212, and Vol. II (Appendix 7), p. 260.

that these schools bring superior standards in reading," Professor Lovell continues, "they may well benefit their pupils in other ways."[14]

Two studies made by Dorothy E. M. Gardner during her years as a member and later head of the Child Development Department of the University of London Institute of Education suggest that informal schools do indeed benefit their students in other ways without harming their progress in reading. In her most recent study, covering the years 1951 to 1963, Miss Gardner and her associates compared children in matched pairs of formal and informal infant and junior schools, using five tests of achievement (free drawing, spoken and written English, reading, handwriting, arithmetic, and general information) and nine tests of attitude (among them, concentration, listening and remembering, neatness and care in work ingenuity, sociability, moral judgement). Since the informal education was just beginning to spread in 1951, when the study began, Miss Gardner limited her sample of informal schools to those that followed informal methods for only part of the day - anywhere from a single "free hour" to half the day "free"; she excluded schools which followed an entirely "free day" program.

The results clearly favor the informal school, although it must be confessed that Miss Gardner does not provide enough information about her methods to enable a reader to draw his own conclusions about the adequacy of the controls. With tests administered at the end of junior school, for example, the informal schools showed clear superiority in six

14. Lovell, K, Informal versus Formal Education and Reading Attainments in the Junior School, London: National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales, 1963, cf. also Morris, Joyce M., Standards and Progress in Reading, New York University Press and National Foundation for Education Research in England and Wales, 1966.

of the fourteen categories that were evaluated: spoken and written English, drawing and painting, "listening and remembering," "neatness, care and skill," "ingenuity," and the breadth and depth of children's out-of-school interests. The informal schools showed some superiority, though of a less striking sort, in children's reading ability, their ability to concentrate on an uninteresting task, their moral judgment, general information, handwriting, and ability to work with other children.[15]

In the two groups in the Gardner study some of the most intriguing differences showed up not in the test results themselves but in what the testers had to report about the way children went about taking the tests. A test measuring children's ability to concentrate on a task of their own choice, for example, showed no significant difference in results. But children in the informal schools picked a task "much more quickly" than did youngsters in the formal schools. More of the "informal" children chose tasks involving working together with others, and many would stop their own task to help other children, e.g., "Kenneth stopped work to mix paint for Edward; on seeing the tester look at him he said, "I'm not changing you know - just doing this for him." The children in the informal schools also volunteered with great frequency to help the tester arrange the materials and clean up afterward. And more than twice as many children in the informal schools picked reading as the task on which to be tested. These kinds of differences showed up in a great many tests; in general, children from informal schools were more relaxed, showed less anxiety and more initiative, independence, and

15. Gardner, D.E.M., Experiment and Tradition in Primary Schools, London: 1966. c.f. also Gardner, D.E.M., Testing Results in the Infant Schools, 1942.

self-confidence, and had an easier relationship with their peers and with the testers.[16]

Silberman believes that, though these studies have a great many conceptual and methodalogical defects, it does appear that reducing the amount of authoritarian control over students does not necessarily result in a drastic impairment of academic skills even though these skills were measured in the traditional manner and do not take into consideration new ways of evaluation and new aims.

As Silberman notes:

> It would be satisfying, of course, to be able to point to statistical data showing clear superiority for informal schooling. The fact that such data is not at hand in no way suggests that differences in educational strategy are unimportant, only that we look in the wrong place to find their effects. As the National Foundation for Educational Research suggests in its report to the Plowden Committee, the consequences of different modes of schooling should be sought less in academic attainment than in their impact on how children feel about themselves, about school, and about learning. For three hundred years or more, schools have been denounced for their capacity to destroy children's spontaneity, curiosity, and love of learning, and for their tendency to mutilate child hood itself. To create and operate schools that cultivate and nurture all these qualities without reducing children's academic attainment - this is a magnificent achievement. 17

16. Silberman, Op. Cit., P. 261.
17. Ibid., P. 264.

CHAPTER NINE INFORMAL EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA

The question remains; could the English informal school methods be transported to the North American context and achieve the success it has in Britain. On first glance, one's initial reaction is that it appears to require teaching genius or at least above average teaching ability. From discriptions of the informal school, it appears as though their teachers possess extraordinary skill, sensitivity and energy. If the English primary teachers are a superior breed then the informal approach would not likely work in North America.

This, however, is not the case; informal education can work as well in North America as in England. This assertion is based on experience. The informal methods are already in use in a number of American schools as diverse as those of New York's Harlem and the small cities, towns, and hamlets of North Dakota; of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Tucson, Arizona; Washington, D.C. and Cambridge, Massachusetts; Paterson, New Jersey, San Antonio, Texas, and Johnson County, North Carolina. In some of these, eg., North Dakota, Washington and New York, the programs now in operation represent conscious adaptions and modifications of the English experience; in others, they are indigenous developments. In all, they appear to be working well.[1]

Informal methods do not depend on extraordinary talent or

1. Ibid., p. 266.

genius on the part of the teacher; teachers of every sort - ordinary, garden-variety teachers, not only superior ones - are able to function well in informal classrooms. As Lillian Weber suggests "perhaps it is in our isolated and encapsulated formal classrooms that only genius can succeed". English primary teachers are not a superior breed; on the contrary, they come from much the same kinds of backgrounds as do American teachers. Some 40 percent of English female primary school teachers, for example, have fathers who are blue-collar workers, and more than half come from lower-middle-class backgrounds; as in the United States and Canada, teaching is an important avenue of social mobility, and has been for a long time.[2]

English primary school teachers tend to be younger and less experienced than their American counterparts, for teacher turnover, especially in infant schools, is extraordinarily high. A survey made for the Plowden Committee, for example, indicated that two-thirds of the women who had taught in infant schools during a period of two years and nine months were no longer in those schools at the end of the period. This is a turnover rate of nearly 25 percent a year, more than double the American rate. Not all of those who left their posts left teaching altogether, of course; there appears to be more movement from school to school in England than in the United States. But many did leave teaching; the annual attrition rate is roughly twice that of the United States, where some 8 percent of classroom teachers leave the profession each year. (In

2. Floud, Jean and Scott, W., "Recruitment to Teaching in England and Wales," in Halsey, A.H.; Floud, Jean; and Anderson, Arnold C., Education, Economy and Society, New York: Free Press Paperback, 1965.

the United States, roughly half of those who leave teaching return at some later date, e.g., when their own children have reached school age.) Taking everything together, therefore, the success of informal schooling cannot be attributed to extraordinary talent or experience on the part of English teachers.[3]

Informal teaching, however, does make a number of demands on teachers that the conventional classroom does not. It requires much more alertness. To be able to "maximize the occasion," a teacher must always be "at the ready" - aware not only of what each child is doing at any moment, but of what stage of development the child is in. Since anything and everything a child may do can provide the occasion to be maximized, teachers are always teaching; the intellectual and emotional demands seem relentless and unending. And teachers need to be informed about many more things; the curriculum is not limited to the teacher's lesson plan, but is as broad and unpredictable as the children's interests.

However, teachers who have tried both approaches insist that informal teaching is no more difficult than formal teaching and is much more rewarding. First, informal education relieves the teacher of the terrible burden of omniscience. In an informal classroom, the teacher is the facilitator rather than the source of learning, the source being the child himself. Learning is something the child makes happen to and for himself, albeit with the teacher's aid, and sometimes at her instigation. The consequence is an atmosphere in which teachers are therefore, more comfortable with children.

3. Silberman, Op. Cit., p. 267.

Secondly, informal education also relieves the teacher of the obligation to try to teach the entire range of abilities at one time, a task that is exhausting as it is futile.

Thirdly, and perhaps most important, the informal classroom relieves the teacher of the necessity of being the timekeeper, traffic cop, and disciplinarian. In the informal classroom the children are not required to sit still and be silent. The release of the teacher's energy is incalculable; he is free to devote all his time and energy to teaching itself.

In C. E. Silberman's experience, most teachers who have attempted informal methods respond affirmatively and insist they could never go back to formal teaching. Since they do not have to expend most of their time and energy maintaining order and control, teachers can concentrate on reaching children individually, on really getting to know each child as an individual and getting the kinds of responses from children that provide the teachers main reward.

It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the informal approach can simply be transplanted to the North American context exactly as it functions in Britain. Educational systems always are, and by nature must be native plants. All schools reflect the views of society about the way children should be brought up, the purposes of education and relation between school and society. Therefore, it would be necessary before adopting informal school methods to consider the relevant cultural and institutional differences between England and the United States or Canada.

One of the most interesting informal school programs, and one

of particular interest to Canadians because of its geographical proximity, is the one being conducted in North Dakota where elementary schools are gradually being remodeled along informal lines. The driving force of this movement is provided by the University of North Dakota's newly created New School for Behavioral Studies in Education.

A study in 1965 turned up the fact that North Dakota ranked fifieth among the states in the professional preparation of its elementary school teachers. The state ranked fifieth also in the overall opportunities it provided for elementary schooling. Drastic changes were in order if the elementary school situation was to be improved. One of the members of the study group in 1965 happened to read Joseph Featherstone's 1967 New Republic articles on the revolution in English primary schools, and also happened to see the relevance of the English informal approach to both North Dakota's needs and the constraints under which its schools operate.[4]

As a result, North Dakota adopted a far-reaching program to convert formal elementary classrooms into informal ones, in which individualized learning replaces most large group instruction, the teacher's role changing from "chalk and talk" teaching to that of "observing, stimulating, and assisting children in their learning." The axis on which the program turns is a completely new program of teacher education and re-education developed by the University of North Dakota's New School of Behavioral Studies in Education, which was established in the spring of

4. Featherstone, Joseph, "Schools for Children: What's Happening in British Classrooms." The New Republic, August 19, 1967; "How Children Learn." The New Republic, September 2, 1967; "Teaching Children to Think," THE NEW REPUBLIC, September 9, 1967.

1968. The University already had a conventional school of education; it was felt, however, that the kinds of sweeping changes that were envisaged could be more readily accomplished by creating a new institution to prepare teachers for informal teaching. The school was designed to become a model of the kind of educational environment it was promoting. It was felt that in order to become informal teachers, students themselves should experience informal and individualized instruction.[5]

The New School enrolls regular University of North Dakota undergraduates in their junior year, in a three-year program leading to a master's degree; the school also enrol s experienced teachers, who return to the Grand Forks campus for a year of more of study leading to a bachelor's degree. While they are at the university, the teacher's places are taken by the New School's master's degree candidates, who spend September to June of the master's year teaching, under close supervision from the New School faculty. Participation in the program is voluntary on the part of the teachers, who commit themselves to return to their schools for a minimum of one year, as well as on the part of their supervisors and school boards. In 1968-69, the first year of operation, fourteen school districts participated. The number more than doubled at the beginning of the 1969-70 school year, and the inclusion of Grand Forks meant that the state's three largest cities - Fargo, Grand Forks and Minot - are all participating. The program appears to be remarkably successful and consequently is winning support throughout the state. As far as the children are concerned it is too soon to measure how informal education has effected their ability in the basic academic

5. Silberman, Op.Cit., p. 288.

requirements such as reading, writing and mathematics. What is obvious, however, is that the children seem visibly happy and engaged. They express as much enthusiasm for the new approach as the teachers.[6]

From a Canadian point of view, one could not hope for a much closer vantage point from which to view informal methods in action. Surely the apparent success of the North Dakota experiment could be emulated in Canadian schools. The cultural differences between Canada or parts of Canada, at least, and North Dakota are certainly so minute in this context as to be almost negligable. If the desire for major changes in the educational system is a fact, then certainly the North Dakota experiment could be a viable alternative in Canada.

Earlier, in the first chapter, we noted how modern society appears to be losing its center of values. The old beliefs, values and traditions which buttressed human behaviour in the past are rapidly diminishing. No tradition or set of beliefs now tells modern man what he ought to do or how he ought to live. He lives increasingly in what has been referred to as "an existential vacuum".

We then asked the question. Would it be possible to establish and "authentic society" in which citizens are summoned to stand by themselves, for themselves, in shaping the direction of their lives and therefore the meaning of their existence? In order to establish such a society, we concluded that it would be necessary to establish what might be called an "existentialist education".

The Gardner study in England described earlier indicated that children from informal schools were more relaxed, showed less anxiety

6. Ibid., p. 289.

and more initiative, independence and self-confidence. Surely these are the exact qualities which must be nurtured in an existentialist education designed to develop individuals who will have to cope with life in an "existential vacuum". As stated earlier, contrary to what some existentialist educators, including Van Cleve Morris, believe, it is this writer's contention that the crucial years in an existentialist education would not be the years of adolescence but rather the elementary school years. As noted previously the vast majority of modern child psychologists stress the importance of the early childhood years in the development of fundamental attitudes and personality traits. The adolescent or secondary school years, certainly should not be ignored in an existentialist education, but the main concern of existentialist educators should be the pre-adolescent, elementary school years. The remaking of the secondary schools could, perhaps, be more gradually phased in as informal elementary schools become more widely established.

Van Cleve Morris offered the free school along the lines of Summerhill as the model for an existentialist education. It might be argued that such a free school is the paradigm for a truly existentialist school. We have, however, noted earlier the basic failing of most such free schools in the area of teaching the basic academic fundamentals such as reading and writing. It appears, also, that the general public is not prepared to accept such a radical change and movement towards freedom and liberalism as the free schools represent.

If schools are to move on a wide scale toward a more free, existentialist education, then they must convince the public that the basic fundamentals of education will not be neglected in the process. The English informal schools have shown that this ideal can be achieved.

The adoption of English informal school methods in the public schools of the United States and Canada would be a large step in the direction of a more existentialist education. If existentialists feel more freedom is necessary, it would appear that the basic structure of the informal school is flexible enough to adapt to changes in this direction as the informal approach is perfected.

CHAPTER TEN: HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

The two comprehensive theories of human nature most influencing psychology until recently have been the Freudian and the experimental - positivistic - behavioristic. All other theories were less comprehensive and their adherents formed many splinter groups. In the last few years, however, these various groups have rapidly been coalescing into a third, increasingly comprehensive theory of human nature, into what has been called a Third Force or Humanistic Psychology.

This group includes the Adlereans, Rankians, and Jungians, as well as all the Neo-Freudians and the Post-Freudians or psychoanalytic ego - psychologists. The influence of Kurt Goldstein and his organismic - psychology has been a factor, as has that of the Gestalt and Lewinian psychologists and of such personality psychologists as Gordon Allport and others. Self psychologists, phenomenological psychologists, growth psychologists and the Rogerian psychologists have also been major contributors to the growth of this new movement.

The literature of this new movement is large and rapidly growing. More important, this new force in psychology is beginning to be used more and more, particularly in the fields of education, industry, religion and management.

Perhaps the best known and most influential advocate of this new Third Force or Humanistic Psychology has been the American psychotherapist, Abraham Maslow.

Maslow believes this humanist trend in psychology is a revolution in the sense in which Galileo, Darwin, Freud and Marx made revolutions; in that it has brought about new ways of perceiving and thinking, new images of man and of society, new conceptions of ethics and of values, new directions in which to move.

To Maslow, Humanistic psychology is one facet of a general Weltanschauung, a new philosophy of life, a new conception of man and a new area of research which will prove fruitful in providing rich meaning to the lives of men in the future.

As Maslow states:

> This psychology is not purely descriptive or academic: it suggests action and implies consequences. It helps to generate a way of life, not only for the person himself within his own private psyche, but also for the same person as a social being, a member of society. As a matter of fact, it helps us to realize how interrelated these two aspects of life really are. Ultimately, the best "helper" is the "good person". So often the sick or inadequate person, trying to help, does harm instead.
>
> These new developments may very well offer a tangible, usable, effective satisfaction of the "frustrated idealism" of many quietly desperate people, especially young people. These psychologies give promise of developing into the life-philosophy, the religion-surrogate, the value-system, the life-program that these people have been missing. Without the transcendent and the transpersonal, we get sick, violent, and nihilistic, or else hopeless and apathetic. We need something "bigger than we are" to be awed by, to commit ourselves to in a new, naturalistic, empirical, non-churchly sense, perhaps as Thoreau and Whitman, William James and John Dewey did.

> I believe that another task which needs doing before we can have a good world is the development of a humanistic and transpersonal psychology of evil, one written out of compassion and love for human nature rather than out of disgust with it or out of hopelessness! 1

In these next chapters we shall examine briefly the main tenets of this new Humanistic psychology, particularly as revealed in the work of Abraham Maslow. No attempt will be made to make a comprehensive analysis of all the implications of this new movement, but rather an attempt will be made to examine the implications which this view of man may have for education and more particularly for informal education and the existentialist educational ideals described here earlier.

Since we have been concerned, heretofore, mainly with the implications which existentialism may have for education, perhaps, it would be appropriate to begin with a brief explanation of what Maslow believes psychology can learn from the existentialists.

Maslow contends that European existentialist philosophers and American psychologists have independently been coming to the same conclusions and have all been responding to something real outside themselves. As was pointed out in the first chapter, he believes this something real to be the total collapse of all sources of values outside the individual. As a result, people have no place else to turn but inward, to the self as the locus of values. He feels that even some of the religious existentialists support this conclusion to some extent.

[1] Maslow, Abraham, Toward a Psychology of Being, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1968. P. IV

> It is extremely important for psychologists that the existentialists may supply psychology with the underlying philosphy which it now lacks. Logical positivism has been a failure, especially for clinical and personality psychologists. At any rate, the basic philosophical problems will surely be opened up for discussion again and perhaps psychologists will stop relying on pseudosolutions or on unconscious, unexamined philosophies they picked up as children.
>
> An alternative phrasing of the core (for us Americans) of European existentialism is that it deals radically with that human predicament presented by the gap between human aspirations and human limitations (between what the human being is, and what he would like to be, and what he could be). This is not so far off from the identity problem as it might sound at first. A person is both actuality and potentiality. 2

Maslow believes that a serious concern with this discrepancy could revolutionize psychology. To Maslow most philosophies and religions, Eastern as well as Western, have dichotomized the nature of man into a lower and a higher, creatureliness and a god-likeness. The existentialists, however, teach that both are simultaneously defining characteristics of human nature. Neither can be repudiated; they can only be integrated.

From the existentialists we have also learned the importance of stressing the concept of the "self-making of the self". Sartre and others speak of "the self as a project" which is wholly created by the continued and arbitrary choices of the individual himself, almost as if he could make himself into anything he decided to be. This does not necessarily mean that an individual's choices are totally unfounded or whimsical, but rather that they are not founded on any source or base external to the chooser. The individual is himself the final arbiter - even if he chooses to be guided, or allows him-

2. Ibid., P. 10.

self to be guided by standards formulated by some other person or institution.

Maslow does not accept the approach of some existentialist therapists who pay insufficient attention to the conditions that may affect an individual's choices. Nor does he agree with the Freudians, Rogerians and other personal growth psychologists who stress the discovering of the self and of uncovering therapy, while often understressing the factors of will and of decision. In this clash of views, Maslow tends to take the middle ground, believing that we discover and uncover ourselves and also that we can, to a significant extent, decide on what we shall be. [3]

He also believes the existentialist philosophers' emphasis on the "aloneness of man" can be of value to the psychologist.

> The existentialist stress on the ultimate aloneness of the individual is a useful reminder for us, not only to work out further the concepts of decision, or responsibility, of choice, of self-creation, of autonomy, of identity itself. It also makes more problematic and more fascinating the mystery of communication between alone-nesses via, e.g., intuition and empathy, love and altruism, identification with others, and homonomy in general. We take these for granted. It would be better if we regarded them as miracles to be explained. [4]

Maslow contends that the existentialists are helping to teach us about the limits of verbal, analytic, conceptual reality. He believes that existentialism is part of the current return to raw experience as prior to any concepts or abstractions. This amounts to a justified critique of the whole way of thinking of the western world in the

3. Ibid., P. 13.
4. Ibid., P. 14.

twentieth century, including orthodox, positivistic science and philosophy, both of which, he feels, badly need re-examination.

However, the most powerful stimulus which has affected Maslow in existentialist thinking has been the problem of future time in psychology. He does however acknowledge the influence of the writing of Charlotte Buhler, Gordon Allport, and Kurt Goldstein as having sensitized him to the necessity of grappling with and systematizing the dynamic role of the future in the presently existing personality.

> Growth and becoming and possibility necessarily point toward the future; so do the concepts of potentiality and hoping, and of wishing and imagining; reduction to the concrete is a loss of future; threat and apprehension point to the future (no future - no neurosis); self-actualization is meaningless without reference to a currently active future; life can be a gestalt in time.
>
> I think it fair to say that no theory of psychology will ever be complete which does not centrally incorporate the concept that man has his future within him, dynamically active at this present moment. In this sense the future can be treated as a - historical in Kurt Lewin's sense. Also we must realize that only the future is in principle unknown and unknowable, which means that all habits, defenses and coping mechanisms are doubtful and ambiguous since they are based on past experience. Only the flexibly creative person can really manage the future, only one who can face novelty with confidence and without fear. I am convinced that much of what we now call psychology is the study of tricks we use to avoid the anxiety of absolute novelty by making believe the future will be like the past. 5

Maslow believes it is possible that existentialism will not only enrich psychology but that it may also be an additional push toward the establishment of another branch of psychology, the psychology of the fully evolved and authentic self and its way of being.

5. Ibid., P. 15.

> Certainly it seems more and more clear that what we call "normal" in psychology is really a psychopathology of the average, so undramatic and so widely spread that we don't even notice it ordinarily. The existentialist's study of the authentic person and of authentic living helps to throw this general phoniness, this living by illusions and by fear into a harsh, clear light which reveals it clearly as sickness, even though widely shared. 6

It should be pointed out, however, that Maslow's work is not a total rejection of Freud or of empirical Behaviorism, but it is rather an attempt to assess what is useful, meaningful, and applicable to mankind in both psychologies and to go on from there. Maslow attempts to integrate these various truths into what is for him, the whole truth.

Maslow is highly critical of Freud's concentration on the study of neurotic and psychotic individuals, and of the assumption that all higher forms of behaviour were acquired and not natural to the human species.

It is Maslow's contention that one cannot understand mental illness until one understands mental health. He believed that Freud and others before him such as Hobbes and Schopenhauer reached their conclusions about human nature by observing the worst rather than the best of man. Positive aspects of human behaviour such as happiness, joy, contentment, peace of mind, satisfaction, fun, play, well being, elation, and ecstasy have been ignored by scientists, as have such positive qualities as kindness, generosity and friendship. Scientific emphasis has been placed on man's shortcomings and little or no consideration has been given to his strengths and potentials.

> If one is preoccupied with the insane, the neurotic, the psychopath, the criminal, the delinquent, the feeble-minded, one's hopes for the human species become perforce more and more modest,

6. Ibid., P. 16.

> more and more 'realistic', more and more scaled down, one expects less and less from people... it becomes more and more clear that the study of the crippled, stunted, immature, and unhealthy specimens can yield only a cripple psychology and a cripple philosophy. The study of self-actualizing people must be the basis for a more universal science of psychology. 7

This concept is one of the unique features of Maslow's theory. He has studied a number of persons whom he characterizes as "self-actualized". By this he means a person who is fully using and exploiting his talent, capacities, potentialities, etc. Such people seem to be fulfilling themselves and doing the best that they are capable of doing. The negative criterion was an absence of tendencies toward psychological problems, neurosis or psychosis. It is Maslow's contention that such persons are generally acknowledged as the best possible specimens of the human species, and rightfully so.

Both Freudians and Behaviourists, in emphasizing man's continuity with the animal world, tend to ignoreor reject the very characteristics which make the human species uniquely different from all other animals. If various animal species have instincts unique to their species, why is it not reasonable, Maslow asked, to assume that the human species also has unique characteristics.

> The use of animals guarantees in advance the neglect of just those capacities which are uniquely human, for example, martyrdom, self-sacrifice, shame, love, humor, art, beauty, conscience, guilt, patriotism, ideals, the production of poetry of philosophy or music or science. Animal psychology is necessary for learning about those human characteristics that man shares with all primates. It is useless in the study of those characteristics which man does not share with other animals, or in which he is vastly superior, such as latent learning. 8

7. Maslow, Abraham, Eupsychian Management, Illinois: Irwin-Dorsey,]965.
8. Maslow, Abraham, Motivation and Personality, New York; Van Nostrand, 1954.

The behavioral scientist has believed he must study man as an object to be observed but not questioned. Subjective information, man's opinions about himself and his own feelings, desires and wants, were to be ignored. Freud was so preoccupied with the unconscious determinants of human behaviour that he paid little or no attention to his patient's attempts to explain their reasons for behaving as they did: that is to say, he tended to reinterpret them to conform to his theory of the unconscious, rather than to take them seriously at their face value.

Maslow was convinced that we can learn a great deal more about human nature through a consideration of the subjective as well as the objective. In fact, in his experience, he found the subjective approach was frequently more productive and when it was ignored much of human behaviour became meaningless. To Maslow, human beings seem to be far more autonomous and self-governed than modern psychological theory allows for.

In his book, The Psychology of Science, Maslow expands and elaborates his original criticisms of physical science as a model for behavioural science. "This book", he said, "rejects the traditional but unexamined conviction that orthodox science is the path to knowledge or even that it is the only reliable path. I consider this conventional view to be philosophically, historically, psychologically, and sociologically naive." [9]

So far we have seen that Maslow proposed to introduce into psychology and psychiatry the study of mental health, rather than

9. Maslow, Abraham, The Psychology of Science, New York: Harper and Row, 1966.

mental illness. He felt that that one could learn a great deal about man and his potential from the exceptionally healthy, mature, self-actualized people-a segment of humanity which he termed the "growing up". He contends that a comprehensivetheory of behaviour must include the internal or intrinsic determinants of behaviour as well as extrinsic or external environmental determinants. Freud had concentrated on the first, the Behaviourists on the second. Both points of view needed to be combined along with anincorporationof the existentialist emphasis on the importance of free choice. An objective study of humanbehaviour is not enough; for complete understanding the subjective must be considered as well. We must consider people's feelings, desires, hopes and aspirations in order to understand their behaviour.

We shall now examine in some detail the more salient features of Maslow's psychology, beginning with his hierarchy of basic human needs.

"The human being is motivatedby a number of basic needs which are species wide, apparently unchanging, and genetic or instinctual in origin". This is a fundamental concept of Maslow's theoretical point of view. The needs are also psychological rather than purely physiological. These psychological needs are the true inner nature of the human species, but they are weak, easily distorted and overcome by incorrect learning, habit or tradition. "They are", states Maslow, "intrinsic aspects of human nature which culture cannot kill, but only repress."[10]

This obviously challenges the ancient and persistent belief held by many, that instincts are strong, unchangeable and evil. Maslow suggests the contrary: The needs are easily ignored or suppressed and are "not evil but either neutral or good."[11]

10. Maslow, Abraham, "Iso Morphic Interrelationships Between Knower and Known." Sign, Image, Symbol, New York, George Braziller Inc.,1965.
11. Maslow, Motivation and personality, Op. Cit., P. 112.

Maslow contends that a characteristic may be considered a basic need if it meets the following conditions:

1. Its absence breeds illness.
2. Its presence prevents illness.
3. Its restoration cures illness.
4. Under certain, very complex, free choice situations, it is preferred by the deprived person over other satisfaction.
5. It is found to be inactive, at a low ebb, or functionally absent in the healthy person. 12

The most basic, the most powerful, the most obvious of all man's needs are his needs for physical survival: his needs for food, liquid, shelter, sex, sleep, and oxygen. A person who is lacking food, self esteem,and love, will demand food first, and until this need is satisfied, will ignore or push all other needs into the background.

Maslow acknowledged that the Behaviourists are correct in identifying physiological needs as having powerful influences on man's behaviour, but only as long as they are unfulfilled. However, for many individuals in civilized society these lower needs are usually well satisfied. Once these basic needs have been satisfied then Maslow states, "At once other (and higher) needs emerge, and these rather than physiological hungers dominate the organism. And when these in turn are satisfied, again now (and still higher) needs emerge, and so on. This is what we mean by saying that the basic human needs are organized into a hierarchy of relative prepotency."[13] Maslow contends that through his life the human being is practically always desiring something, he is a wanting animal and "rarely reaches a state of complete satisfaction except for a short time. As one desire is satisfied, another pops up to take its place."[14]

Once the physiological needs are sufficiently satisfied, what Maslow describes as safety needs emerge. Since the safety needs are generally satisfied in the healthy, normal adult, they can be best understood by observing children or neurotic adults. Child

12 Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, Op. Cit., P. 22.
13. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, Op. Cit., P. 123.
14. Ibid., P. 127.

psychologists and educators have found that children need a predictable world, a child prefers consistency, fairness, and a certain amount of routine. When these elements are absent be becomes anxious and insecure. Freedom within limits rather than total permissivness is preferred; in fact it is necessary for the development of well adjusted children according to Maslow.

When the physiological and safety needs are met, needs for love, affection and belongingness emerge. Maslow states

> Now the person will hunger for affectionate relations with people in general, namely, for a place in his group, and he will strive with great intensity to achieve this goal. He will want to attain such a place more than anything else in the world and maybe even forget that once, when he was hungry, he sneered at love as unreal or unnecessary or unimportant. 15

Love as Maslow uses the word, is not to be confused with sex which can be studied as purely physiological need. He prefers Carl Rogers definition of love as "that of being deeply understood and deeply accepted."

Maslow found that the absence of love stifles growth and the development of potential. Clinicians have found repeatedly that babies require love. Many other students of psychopathology have considered the thwarting of love needs as a prime cause of maladjustment.

Maslow found thatpeople also have two categories of esteem needs - self-respect and esteem from other people. Self-esteem includes such needs as desire for confidence, competence, mastery, dee

15. Ibid., P. 134.

adequacy, achievement, independence and freedom. Respect from others includes such concepts as prestige, recognition, acceptance, attention, status, reputation, and appreciation. A person who has adequate self-esteem is more confident and capable and thus more productive. However, when the self esteem is inadequate the individual has feelings of inferiority and helplessness, which may result in discouragement and possible neurotic behavior.

The identification of the psychological need for growth, development, and utilization of potential - what Maslow calls self-actualization - is an important aspect of his theory of human motivation. Maslow has described this need as the "desire to become more and more what one is, and to become everything that one is capable of becoming".[16] Maslow finds that the need for self-actualization generally emerges after a reasonable satisfaction of the love and esteem needs.

Maslow believes that a characteristic of mental health is curiosity. The satisfaction of curiosity is subjectively satisfying; individuals report that learning and discovery produce satisfaction and happiness.

Closely related to individual motivation are the environmental or social conditions in the society. Among the conditions prerequisite to basic need satisfaction, Maslow lists such conditions as freedom to speak, freedom to do what one wishes as long as no harm is done to others, freedom of inquiry, freedom to defend oneself, justice, honesty, fairness and order. Threats to these

16. Ibid., P. 144.

preconditions evoke a reaction from the individual similar to that evoked by threats to the basic needs themselves. In Maslow's words, "These conditions are not ends in themselves, but they are almost so since they are so closely related to the basic needs, which are apparently the only end in themselves. These conditions are defended because without them the basic satisfactions are quite impossible, or at least, severely endangered."[17]

A factor of importance to parents and educators is Maslow's contention that people who have been fortunate enough to be born in circumstances enabling them to satisfy their basic needs develop such strong unified characters that they can then withstand the loss or frustration of these needs for considerable lengths of time. Gratification of these needs very early in life, especially the first two years is very important, as Maslow states "People who have been made secure and strong in the early years tend to remain secure and strong thereafter in the face of whatever threatens."[18]

Maslow also cautions against viewing the hierarchy of needs too precisely. One must not assume that the need for security does not emerge until the need for food is entirely satisfied, or that the need for love does not emerge until the need for safety is fully satisfied. Most people in our society have partially satisfied most of their basic needs, but still have some unsatisfied basic needs remaining. It is the unsatisfied needs which have the greatest influence on behavior. Once a need has been gratified it has little effect on

17. Ibid., P. 161.
18. Ibid., P. 172.

motivation. "A want that is satisfied is no longer a want."[19]

People may or may not be aware of their basic needs. "In the average person they are more often unconscious than conscious ... although they may, with suitable techniques and with sophisticated people become conscious." Behaviour is the result of many forces. It may be a result, not only of several of the basic needs in combination, but also of personal habits, past experience, individual talents and capacities, and the external environment.[20]

In his later studies Maslow discovered a whole new list of needs in a still higher category, which he described as growth needs (Being-values or B-values), as contrasted with the basic or deficiency needs. He said that this higher nature of man needed the lower nature as a foundation, and without which the higher nature "collapsed". "The major emphasis in humanistic psychology", he stated, "rests on the assumptions regarding 'higher needs'. They are seen as biologically based, part of the human essence.."[21] Thus man is initially motivated by a series of basic needs; as these are satisfied, he moves toward the level of the higher needs and becomes motivated by them. Maslow's term for this is metamotivation.

Maslow's discovery of these growth needs or Being values arose out of his study of self-actualized persons. He first began this study with his personal acquaintances, friends and selected college students. He then moved to a study of public figures living and dead.

19. Ibid., P. 179.
20. Ibid., P. 187.
21. Maslow, Abraham, "Farther Reaches of Human Nature", lecture under auspices of the Esalen Institute, Spt. 14, 1967, San Fransisco.

He divided his study into three categories: cases, partial cases, and potential or possible cases. Included in the first category were individuals such as Abraham Lincoln, Albert Einstein, Eleanor Roosevelt, William James, Spinoza, Albert Schweitzer, and Aldous Huxley. The partial cases category included five contemporaries who fall short but can still be used for study. In the potential or possible cases were included twenty younger people who seemed to be developing in the direction of self-actualization and also such people as George Washington Carver, Goethe, Pablo Casals, Martin Buber, John Keats, Adlai Stevenson, Sholom Aleichem, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Pierre Renoir, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Thomas More, Benjamin Franklin, Walt Whitman, and others. The study of these individuals, their habits, their characteristics, their personalities, and their abilities, led Maslow to his definition of mental helath and his theory of human motivation. He believed this method opens a whole new area to behavioral science.

"It now becomes feasible", said Maslow, "through the study of self-fulfilling individuals to have our eyes open to all sorts of basic insights, old to the philosophers, but new to us." [22]

The actualization process means the development or discovery of the true self and the development of existing or latent potential. Not all highly productive, successful talented people meet the description of psychological health, maturity or self actualization. However, from the study of exceptional people a number of characteristics began to crystallize regarding the aspects of mental health.

22. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, Op. Cit.

Maslow discovered that probably the most universal and common aspect of these superior people is their ability to see life clearly, to see it as it is, rather than as they wish it to be. They are usually less emotional and more objective about their observations. Self-actualizing people do not allow their hopes and wishes to distort their observations. They are above average in their ability to judge people correctly and to see through the artificial or the fake.

Because of their superior perception, the self actualizing are usually more decisive and have a clearer notion of what is right and wrong. They are usually more accurate in their prediction of future events.

Yet Maslow found these people to have a kind of humility, the ability to listen to others, to admit that they do not know everything, and that other people can teach them something. This concept can also be described as a child-like simplicity and lack of arrogance.

The self-actualized person's perception is less distorted by desires, anxieties, fears, hopes, false optimism or pessimism. Without exception, Maslow found them to be dedicated to some work, task, duty, or vocation which they considered important. For them, working was exciting and pleasurable. It seems that commitment to an important job is a major requirement for growth, self actualization and happiness. Although this does involve hard work, discipline, training, and often postponment of pleasure.

Maslow also found creativity to be a universal characteristic of all the self-actualizing people he studied. Creativeness was almost synonomous with health, self actualization, and full humanness. Characterisitcs associated with this creativity were flexibility,

spontaneity, courage, willingness to make mistakes, openness, and humility.

Another characterisitc of the self-actualized person is the low degree of self-conflict. He is not at war with himself; his personality is integrated. This means that he has more energy for productive purposes.

> Truth, goodness and beauty are in the average person in our culture only fairly well correlated with each other, and in the neurotic person even less so. It is only in the evolved and mature human being, in the self-actualizing, fully-functioning person that they are so highly correlated that for all practical purposes they may be said to fuse into a unity. 23

The healthy individual has less confusion about what is right or wrong, good or bad, and has little trouble operating on his perception of right behavior. Contrary to the assumption of many scientists and theologians, Maslow found that the psychologically healthy person is both selfish and unselfish; in fact these two attitudes merge into one. The healthy person finds happiness in helping others. Thus for him unselfishness is selfish. The healthy person is selfish in a healthy way, a way which is beneficial to him and to society as well. [24]

Self-actualizers have what Maslow calls "psychological freedom". They are able to make decisions even in the face of contrary public opinion. They are both the most individualistic members of society and at the same time, the most social friendly and loving. They are governed far more by inner directives, their own nature and natural needs than by the society or the environment. They are less

23. Ibid., P. 34.
24. Maslow, Eupsychian Management, Op. Cit.

anxious for honours, prestige and rewards.

Only one of the subjects studied by Maslow was religious in the orthodox sense of the word. Yet all of them, with the exeption of one who was an acknowledged atheist, had a belief in a meaningful universe and a life which could be called spiritual. Maslow, in fact, found the characteristics of self-actualized people to be similar in many respects to the values and ideals taught by the great religions.

> The transcendence of self, the fusion of the true, the good and beautiful, contribution to others, wisdom, honesty, and naturalness, the transcendence of selfish and personal motivations, the giving up of 'lower' desires in favour of 'higher ones',.... the decrease of hostility, cruelty, and destructiveness and the increase of friendliness, kindness, etc. 25

Maslow contends that the average individual is motivated by deficiencies - he is seeking to fulfill his basic needs for safety, belongingness, love, respect and self esteem. The healthy man is "primarily motivated by his need to develop and actualize his fullest potentialities and capacities".[26] The healthy individual in other words is motivated primarily by a desire for self-actualization.

The self-actualizing people of the type Maslow studied are a tiny percentage of the total population, a fraction of one percent. They are very different from the average person and few really understand them. Yet these superior people have a deep feeling of kinship with the whole human race. They are capable of sharing a type of friendship with people of suitable character, regardless of their race, creed, class, education, political beliefs or colour. This acceptance of others cuts right across political, economic and national

25. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, Op. Cit., P. 123.
26. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, Op. Cit., P. 62.

boundaries.

In summation, Maslow contends that the study of self actualizing people refutes the Freudian theory that the human unconscious (id) is only bad, evil, psychotic, or dangerous. In self-actualizing people, the subconscious is creative, loving positive, and healthy.

This is a list of the Being-Values as Maslow found them:

> "1. Wholeness (unity; integration; tendency to oneness; interconnectedness simplicity; organization; structure; dichotomy-transcendence; order);
> 2. perfection (necessity; just-right-ness; just-so-ness; inevitability; suitability; justice; completeness; "oughtness");
> 3. completion (ending; finality; justice; "it's finished"; fulfillment; finis and telos; destiny; fate);
> 4. justice (fairness; orderliness; lawfulness; "oughtness");
> 5. aliveness (process; non-deadness; spontaneity; self-regulation; full-functioning);
> 6. richness (differentiation; complexity; intricacy);
> 7. simplicity (honesty; nakedness; essentially; abstract; essential; skeletal structure);
> 8. beauty (rightness; form; aliveness; simplicity; richness; wholeness; perfection; completion; uniqueness; honesty);
> 9. goodness (rightness; desirability; oughtness; justice; benevolence; honesty);
> 10. uniqueness (idosyncrasy; individuality; noncomparability; novelty);
> 11. effortlessness (ease; lack of strain, striving or difficulty; grace; perfect, beautiful functioning);
> 12. playfulness (fun; joy; amusement; gaiety; humour; exuberance; effortlessness);
> 13. truth, honesty; reality (nakedness; simplicity; richness, oughtness; beauty; pure, clean and unadulterated; completeness; essentially);
> 14. self-sufficiency (autonomy; independence; not-needing-other-than-itself-in-order-to-be-itself; self-determining; environment-transcendence; separateness; living by its own laws)". 27

27. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, Op. Cit., P. 83.

His study led Maslow to his concept of the basic psychology of man and his theory of human motivation.

In summary the basic tentative conclusions Maslow arrives at are:

> 1. We have, each of us, an essential biologically based inner nature, which is to some degree "natural," intrinsic, given, and, in a certain limited sense, unchangeable, or, at least, unchanging.
> 2. Each person's inner nature is in part unique to himself and in part species-wide.
> 3. It is possible to study this inner nature scientifically and to discover what it is like - (not invent - discover).
> 4. This inner nature, as much as we know of it so far, seems not to be intrinsically or primarily or necessarily evil. The basic needs (for life, for safety and security, for belongingness and affection, for respect and self respect, and for self-actualization), the basic human emotions and the basic human capacities are on their face either neutral, premoral or positively "good". Destructiveness, sadism, cruelty, malice, etc., seem so far to be not intrinsic but rather they seem to be violent reactions against frustration of our intrinsic needs, emotions and capacities. Anger is in itself not evil, nor is fear, laziness, or even ignorance. Of course, these can and do lead to evil behaviour, but they needn't. This result is not intrinsically necessary. Human nature is not nearly as bad as it has been thought to be. In fact it can be said that the possibilities of human nature have customarily been sold short.
> 5. Since this inner nature is good or neutral rather than bad, it is best to bring it out and to encourage it rather than to suppress it. If it is permitted to guide our life, we grow healthy, fruitful and happy.
> 6. If this essential core of the person is denied or suppressed, he gets sick sometimes in obvious ways, sometimes in subtle ways, sometimes immediately, sometimes later.
> 7. This inner nature is not strong and overpowering and unmistakable like the instincts of animals. It is weak and delicate and subtle and easily overcome by habit, cultural pressure, and wrong attitudes toward it.
> 8. Even though weak, it rarely disappears in the normal person - perhaps not even in the sick person. Even though denied, it persists underground forever pressing for actualization.

> 9. Somehow, these conclusions must all be articulated with the necessity of discipline, deprivation, frustration, pain, and tragedy. To the extent that these experiences reveal and foster and fulfill our inner nature, to that extent they are desirable experiences. It is increasingly clear that these experiences have something to do with a sense of achievement and ego strength and therefore with the sense of healthy self-esteem and self-confidence. The person who hasn't conquered, withstood and overcome continues to feel doubtful that he could. This is true not only for external dangers; it holds also for the ability to control and to delay one's own impulses, and therefore, to be unafraid of them. 28

Maslow believes that if these assumptions are proven true, they promise a scientific ethics, a natural value system, a court of ultimate appeal for the determination of good and bad, of right and wrong It is his belief that the more we learn about man's natural tendencies, the easier it will be to learn how to be good, how to be happy, how to be productive, how to love, how to fulfill our highest potentialities.

Maslow's theory of human motivation can be applied to almost every aspect of individual and social life. He contends that most drives and desires in the individual are interrelated. Most previous studies have assumed that needs can be isolated and studied individually, in terms of means and ends. A full understanding of motivation requires emphasis on the fundamental end or objective rather than the means taken to reach it. When studied on a broad cross-cultural basis ends are far more universal than the various methods taken to achieve them. That is, while the methods vary greatly among races and cultures, the ultimate ends seem to be identical.

Maslow's basic need theory is supported by a number of clinical experiments. Those of W. Goldfarb, for example, demonstrate that institutionalized children show pathological symptoms when they are not

28. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, Op. Cit., P. 3

loved in spite of the fact that all the other physiological needs are well satisfied. [29]

Ashley Montague, the renowned anthropologist, has pointed out, "There is now good evidence which leads us to believe that not only does a baby want to be loved, but also that it wants to love, that all its drives are oriented in the direction of receiving and giving love, and that if it doesn't receive love it is unable to give it - as a child or as an adult.[30]

This view is also supported in a recent article in the Toronto Globe and Mail which describes what doctors refer to as deprivation dwarfism which is caused by lack of love which can stunt the growth of a child and retard his intellect. According to researchers it is the disease that used to kill most of the children in orphanages.

> As late at 1915, 90 percent of the children in Baltimore orphanages died within the first year of admission. They died of lack of love, according to Dr. Lytt I. Gardner, a pediatrician at the upstate medical centre of the State University of New York.
>
> Typically, in deprivation dwarfism, the child sleeps abnormally. Bowel movements are more frequent and looser. Sometimes a bald spot develops on the back of the head because the child lies in one position too long.
>
> Dr. Gardner and his associates believe they have traced the physical causes of deprivation dwarfism. "impulses from the higher brain centres.. travel along neutral pathways to the hypothalamus (gland)" which influences the pituitary.
>
> The pituitary produces various hormones necessary for growth and life. One of them called ACTH, triggers a reaction that helps turn protein

29. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, Op. Cit., P. 194.
30. Montague, Ashley, The Humanization of Man, Cleveland, The World Publishing Co., 1962.

into sugar. In dwarfed children there is insufficient ACTH. 31

Anthropology, formerly dominated by Behavioristic theory, has in recent years uncovered considerable evidence to support Maslow's contention that the "ultimate desires of all human beings do not differ nearly as much as do their conscious everyday desires. And this is regardless of race or culture. "With anthropology", he says, "the first rumbles of dissatisfaction with cultural relativism came from field workers who felt that it implied more prodound and irreconcilable differences between people than actually existed." The study of self actualized people proves again and again that such people regardless of their cultures value the same things.

The tendency of the human species to seek growth and self actualization has been observed and reported "by thinkers as diverse as Aristotle and Bergson, and by many other philosophers. Among psychiatrists, psycho-analysts, and psychologists it has been found necessary by Goldstein, Rand, Jung, Horney, Fromm, May and Rogers".[32]

Maslow believes that most individuals have a capacity for creativeness, spontaneity, caring for others, curiosity, continual growth, the ability to love and be loved, and all of the other characteristics found in self-actualized people. A person who is behaving badly is reacting to the deprivation of his basic needs. If his behaviour improves he begins to develop his true potential and move toward greater health and normality as a human. Freud, says Maslow,

31. The Toronto Globe and Mail, July 15, 1972.
32. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, Op. Cit., P. 207.

taught us that past experience exists in the present in each individual. "Now we must learn from the growth theory and self-actualization theory that the future also now exists in the person in the form of ideals, hopes, duties, tasks, plans, goals, unrealized potentials, mission, fate and destiny." [33]

33. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, Op. Cit., P. 193.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: PSYCHOLOGICAL GROWTH AND EDUCATION

Maslow's research led him to conclude that growth toward self-actualization is both natural and necessary. By growth he means constant development of talents, capacities, creativity, wisdom and character. Growth is the progressive satisfaction of higher and higher levels of psychological needs. In Maslow's words, "Man demonstrates in his own nature, a pressure toward fuller and fuller being, more and more perfect actualization of his humanness in exactly the same naturalistic scientific sense that an acorn may be said to be 'pressing toward' being an oak tree".[1]

Evidence for this conclusion was the discovery that psychological growth led to psychological health, while people who failed to grow suffered from symptoms of mental and physical pathology.

Orthodox Behaviourist theory has assumed that the human species seeks an equilibrium, seeks to reduce tension, and that behaviour can be defined in tension reducing terms. Freud also believed in tension reduction and the pleasure-pain principle, saying that the human species constantly sought pleasure and avoided pain. Maslow however, reports that more and more psychologists and behavioural scientists are being forced to assume a human tendency toward growth and self-actualization, because the tension-reduction theories do not adequately explain human behaviour. Or as Maslow stated, "If the

[1]Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, Op. Cit. P. 211.

motivational life consists essentially of a defensive removal of irritating tensions, and if the only end product of tension-reduction is a state of passive waiting for more unwelcome irritations to arise and in their turn, to be dispelled, then how does change or development or movement or direction come about? Why do people improve? Get wiser? What does zest in living mean?"[2]

Historically such great, yet diverse thinkers as Plato, Aristotle, Bergson and other leading philosophers had reached this conclusion, as well as many psychiatrists and psychologists.

In Maslow's words, "All the evidence that we have (mostly clinical evidence, but already some other kinds of research evidence) indicates that it is reasonable to assume in practically every human being, certainly in almost every newborn baby, that there is an active will toward health, an impulse toward growth, or toward the actualization of human potentialities."[3]

Man has the capacity to grow and yet, according to Maslow's research, only a small percentage of people even in our relatively free society come anywhere near realization of their full potentials. Maslow suggests a number of reasons why so many fail to grow.

1. As mentioned, man's instincts towards growth are weak rather than strong, and thus tendencies can be easily stifled by bad habits, a poor cultural environment, or inadequate - even erroneous- education.

2. There has been a strong tendency in western culture to fear instincts, to believe they are all animalistic and bad. Freud

[2]Ibid., P. 201.

[3]Maslow, Abraham, "Neurosis as a Failure of Personal Growth," Humanitas, 1967.

and many Christian theorists have stressed the negative aspects of human instincts, and as a result, we have a culture emphasizing controls and negative motivation rather than positive motivation.

3. There is the strong negative influence of the lower needs for safety and security. The growth process requires constant willingness to take chances, to make mistakes, to break habits. "One can choose says Maslow, "to go back toward safety or forward toward growth. Growth must be chosen again and again; fear must be overcome again and again. Anything that increases fear or anxiety tips the dynamic balance between regression and growth back toward regression and away from growth".[4] Children in a secure, warm, friendly atmosphere are more apt to grow and learn the growth process. Children in insecure surroundings seek safety. Even a healthy child, when placed in strange surroundings, will become more cautious, less apt to explore etc.

4. The cultural environment can and often does stifle developement toward self-actualization. One example is the common cultural concept of what is manly and what is not. Such human aspects as sympathy, kindness, gentleness, and tenderness are frequently discouraged because of this cultural tendency to consider such characteristics unmanly.

5. It has already been noted that self-actualizating people are more flexible than the average, more open to new ideas and new experiences. Conversely, it follows that habits are obstacles to growth.

[4]Maslow, Eupsychian Management, Op. Cit., P. 78.

Most people exhibit strong tendencies to continue to do as they have in the past. This is not always bad, there are many types of habits which release the mind for other activities. At the same time other habits formed, sometimes early in life and never re-examined, limit the individual's development.

> However, useful habits may be constant aspects of the world, they are positively a hindrance and impediment when the organism has to deal with the changing, fluctuating aspects of the world with problems which are unique, novel, never before met with.. Preference for the familiar becomes a life and death necessity in abnormal cases. The healthy taste for the novel and unknown is missing or at a minimum in the average neurotic. 5

The consideration of the failure to grow has hinted at the methods for growth. For the healthy child in the healthy environment, growth seems to be encouraged by giving the child freedom to explore and freedom to learn through trial and error. The same applies for the adult. Overprotection and coddling can easily become growth-inhibiting; people need to learn to make their own choices; when the choices are contantly made by others, growth will certainly be inhibited.

To Maslow self-knowledge and self-understanding are the most important roads toward self-actualization - a process which can be aided or thwarted by parents, teachers, and the cultural environment. Professional therapists who understand the growth process can be tremendously helpful. When a person understands himself he will understand his basic needs and his true motivation and learn to behave in a manner which will satisfy these needs. Self-understanding will also enable one to under-

[5]Maslow, Motivation and Personality, Op. Cit., P. 162.

stand and relate to other people more effectively. If the entire human species has the same basic needs, then it follows that self understanding leads to understanding of the entire human species.

Self-actualizers cannot avoid discipline and a certain amount of control, but it is far better when this is self-imposed, rather than external. However, as the individual develops, the need for control lessens, and actions become more natural and spontaneous. Most religious and moral philosophers, Maslow believes, put too much stress on control and will power and too little stress on self-understanding and spontaneity. Aristotle, for example, proposed a hierarchy of human capacities with reason at the peak. Maslow contends that, for the healthy person, subjective feeling must be given greater recognition and respect.

It seems evident that people who have been loved, particularly in childhood, are more apt to grow in a healthy way than those who have been deprived of love. Nearly all schools of thought now tend to agree on this point.

All major fields of psychology now recognize the importance of the early years in character formation. Also, an increasing number of psychologists and psychiatrists, regardless of their theoretical background, recognize the importance of love and respect in the parent-child situation. Maslow contends that, if the parents treat the child with love and respect, they can make a lot of mistakes and still be successful. The type of child-rearing he recommends is perhaps best described as freedom within limits. He recognizes the danger of com-

plete permissiveness or parental indulgence, and, at the same time, recognized the damaging effect of the dictatorial, authoritarian parent who squelches, controls, or overprotects the child until he is unable to develop a personality of his own. As Maslow points out there is increasing evidence that even young children when healthy, have a certain "internal wisdom" which enables them to make good dietary choices, to know when they are ready to be weaned, to know how much sleep they need, to know when they are ready for toilet-training and so forth. What we are learning, he says, is to "give the child a choice; we let him decide. We have learned to let the child tell us when he needs love, or protection, or respect or control by setting up a permissive, accepting, satisfying atmosphere."[6]

Maslow explains that this does not mean permissiveness under all conditions and with all children. It works with healthy children; it may not work with those who have already developed character problems. Freudian theory saw every child as resisting change and growth and thus requiring continual pushing out of his comfortable state into a new frightening situation. Maslow flatly contradicts this concept. Although it is true for some insecure, frightened children, it is not true for healthy children. "Observation of children shows more and more clearly that healthy children enjoy growing and moving forward gaining new skills, capacities and powers."[7]

The child needs freedom to grow, to learn, to discover himself, to develop skills; but he also needs the security of rules and

[6]Maslow, Motivation and Personality, Op. Cit., P. 177.
[7]Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, Op. Cit., P. 151.

limits, an opportunity to learn, to control, to denounce, to tolerate frustration, and to become self-disciplined. The child needs to learn the proper way to gratify his basic needs; he must understand that other human beings must be allowed to satisfy their needs. The proper educational process should be concerned with the growth and development of the child, not just restraining and subduing him for the convenience of adults. Maslow says we must learn more about how to teach children strength, self respect, righteous indignation, resist nce to domination and exploitation, to propaganda and untruth.

Maslow rejects the tendency of Freudian psychology to picture the young child as selfish, destructive, aggressive and unco-operative. Normal children, he says, can be hostile, destructive and selfish but they can also be generous, co-operative and unselfish. Whether they will show more of the first and less of the second depends upon the climate in which they are raised. If they are insecure, threatened, frustrated in satisfaction of their basic needs, the negative aspects will predominate. If they are loved and respected, they will show far less destructive and agressive behaviour.[8]

Maslow contends that the healthy child has a great deal of curiosity; in fact, if it is lacking, it is an indication of pathology. "There seems to be a general agreement (among all trained observers as well as among all parents) that the child shows inquisitive behavior that can be best explained by some sort of innate drive."

[8]Maslow, Motivation and Personality, Op. Cit., P. 141.

Humanistic psychological theory calls for a new kind of education. This education will put more emphasis on development of the person's potential, particularly the potential to be human, to understand self and others and relate to them, to achieve the basic human needs, to grow toward self-actualization. This education will help "the person become the best that he is able to become".[9]

Maslow believes our present educational institutions fall far short of this image. He contends that the educational process should be concerned with developing self-discipline, spontaneity and creativity at the same time. As Maslow states:

> An experientially rich person is a person who has great self-awareness. It is this characteristic of experiential richness which needs to be taught and developed. What we are blind and deaf to within ourselves, we are also blind and deaf to in the outer world, whether it be playfulness, poetic feeling, aesthetic sensitivity, primary creativity or the like. When the total educational process is functioning properly, the student discovers more and more bits of truth about himself, other people, and the physical world and in the process, sees increasing unity and becomes increasingly unified. 10

It would seem apparent then, that the type of education which Humanistic psychologists such as Maslow would support, would be one along the lines suggested by the existentialist education ideals of freedom, individualism and activism described here earlier. These existentialist ideals, as well as Maslow's concept of freedom within limits

[9]Maslow, Abraham,"Music Education and Peak Experiences", Music Educators Journal, 1968.

[10]Maslow, "Isomorphic Interrelationships Between Knower and Known", Sign, Image, Symbol, New York, George Braziller Inc., 1965.

within an atmosphere of love, security and respect for the child are apparently already being largely realized in the system of informal education presently being employed in the primary schools of Great Britain and some areas of North America.

In conclusion, perhaps it should be pointed out that this informal education with its emphasis on freedom, individuality, activism, love, acceptance and security for the child may have important remifications as well in the crucial area of moral education.

Recent studies by Lawrence Kohlberg[10] in the area of moral development are of particular interest to Existentialist and Humanistic educators. Kohlberg believes that one of the major reasons why the social functions of the school have not been phrased in moral-education terms has been the fact that conventional didactic ethical instruction in the school has little influence upon moral character as usually conceived. He contends that this conclusion seems clearly indicated by Hartshorne and May's findings that character-education classes and religious-instruction programs had no influence on moral conduct, as the latter was objectively measured by experimental tests of "honesty" (cheating, lying, stealing) and "service" (giving up objects for others' welfare). According to Kohlberg the small amount of recent research on conventional didactic moral education provides us with no reason to question these earlier findings. Instead he feels that recent research suggests that the major consistencies of moral character represent the slowly developing formation of more or less cognitive principles of moral judgement and decision and of related ego abilities.[11]

10. Kohlberg, Lawrence, The Development of Children's Orientations to a Moral Order, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971.
11. Kohlberg, Lawrence, "Moral Education in the Schools, A Developmental View", The School Reviews, Vo. 74, Spring 1966, No. 1, P.3.

One interpretation of the findings of Hartshorne and May was suggested by psychoanalytic and neopsychoanalytic theories of personality. In this interpretation, moral instruction in the school was ineffective because moral character is formed in the home by early parental influences. Moral character, so conceived, is not a matter of fixed moral virtues, like honesty, but of deep emotional tendencies and defenses-of love as opposed to hate for others, of guilt as opposed to fear, of self-esteem and trust as opposed to feelings of inadequacy and distrust. Because these tendencies are basically affective, they are not consistently displayed in verbal or behavioral test situations, but they do define personality types. These types, and their characteristic affective responses, can be defined at the deeper levels tapped by personality projective tests, but they are also related to other people's judgments of the child's moral character.

While both the "situational" and the "psychoanalytic interpretations of moral-character research have some validity, recent research findings support a different and more developmental conception of moral character with more positive implications for moral education. While a specific act of "misconduct," such as cheating, is largely determined by situational factors, acts of misconduct are also clearly related to two general aspects of the child's personality development. The first general aspect of the child's development is often termed "ego strength" and represents a set of interrelated ego abilities, including the intelligent prediction of consequences, the tendency to choose the greater remote reward over the lesser immediate reward, the ability to maintain stable focused attention, and

a number of other traits. All these abilities are found to predict (or correlate with) the child's behavior on experimental tests of honesty, teacher's ratings of moral character, and the children's resistance to delinquent behavior.[12]

The second general aspect of personality that determines moral conduct is the level of development of the child's moral judgments or moral concepts. In this regard, Kohlberg has developed his own concept of the stages in the development of moral judgment. They are as follows:

Level 1-PREMORAL

Stage 1. Obedience and punishment orientation. Egocentric deference to superior power or prestige, or a trouble-avoiding set. Objective responsibility.

Stage 2. Naively egoistic orientation. Right action is that instrumentally satisfying the self's needs and occasionally other's. Awareness of relativism of value to each actor's needs and perspective. Naive egalitarianism and orientation to exchange and reciprocity.

Level 11-CONVENTIONAL ROLE CONFORMITY

Stage 3. Good-boy orientation. Orientation to approval and to pleasing and helping others. Conformity to stereotypical images of majority or natural role behavior, and judgment of intentions.

Stage 4. Authority and social-order-maintaining orientation. Orientation to "doing duty" and to showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order for its own sake. Regard for earned expectations of others.

Level 111-SELF-ACCEPTED MORAL PRINCIPLES

Stage 5. Contractual legalistic orientation. Recognition of an arbitrary element or starting point in rules or expectations for the sake of agreement. Duty defined in terms of contract, general avoidance of violation of the will or rights of others, and majority will and welfare.

Stage 6. Conscience or principle orientation. Orientation not only to actually ordained social rules but to principles of choice involving appeal to logical universality and consistency. Orientation to

12. Ibid., P. 6.

> conscience as a directing agent and to mutual respect and trust. 13.

Kohlberg's discussion of social class stresses opportunities for social participation and role-taking as factors stimulating moral development.

> Perhaps a clearer example of the importance of social participation in moral development is the finding that children with extensive peer-group participation advance considerably more quickly through the Kohlberg stages of moral judgment than children who are isolated from such participation (with both groups equated for social class and I.Q.). This clearly suggests the relevance and potential of the classroom peer group for moral education. In pointing to the effects of extra-familial determinants upon moral development, we have focused primarily on their influence upon development of moral judgment. However, these same determinants lead to more mature moral behavior as well, as indicated by teachers' ratings and experimental measures of honesty and of moral autonomy. 14

In Kohlberg's view, there is an alternative to a state moral-indoctrination system and to the current American and Canadian system of moralizing by individual teachers and principals when children deviate from minor administrative regulations or engage in behavior personally annoying to the teacher. This alternative is to take the stimulation of the development of the individual child's moral judgment and character as a goal of moral education, rather than taking as its goal either administrative convenience or state-defined values. The attractiveness of defining the goal of moral education as the stimulation of development rather than as teaching fixed virtues is that it means aiding the child to take the next step in a direction toward which he is already tending, rather than imposing an alien

13. Ibid., P. 7.
14. Ibid., P. 17.

pattern upon him.[15]

> The principal values and virtues the teacher attends to are intellectual. However, the teacher may attend to these values and virtues either with awareness of their broader place in moral development or without such awareness. If such awareness is not present, the teacher will simply transmit the competitive-achievement values that dominate our society. He will train the child to think that getting a good mark is an absolute good and then suddenly shift gears and denounce cheating without wondering why the child should think cheating is bad when getting a good mark is the most important value. If the teacher has a greater awareness of the moral dimensions of education his teaching of the intellectual aspects of the curriculum will illustrate the values of truth, integrity, and trust in intellectual affairs and intellectual learning in such a way as to carry over to behaviors like cheating. [16]

Kohlberg's studies seem to indicate that while children are able to understand moralizing that is talking down beneath their level, they do not seem to accept it nearly as much as if it is comprehensible but somewhat above their level. It is obvious that the teacher's implementation of this principle must start by his careful listening to the moral judgments and ideas actually expressed by individual children.

Kohlberg feels the problem of insuring correspondence between developing moral judgments and the child's action is not primarily a problem of eliciting moral self-criticism from the child. One aspect of the problem is the development of the ego abilities involved in the non-moral or cognitive tasks upon which the classroom centers. As an example, an experimental measure of high stability of attention (low reaction-time variability) in a simple monotonous task has been found to clearly predict to resistance to cheating in Hartshorne and May's tests (r=.68). The encouragement of these attentional ego capacities is not a task of moral education as such but of general programming of classroom learning activities.[17]

15. Ibid., P. 19.
16. Ibid., P. 23.
17. Ibid., P. 25.

In conclusion, Kohlberg states:

> It is clear, then, that a developmental conception of moral education does not imply the imposition of a curriculum upon the teacher. It does demand that the individual teacher achieve some clarity in his general conceptions of the aims and nature of moral development. In addition it implies that he achieve clarity as to the aspects of moral developmental level and as to appropriate methods of moral communication with these children. Most important, it implies that the teacher starts to listen carefully to the child in moral communications. It implies that he becomes concerned about the child's moral judgments (and the relation of the child's behavior to these judgments) rather than about the conformity of the child's behavior or judgments to the teacher's own. 18

In another study which generally supports Kohlberg's findings, John Rawls [19] offers a possible explanation of the way in which the all important feeling of empathy is developed in children.

Rawl's thesis is primarily a conceptual one in that he wishes to establish a conceptual connection between moral feelings and natural attitudes such as self-esteen, compassion, and love. We could not for instance, understand what shame was unless we also had the concept of self-esteem: for self-esteem includes the disposition to feel shame in certain circumstances. Similarly love is exhibited in a tendency to feel guilt or remorse in certain circumstances, as well as in other things. Whatever the case may be for conceptual connections of this sort, there is certainly a very strong case to made for psychological connections between moral defects and the absence or weakness of moral feelings such as shame or guilt on one hand, and on the other hand, the connection between moral feelings and natural attitudes such as love and self-esteem. Rawls contends that the wicked man

18. Ibid., P. 27.
19. Rawls, John, Moral Feelings and Natural Attitudes, This paper was read at a conference on education and the Concept of Character organized by Harvard Graduate School of Education, May, 1961.

could be almost described as the man who feels too little remorse or guilt about his actions which he knows to be wrong. Remorse is usually felt for actions which have dire consequences for others; the capacity of feeling remorse therefore presupposes that we have sympathy for others or love for them. Similarly guilt can be felt in relation to a breach of rules that issue either from an authoritative source or which are thought of as being fixed on a basis of reciprocity. The former kind of guilt is expressed in the desire to confess and ask for forgiveness which is a way of restoring the relation of love and trust which this sort of guilt presupposes. The latter is expressed in the desire to apologize, to make reparations, to admit one's faults; which are ways of restoring mutual trust. Such mutual trust and fellow feeling is presupposed in the autonomous type of morality characterizing an open society. Rawls stresses that both types of conscience presuppose the development of attachment to others learned in the first instance from parents and developing into fellow - feeling for the members of a peer group if the child develops from what Piaget calls the "transcendental" to the "autonomous: stage of morality. Rawls believes much of this development must come about by simple imitation and by means of the rather indeterminate process called "identification" by psycho-analysis which leads to the formation of an "ego-ideal".

If Rawls' thesis is correct in that the crucial feeling of empathy is developed in children in the above manner, then it seems apparent that this feeling would be more successfully nurtured in informal schools which emphasize the development of self-esteem and ego-strength in an atmosphere of freedom, love, acceptance and security.

In traditional formal education what can be "taught" is repressive, authoritarian control or the internalization of external control based on the Freudian or Puritan Concept of morality. Informal education, on the other hand, seems consistent with the notions of personal growth and moral development suggested by the studies of Maslow, Kohlberg and Rawls. If their contentions are correct then the support for a Humanistic-Existentialist approach to education is strengthened , for it requires us to come to terms with what is, in fact, necessary for moral development to occur.

Perhaps, in the long run, the implications in the field of moral education, may be the most important contribution which informal education based on the ideals of Existentialism and Humanistic Psychology, could make to our society.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

At the outset we examined the problem facing contemporary man in terms of the loss of his old beliefs, values and goals which formed a foundation for his existence and buttressed his behaviour. We noted how this "existential vacuum" has led to widespread feeling of anxiety, alienation, loss of identity and meaninglessness. Not only can contemporary man no longer rely on the old beliefs and values to tell him what he has to do, but now with the "death of Permanence" he can not even rely on gaining a sense or order or values from his physical surroundings or social traditions.

We determined that in order to cope with this "existential vacuum" man must learn to freely choose his own values and essence. He must learn to approach life as an authentic existential man. The difficulty with most individuals, however, is that they have had no experience in freely choosing their own values or meaning in life. Many of them cannot face this necessity; as Fromm suggests, they desire to "escape from freedom".

The problem then is how to lead individuals to the realization that they are free subjectivities who must choose and take personal responsibilities for the values they create for themselves. In other words, how can we create the authentic existential man?

We noted the failure of the traditional school system to meet this challenge. It would appear that present schools are failing to prepare our children for the future not only in a social and philosophical sense, but ironically, also in their apparent main function, the service of industry

and commerce.

We determined that in order to cope with this problem, the answer pointed to the development of an educational system which develops in students the desire and ability to make choices and decisions for themselves.

An examination of the main tenets of existentialist philosophy, particularly from the Sartrean view, led to the conclusion that an existentialist school would be one which stressed freedom, individualism and activism in order to foster in its students qualities of self awareness, initiative, decisiveness and personal responsibility.

We then noted the support for these existentialist educational ideals in the thought of recognized educational authorities of the past and present such as Comenius, Rousseau, Pestolozzi, Froebel, Montessori, Dewey, Piaget and others, as well as the support of such influential reports as the Parent Commission in Quebec, the Hall-Dennis Committee in Ontario and the Plowden Commission in Great Britain. All of which stress the educational ideals of freedom, individualism and student activism.

We then turned to an examination of modern educational technology in order to anticipate how it may be possible to maintain these ideals in a highly technological environment. We also warned however, of the dangers inherent in the increased use of technology and the paradoxical situation which could result from the development of a highly technological school system which would require a great degree of industrialization and regimentation in order to be serviced and maintained.

We then examined free schools at present and noted that while they operate in an atmosphere of child centred freedom and activism, yet

they have failed to gain widespread acceptance because of their failure to teach successfully the basic academic fundamentals such as reading and writing.

We directed our attention next, to an examination of the informal education system being employed in the primary schools of Great Britain. We pointed out how these schools have been able to incorporate, to a large degree, the existentialists ideals while still maintaining basic academic standards. We noted how these schools have been able to develop the existentialist qualities of self-awareness, initiativeness, decisiveness and personal responsibility in a warm, humane environment.

Finally we turned to an examination of the emerging Humanistic movement in psychology and noted how its view of human motivation and psychological growth, and its emphasis on the self-actualization of the individual, supports an education stressing freedom, individualism and self-activism along the lines suggested by existentialist ideals. We also noted how such an education might have significant implications in the area of moral education.

In conclusion, it is my contention that the informal education system presently being employed in the primary schools of Great Britain offers the best hope of realizing, for the present, the educational ideals implied by Existentialism and the emergent new Humanistic Psychology.

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