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## Educational Considerations, vol. 4(1) Full Issue

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# educational considerations

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## Viewpoint

# Journal has new editorial positions

The Fall 1976 issue of **Educational Considerations** brought several new editorial position changes to the publication.

Sandra B. Ernst, who had been co-editor since Fall 1974, left her position as University Publications Editor at Kansas State University to accept a teaching position with the William Allen White School of Journalism at Kansas University.

Mary Kahl Sparks has replaced Dr. Ernst. Mrs. Sparks teaches Reporting I in the Journalism Department at Kansas State University and supervises the department's programs for high school journalism teachers and students. Mrs. Sparks is also currently completing a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction at Kansas State University. She holds a master's in journalism from Iowa State University and a bachelor's in education with a major in English from Southwest Missouri State in Springfield.

Mrs. Sparks has taught at the junior and senior high levels as well as in college. She came to Kansas State in 1974 to be assistant editor of publications for the Kansas State University Extension Service.

William E. Sparkman is now the book review editor for **Educational Considerations**. Dr. Sparkman came to Kansas State University in August 1975. He is an assistant professor in the Department of Administration and Foundations and teaches courses in school law and educational finance.

Dr. Sparkman received his bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. from the University of Florida. He was an EPDA fellow with the National Educational Finance program in 1973-74. He taught social studies at Williston High School, Williston, Fla., while working on his last two degrees.

Richard V. Peach holds the new position of editorial assistant. Peach is a New Zealander who received a Fellowship from and is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Administration and Foundations of Education, College of Education at Kansas State University.

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# educational considerations

Vol. IV, Number 2: Winter 1977

Viewpoint	Inside front cover
Combining education and politics <b>Jonathan Levine</b>	2
A problem solving approach to instructional evaluation <b>Judith A. Redwine</b>	6
Teacher attitudes concerning the procedures involved in teacher evaluation <b>Mel J. Zelenak</b>	10
Why philosophy for children? <b>Darrell R. Shepard</b>	12
Learning disabilities: description, diagnosis or explanation? <b>Dale Baum and Maximo Plata</b>	14
Homosexuality: out of the educational closet <b>Walter M. Mathews</b>	18
Competency based education: catalyst for reform <b>Howard D. Hill</b>	21
Innovative masters degree programs in teacher education <b>Pat Haas, Judith Redwine and L. James Walter</b>	23
An in-service address; the foundations of education <b>Richard A. Brosio</b>	27
Review: The planning of change <b>Kenneth M. Matthews</b>	30
Review: Public policy and the education of exceptional children <b>Nelda H. Cambron</b>	31

Hunter College has a new program giving students the opportunity to learn campaign techniques and get college credit for it.

# Combining education and politics

by Jonathan Levine



Jonathan Levine is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Foundations at Hunter College of The City University of New York. He has taught social, historical and political foundations of education as well as methods courses. He has also supervised student teachers. He received his Ed.D. from the University of North Dakota in 1972 in teacher education. His current research interest is in the field of politics of education and New York City school board elections.

On May 6, 1975, New York City held its Community School Board Elections. At stake were 288 seats in 32 Community School Districts. Of the nearly 800 candidates in the races, seven were running not only for a chance to serve their community, but also for academic credit.

These seven were enrolled in a special interdisciplinary program at Hunter College of the City University of New York. The program involved education and political science, and offered the students a chance to combine real life experience with academic credit. The program, perhaps the first of its kind in the country, was developed by the author in collaboration with Professor Norman Adler of Hunter's Political Science Department, who shares with the author an interest in school politics.

The goals of the program were to provide an opportunity for the candidates to learn campaign techniques and to better understand the problems of education through involvement in a real life situation rather than lectures or simulation.

Anyone interested could enroll in the program for either three or seven credits.\* Undergraduate students could earn three credits in education and four in political science; graduate students were restricted to three credits in education. Attendance at Hunter was not a requirement, and one of the students was, instead, enrolled in New York State's external degree program, Empire College. Course announcements were sent to every major organization with an interest in the elections, as well as all education and political science classes. The program was the subject of a feature story in the college press.

Both faculty members screened students for their firm commitment to run and their estimated ability to complete the task. During the screening process, students were advised that the program would entail about 20 hours per week. Several students were counseled out of the program because they did not have the time or inclination to run an effective race. Other prospective candidates could not run because they taught and lived in the same Community School District, a violation of the election requirements.

Seven students in six different districts survived the screening. Of these seven, only one had prior school board experience, another had been a nominal third party candidate for the City Council in 1973. Two of the remaining five had participated in their community's political or civic organizations, and three had had no previous political experience.

Since the program was an academic one, stressing insight and observation as well as participation, the following was required of all students:

- a. Maintenance of a daily log.
- b. A scrapbook of campaign efforts.
- c. Note cards on two books read for the course.
- d. A final paper covering some aspect of the campaign.
- e. Conferences.
- f. The actual race itself.

Elections were scheduled for early May, which left ample time for preliminary work on educational issues and campaign techniques. The class met once a week for five weeks, during which time guest speakers addressed a variety of problems involved in the forthcoming elections, focusing on necessary background information relating to the issues they would face. The first session sketched the background of the New York decentralization movement and outlined basic campaign strategies. The next two focused on practical campaign techniques: targeting, literature design, fund-raising, and petitioning, with a professional fund-raiser on hand for one evening.

The next two sessions were devoted to the duties and responsibilities of Community School Boards (CSB), including their relationship to the New York City Central Board of Education and their budgeting procedures. Speakers included a past President of the Central Board of Education, the Director, Division of Community School District Affairs of the Central Board of Education, a former Superintendent of one of the local Community School Boards and a member of the Bureau of the Budget of the Central Board of Education. A sixth meeting to summarize the semester was held on May 20th, after the election was over.

### The Campaign

In order to understand the individual campaigns run by our candidates, it is necessary to understand the environment. Three major elements influenced the elections. One was dominance of the United Federation of Teachers and other major slates which made it difficult for an Independent candidate to win a seat. The second was widespread voter apathy as demonstrated by only a 9.4 per cent turnout of eligible voters. Though this is not abnormally low when compared to other cities, it does tend to permit well-organized groups who can get out the vote to dominate the elections. Finally, the use of proportional representation for determining the winning candidates confuses many voters and favors slate candidates who have second and third round strength at the expense of independents.

In the first CSB election, held in 1970, candidates backed by the Catholic Church won a plurality of the seats, with United Federation of Teachers (UFT) candidates taking the second largest block. In the two subsequent elections, UFT backed candidates have won a plurality of the seats. The exact number of candidates who owe their primary allegiance to the UFT is difficult to calculate because in some districts the UFT and parent groups formed alliances, while in others they were bitter enemies. A city-wide group called the "Alliance For Children" was formed in February 1975 to organize anti-UFT sentiment, but they never became the potent force they hoped to become. Because the UFT keeps its campaign organization alive between elections, and com-

mands considerable resources, it is difficult for a group that organizes at the eleventh hour to defeat them.

To meet the UFT's challenge, local groups must combine and form slates around local issues, further reducing the chances of an independent or of a candidate who does not enjoy the support of a strong local group or parent slate. UFT support, however, is no guarantee of winning the election, as one of our students found out the hard way.

A number of other factors increase the importance of identification with an organized slate. In an attempt to remove school board elections from politics, they are separated from the general election in November, which contributes to the poor turnout. Because most candidates operate on a minimum budget, publicity, except that provided by organized slates, is at a minimum. Major media coverage of the election usually focuses only on those districts deemed the most controversial, though local weekly newspapers do provide election coverage and our students tried to take advantage of this whenever possible. (The *New York Daily News*, the country's largest newspaper, did a feature story on the Hunter program prior to election day, but did not identify any of the seven candidates.)

The early weeks of the semester were spent on targeting, petitioning and fund raising. Students identified those voters whom they felt would be most likely to vote and would be the most receptive to their campaign, and records of past school board and primary elections were studied. All students collected the 200 valid signatures needed to get on the ballot, but two of them had their petitions challenged.

During the early weeks our students worked at raising the necessary funds for their campaigning. None of the seven spent more than \$500 on their election—the average spent was less than \$300—but all were successful in raising the funds they felt necessary from family or friends, and no campaign severely suffered from a lack of money. Those of our candidates endorsed by one of the major organizations also received support from the endorsing group.

The students had to decide if they wanted to run as an independent or with slate affiliation. All of them tried to obtain the endorsement of at least one of the two major city-wide organizations who endorse candidates, and additional support from local parent, civic and political groups. Two of the students received UFT endorsement, a third was backed by the Alliance for Children, and a fourth candidate was on the so-called "Church Slate" in one of the community districts. The other three ran as independents. All of the candidates received endorsements from some group, whether parent, political, civic or fraternal. Each candidate prepared and distributed his own literature, though those who had slate backing also received some of their literature from the endorsing group.

The literature that was prepared was as distinctive as the individuals involved, one student issuing a broadside with actual "scare" headlines from the local papers. Others took a more conventional format. The instructors, when asked, helped the students with ideas and layout of the literature.

Besides appearing before groups to obtain endorsements the students spoke at public forums sponsored by PTA, church, political, civic and fraternal organizations. Attendance at these meetings depended

on the district; in some areas the speakers outnumbered the audience. One student didn't speak at any gatherings, preferring to spend his time on a door-to-door campaign in targeted areas. Another who had previous board experience, didn't feel he had much of a chance to win but was trying to make sure some incumbents were not re-elected, and his campaign strategy was to attack them to the point of abrasiveness, at the public forums.

Some of our students had never before spoken publically. Their growth in this respect proved to be one of the most important non-cognitive outcomes of the program. Those who had not previously engaged in public speaking developed self-confidence, poise and a better awareness of their capabilities. In developing debate and public speaking skills the college classroom is probably not an adequate substitute for this real life experience on the campaign trail.

When the votes were in, one of our seven had won in his district. Both of us had expected two winners, but the one student we felt had the best chance lost due to over-confidence. He had the backing of every major organization, except the Alliance For Children, in his district, including endorsements by political clubs and a popular state legislator. Furthermore, the number of votes he needed to win was less than the number of people who signed his nominating petitions. As a result, he neglected to organize a vote-pulling operation on election day and wound up in eleventh place when the final count was taken. The one victorious student, on the other hand, had a small but well-organized group of supporters, and they worked hard on election day to get the vote out. With all candor, the others never had much chance to win.

The reasons for their defeat are clear. Four of the five, whose ages ranged from 17-23, were seriously handicapped by their youth and had little prior visibility in their community. Many voters must have felt that they lacked the experience required for school board membership. Furthermore, four are single, and many voters seem to feel that only parents should be elected to school boards. In communities with strong parent groups, their non-parent status was a considerable handicap to obtaining vital endorsements.

Lack of organizational support was probably the major reason for their failure. In an election where only a small number of voters go to the polls solid organizational backing with its financial and personnel resources is vital. The fifth losing candidate, though neither young nor single, also suffered from a lack of organized support. He had previously served on his community board when board members were appointed and was active in other community groups including his political club; furthermore, his children had attended schools in the community, though they are now out of school. In previous years his support had come from the union. However, in 1975 in his district, the UFT and parent groups agreed to support a joint slate of candidates; one criterion for inclusion on the slate was to have a child enrolled in the district's public schools. Denied UFT endorsement, he ran as an independent.

### **Course Evaluation**

While only one student was victorious, we feel that the program was a success in other ways. In the cognitive area, the results were obvious. The students came to understand both the political process and educational issues at a level that classroom lectures are unlikely to

reach. Less obvious, but equally important, are the affective gains. All of the students came to a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, we also observed growth in self-confidence, self-esteem, and poise. In one student this growth was truly remarkable. While the results were quite dramatic in one case, all students showed growth in this vital area.

Another long-term result of the program was that the students gained the visibility in the community needed for future forays into the political arena. Several have indicated interest in the 1977 CBS elections, and at least one, denied UFT support, has been promised strong UFT backing the next time around. This offer of support was given after he had proved his sincerity and interest to the local UFT officials. It is possible that if others maintain their visibility, their chances for victory in 1977 will be greatly improved.

Two of the candidates have been elected to the executive committee of their tenant association since the elections; it is likely that the experience and visibility they gained in running for a school board seat was a contributing factor. One of the seven started a campaign to win a seat to the 1976 Democratic National Convention.

Although the program resulted in a successful learning experience, we learned some things ourselves, which we pass on as recommendations to others who might wish to undertake a similar program.

It is not sufficient to permit the students to arrange for conferences on their own. Students must be scheduled for conferences with some firmness, or the involvement of the campaign will blot out the educational goals of the experience. Each student was required to have at least two personal conferences with either of the instructors, prior to the spring recess in March and one before the election was over. We hoped that these conferences would provide individual attention for those students who needed it most. Assuming that the students would take the responsibility for scheduling conferences, we were flexible about them, which proved to be a mistake. They were helpful to those who took advantage of the opportunity, but our reluctance to insist on meeting with us resulted in problems that we could have prevented. One example of this occurred when the students' petitions were challenged. In both cases the challenge could have been prevented and the advice of either instructor would have stopped the time-consuming and debilitating challenge from taking place. Students tend to "go native," a danger that anthropologists learn to be wary of when they involve themselves in a strange setting or society. The instructors must constantly press time to be thoughtful and to see the implications of what they are doing. Conferences can provide the vehicle to accomplish this. Introspection is not a principal ingredient of the personality of most political candidates and our students adopted the attitudes and garb of the "natives" all too easily. We had to draw them back to the other side of participant—observation, that is, to observation.

Second, it is not always possible to anticipate the specific needs of the individuals involved in the program. The preparatory sessions we arranged sometimes failed to work because students from diverse backgrounds brought different ideas, needs and resources to the program. Some of the information provided during the early sessions proved to be of little use since successful campaign techniques in other political races are all but useless in school board elections, where money is scarce

and campaign personnel are at a premium. Much of the academic learning occurred after the campaigns were launched rather than in the classroom setting prior to the petitioning period. Furthermore, policy issues differ from community to community, and many of the general theories and approaches we described turned out to be not particularly relevant to some areas in which the students campaigned.

These observations are not intended to suggest that all preparatory sessions should be eliminated and replaced by personal conferences and monitoring sessions, but that early sessions must take into account such factors as district variation. One must, above all, not lose sight of the fact that most of the students are amateurs with little knowledge of the educational system or of campaign techniques.

Our original idea of bringing the class together to share experiences never worked out. During the campaign period the students were too busy, too involved in their own affairs, to think about—much less find time to meet with—the other candidates. As a result of a natural post-election let down, the final session became an ineffective sort of “show-and-tell.” We recommend the creation of additional post-election opportunities to reflect on the politics of school board selection, possibly by assigning some of the readings to be done after the campaign. This might give the instructors an opportunity to focus at-

ention on common problems and issues.

Though the scrapbook assignment helped students reflect on their experience and provided us with a sound way of judging achievement as well, the daily log was a failure as a monitoring device. Students had neither the strength nor patience to reflect on the day's events after shaking hands and speaking at meetings for 10 or 12 hours. Some of the daily logs read like some teachers' plan books when two months' worth of lessons are filled in the day before the books are due. Perhaps some less frequent tool, such as a weekly essay, might have proved more realistic and more beneficial to the students.

In summary, as we look back on it, we believe that the program accomplished its objectives; the students gained new insights in education and politics. The interdisciplinary approach provided them with a real-life experience, as a sort of living classroom, enabling the students to grasp the complex relationship of educational politics to political strategy in the context of a campaign experience. Their desire to win created an intense involvement that ensured learning in a way no lecture or text could match.

\*Professor Adler's time was donated and was not part of his scheduled program. It is also important to note that students should be advised to take a light course load during the semester they run for office.

## Schooling Teachers

The argument for teachers being schooled to a professional level is based on the assumption that mere rule-following technicians will not be flexible enough to meet the complex and shifting demands of the learning situation. How can the modern teacher take account of the individual differences of his pupils and of the cultural and economic factors in the learning situation? How can he manage the vast increase in knowledge by mechanically following rules of practice? The standard answer is that he cannot.

**The Real World of the Public Schools.** Harry S. Broudy. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972. p. 54.

When one looks at a person before he is able to solve a problem and then after he has solved the problem, one observes that change has occurred.

# A problem solving approach to instructional evaluation

by Judith A. Redwine



Judith A. Redwine is director of elementary education at Indiana University at South Bend. She has done extensive work with teachers and administrators, published and developed materials in the areas of instructional leadership, supervision, evaluation and professional goals and objectives as related to teacher evaluation. She is the co-author of another article appearing in this issue.

The purposes for teacher evaluation can be divided into two general categories: administrative and instructional.<sup>1</sup> Evaluative information is collected to improve decision making with respect to rehiring, transfers, termination, promotion and tenure (administrative) as well as instructional and curricular issues (instructional). While these categories are not mutually exclusive, the focus of the evaluations may be different. The problem solving approach to teacher evaluation is intended to help administrators and supervisors conduct more effective instructional evaluation.

## Problem Solving Approach to Instructional Evaluation

Determining methods for increasing teacher effectiveness is a problem for which solutions must be sought. When one looks at a person before he/she is able to solve a problem and then when he/she is able to solve the problem, one observes that change has occurred in one or more of the following: cognitive processes, behavioral response production or perceptual processes.<sup>2</sup> *The problem solving approach to instructional evaluation is a process by which changes are effected in the teacher's thinking, behavior and/or perception, thereby enabling the teacher to work out solutions to the problem of increasing his own teaching effectiveness.*

The problem solving approach to teacher effectiveness meets the criteria of a sound formative evaluation program; i.e., it is cooperative, situation focused, diagnostic rather than judgmental, enhances personal and professional self respect and self image, encourages experimentation, creativity and variation in all those involved; and finally, it results in a higher quality and greater variety of opportunities for learning.<sup>3</sup>

## Operationalizing the Problem Solving Approach

There are six distinct steps involved in the problem solving approach to instructional evaluation. These steps are: the preliminary conference, pretreatment data collection, diagnosis and prescription, treatment, post-treatment data collection, and the summary conference. (See Figure 1) The purpose of each phase as it relates to effecting the changes in cognitive processes, behavioral response production and/or perceptual processes necessary to stimulate teacher problem solving activity will be discussed in some detail. The role of the evaluator will also be described for each step.

**1. Preliminary Conference.** The evaluator (supervisor or administrator) and the evaluatee (teacher) mutually determine areas of interest or concern in the preliminary conference.

The first of these preliminary conferences is held early in the school year. Subsequent preliminary conferences are held periodically throughout the year with the spacing and frequency determined by the time required to complete the cycle.

Sources stimulating these mutual concerns and/or interests will vary. Some will develop from existing classroom difficulties; others will stem from professional reading, inservice sessions, university courses, etc. The courses tend to arouse concerns which were not present previously; i.e., will cause the teacher to raise his expectation level<sup>4</sup> thus causing uncertainty or dissatisfaction in an area where he/she was previously unconcerned or perhaps pleased with his performance. Whatever the source, it is desirable that some change in thinking occur;

i.e., that the teacher begin to look at teaching/learning in a different way. For example, the teacher who expresses a concern regarding lack of student interest would benefit from a reminder of Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive activities<sup>5</sup> or Krathwohl's taxonomy of affective activities.<sup>6</sup> Through this discussion he can be led to look at the activities in his classroom in new ways. He may now wonder whether student boredom may be a result of a lack of a variety of activities on too low a level to be challenging. Similarly, an article which presents a theory of teaching as a special form of communication<sup>7</sup> may cause a teacher to question the adequacy or authenticity of his verbal and nonverbal communication. In each case, new ideas have been introduced which arouse uncertainty. Now the teacher has a need for data in order to determine how he measures up to the theory. Accordingly, the evaluator and the teacher move to deciding upon a method whereby this baseline data can be collected. Decisions regarding when, where, and by whom the data are to be collected are also mutually determined before the preliminary conference is concluded.

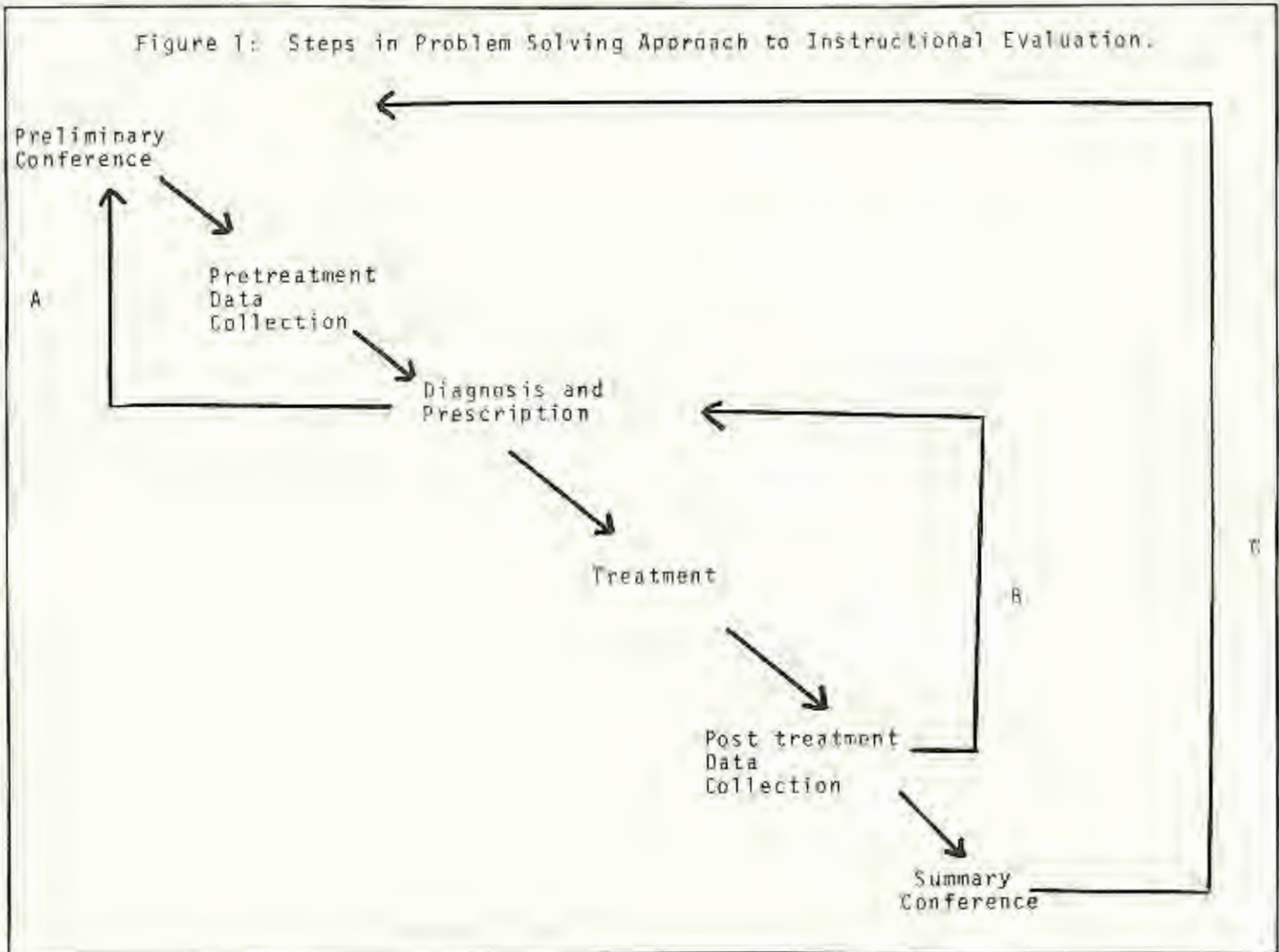
**2. Pretreatment Data Collection.** Means of collecting data may include: videotapes, audiotapes, interviews, surveys, tests and observation instruments or combinations. While the manner in which data are collected will un-

doubtedly vary, the purpose of the data collection always stems directly from the needs and interests expressed in the preliminary conferences.

The type of data collection is dependent upon the focus of the evaluation. Data may be collected on teacher behaviors, student behaviors, the classroom environment or some interaction among the three. The result of the data collection may be a list and frequency count of student behaviors which the teacher appears to be reinforcing, an analysis of nonverbal communication using an instrument designed by the evaluator and/or the teacher, a chart indicating percent of class time devoted to each of Bloom's levels, a frequency count of question types<sup>8</sup> used by students and/or teacher, a summary of the results of a student attitude survey, etc. In every case, data which require little observer inference are concerned with specific behaviors related to specific problem areas about which the teacher has expressed a concern will be collected. The purpose of the pretreatment data collection is to provide baseline data to assist the teacher in clarifying his perception of the teaching/learning situation.

The degree of involvement of the evaluator in the data collection step will vary. In some cases, he may spend several hours in direct classroom observation, in other cases he may assist the teacher in the design of a questionnaire to be used in gathering student data and in

Figure 1: Steps in Problem Solving Approach to Instructional Evaluation.



yet others, the teacher may simply apprise him of the data gathering method.

**3. Diagnosis and Prescription.** As soon as possible after the data have been collected, the evaluator and the teacher meet to discuss the baseline data. The data serve as an impetus for teacher self-diagnosis. In this step the evaluator acts as a facilitator, guiding the teacher through a review of the data, eliciting a reaction from the teacher (if it does not occur spontaneously), and then assisting in the determination a prescription based upon the diagnosis. For example, viewing and coding a videotaped episode for teacher nonverbal behavior may indicate that the teacher comes across as unenthusiastic, unhappy, etc. The teacher himself expresses the judgment needed to make a decision to change his behavior, e.g., "I wouldn't like to have to watch myself all day long!" With another teacher, appropriate questions from the evaluator may be necessary to motivate the teacher to express a desire to change his behavior. The problem solving approach to teacher evaluation does not eliminate the evaluator's responsibility to exercise professional judgment in order to improve the teaching/learning situation. It does provide an opportunity for a teacher to assume this responsibility but if the teacher is incapable or unwilling, then the evaluator must take on this role.

Prescribed behavior changes may involve increasing existing behavior, weakening or extinguishing of existing behavior, or developing totally new behaviors. Often the change in self perception effected by the diagnosis is suf-

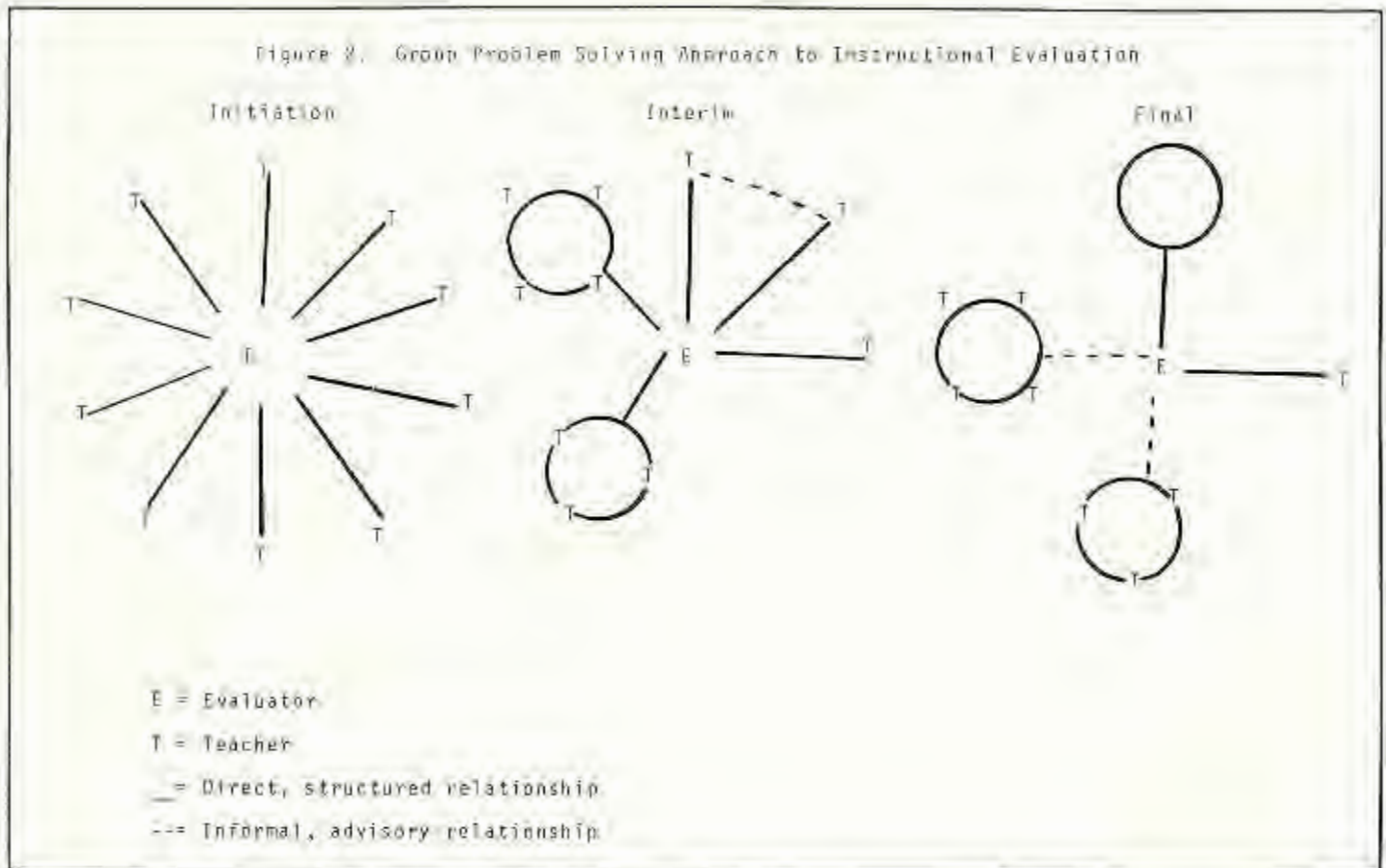
ficient to direct the teacher in modifying his own behavior. The role of the evaluator in this step is to see to it that appropriate changes in self perception actually do occur to provide support to the teacher in accepting these realities, and to assist the teacher in designing a behavior change plan if necessary.

It is also possible that the data would support the teacher's original satisfaction with his performance. In this happy circumstance, a new area of concern is selected and the cycle begins again within the same conference. (See A in Figure 1.)

**4. Treatment.** In this step the teacher moves ahead in his behavior change plan. Again, the extent to which the evaluator is involved will vary with the needs of the teacher and the nature of the plan. The situation may require the presence of the evaluator in the classroom to reinforce a new behavior such as smiling or asking higher level questions. At other times the teacher may be able to carry out his own behavior change plan without assistance from the evaluator.

**5. Post Treatment Data Collection.** When the teacher feels he/she is ready or after an appropriate interval, new data are collected in a manner similar to the pretreatment data collection. The two sets of data are compared to measure change. Statistical analysis of the data will depend on the level of data collected.

**6. Summary Conference.** Pre and post treatment data are compared. If a mutually satisfactory change has occurred, and time permits, the cycle begins again with



another concern. (See C in Figure 1.) Discussion of the new concern or interest would usually occur within this conference; i.e. the summary conference develops into a preliminary conference. If sufficient change has not occurred and the concern is deemed worth pursuing further, the prescription is revised and the new treatment is applied. (See B in Figure 1.) In this case, the summary conference returns to the prescription phase.

### Group Instructional Evaluation

While this approach has been described within a one-to-one framework, the same approach can be used to develop instructional evaluation groups comprised of, and eventually led by, teachers themselves. In order to initiate the problem solving approach to instructional evaluation, the evaluator is involved with individual teachers as depicted in the Initiation diagram within Figure 2.

Depending on the commonness of teacher interests and needs and compatibility of the teachers involved, the evaluator gradually encourages the formation of teacher groups as depicted in the interim diagram within Figure 2. These teachers motivate, support, and assist one another in finding solutions to their problems of increasing teaching effectiveness. In this interim time, the evaluator leads the group as they move through the same phases described earlier.

Gradually, as these groups become ready to carry on their own problem solving, the role of the evaluator is taken over by the teachers within the group. Although the groups now operate somewhat autonomously, the former evaluator may be used in an advisory capacity from time to time. See final diagram within Figure 2.

Since not all teachers are simultaneously ready to assume the responsibility for participation in these autonomous groups, the evaluator still continues to work directly with some individual teachers. A teacher may choose to work with more than one evaluation group; e.g. one group may focus on cognitive goals whereas another might concentrate on affective goals. It is also possible that a teacher might continue to work individually with the evaluator while participating in an evaluation group.

The end result will be groups of teachers who truly are professionals in that they will have assumed responsibility for the practice of their profession.

The problem solving approach to teacher evaluation assumes that the teacher has a good self concept and is a professional; i.e., capable of operationalizing theory, diagnosing his own performance (given the necessary data) and designing and executing behavior changes necessary to increase teaching/learning effectiveness. It requires evaluators who are strong instructional leaders, who stimulate a steady flow of ideas among teachers, understand theories of teaching/learning, basic data collection techniques and statistical analysis, possess good communication skills and believe in and will go to great lengths to develop the potential of teachers. The result of the problem solving approach to teacher evaluation will be teachers who are capable of, and motivated to seek, their own solutions to the persistent problem of increasing teacher effectiveness.

(The author wishes to acknowledge the perceptive insights shared by Dr. Vincent Peterson and Dr. James Waller during the preparation of this article.)

### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>McNally, H.J., "Teacher evaluation that makes a difference," *Educational Leadership*, V. 29, N. 4, pp. 353-7, January, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>Kelley, H.H. and J.W. Thibaut, "Group problem solving," in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, V. 4, G. Lindzey and E. Aronson (eds.), Reading Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1969, pp. 1-100.

<sup>3</sup>McNally, op. cit.

<sup>4</sup>Kelley and Thibaut, op. cit., p. 10. The authors suggest that a person has a particular level of aspirations for a given task or relationship and will only engage in problem solving activities when outcomes are perceived to fall below this level.

<sup>5</sup>Bloom, B.S. (ed.) *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook of Cognitive Domain*, New York: David McKay Co., Inc. 1956.

<sup>6</sup>Krathwohl, D.R., Bloom, B.S. and B.B. Masia. *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives Handbook II: Affective Domain*, New York: David McKay Co., Inc. 1956.

<sup>7</sup>Lewis, W. "Selected concepts of communication as a basis for studying mental health in the classroom," in *Teaching: Vantage Points for Study*, R. Hyman (ed.) Philadelphia: J.B. Lippencott, 1968, pp. 43-47.

<sup>8</sup>Cunningham, R. "Developing question-asking skills," in *Developing Teacher Competencies*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971, pp. 81-130.

Teachers who feel evaluation processes are used for instructional purposes have different attitudes about the procedure than those who feel the evaluations are used for administrative purposes.

# Teacher attitudes concerning the procedures involved in teacher evaluation

by Mel J. Zelenak



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In 1654 the General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colonies passed a law that required the elders of a town, as well as the overseers of Harvard University, to insure that no teachers were hired who were "unsound in the faith or scandalous in their lives."<sup>1</sup> This was the beginning of a long process that we now know as teacher selection and evaluation.

The burden of proof of determining competency is usually assumed by the building principal or other administrative personnel. Current literature suggests that administrators are divided into two distinct groups relative to their philosophies concerning the purpose of teacher evaluation. One group emphasizes the intent of evaluation is for administrative purposes, i.e. teacher tenure, promotion, dismissal, assignment, salary, etc. are involved. The other group denotes that evaluation is to assist the teacher to improve performance and advance in his profession.<sup>2</sup>

It appears that the controversy concerning teacher competency will continue until educators concur on an acceptable purpose for teacher evaluation.

## Statement of the Problem

The central problem of this investigation was to compare attitudes of teachers who believe the intent of evaluation is for administrative purposes with those of teachers who believe the intent of evaluation is for instructional purposes. This investigation was a follow-up to a similar study completed by the researcher at the University of Iowa.<sup>3</sup> The following questions were presented to assist the investigator in evaluating the above:

1. Do teachers with different perceptions regarding the purpose of teaching evaluation differ in their attitudes toward the first concept: "teaching evaluation in this school?"
2. Do teachers with different perceptions regarding the purpose of teaching evaluation differ in their attitudes toward the second concept: "the individual(s) who evaluate in this school?"
3. Do teachers with different perceptions regarding the purpose of teaching evaluation differ in their attitudes toward the third concept: "the evaluation form used by this school?"
3. Do teachers with different perceptions regarding the purpose of teaching evaluation differ in their attitudes toward the fourth concept: "in-service programs related to teaching evaluation in this school?"
5. Do teachers with different perceptions regarding the purpose of teaching evaluation differ in their attitudes toward the fifth concept: "the post-evaluation conference used by this school?"

## Procedures

The data gathering instrument used for the investigation was similar to the semantic differential technique developed by Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum.<sup>4</sup> Three attitudinal dimensions or elements of semantic meaning (activity, evaluative and potency) were developed by these three authors. The following bipolar adjectives were found to be highly weighted on these dimensions and were used as the opposite ends of the scales of measurement employed to rate the concepts presented to subjects in this study: (1) activity: dull-sharp, passive-active, slow-fast and cold-hot; (2) evaluative: worthless-valuable, unfair-fair, bad-good and unpleasant-pleasant; (3) potency: rough-smooth, shallow-deep, weak-strong and narrow-wide.

**TABLE I**  
 Semantic Differential Differences Between Two Groups of Teachers on Five Evaluation Concepts

		Administrative N = 83		Instructional N = 157		Diff.	t
		$\bar{X}$	$\sigma$	$\bar{X}$	$\sigma$		
Concept I:	Activity	3.98	1.01	4.42	.91	.44	-3.45*
	Evaluative	4.70	1.32	5.23	1.27	.53	-5.99*
	Potency	3.83	1.31	4.50	1.24	.67	-3.89*
Concept II:	Activity	4.42	1.10	4.65	1.07	.23	-1.64
	Evaluative	5.04	1.40	5.48	1.27	.44	-2.48*
	Potency	4.33	1.36	4.77	1.28	.44	-2.51*
Concept III:	Activity	4.08	.90	4.26	.95	.18	-1.41
	Evaluative	4.28	1.26	4.95	1.26	.67	-3.93*
	Potency	3.97	1.19	4.39	1.11	.42	-2.71*
Concept IV:	Activity	3.36	1.03	3.85	1.00	.49	-3.06*
	Evaluative	3.63	1.21	4.26	1.33	.63	-3.11*
	Potency	3.39	1.08	4.01	1.15	.62	-3.56*
Concept V:	Activity	4.09	1.05	4.44	1.00	.35	-2.28*
	Evaluative	4.47	1.11	5.24	1.16	.77	-4.15*
	Potency	4.03	1.14	4.62	1.21	.59	-3.32*

\*Significant beyond the .01 level for two-tailed tests and 229 d.f.

Teachers from school districts throughout the state of Kansas were asked to participate in the endeavor. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed, 236 were returned, of which 232 or 58 per cent were useable.

For purposes of analysis, the respondents were divided into two groups: (1) the administrative group (those teachers who indicated the intent of teacher evaluation is for administrative purposes) and (2) the instructional group (those teachers who believe the intent of evaluation is for instructional purposes.) The two group means for the three attitudinal dimensions were compared through the utilization of a t-test. For the two groups to be significantly different on any of the five concepts, all three attitudinal dimensions for a particular concept had to be significant.

#### RESULTS OF THE STUDY

- Concept I. Table I shows that the administrative group of teachers scored significantly lower on all three attitudinal dimensions toward the concept, "teaching evaluation in this school," than the instructional group of teachers.
- Concept II. The administrative group of teachers scored significantly lower on two of the three attitudinal dimensions toward the concept, "the individual(s) who evaluate in this school," than the instructional group of teachers.
- Concept III. The administrative group of teachers scored significantly lower on two of three attitudinal dimensions toward the concept, "the evaluation form used by this school," than the instructional group of teachers.
- Concept IV. The administrative group of teachers scored significantly lower on all three attitudinal dimensions toward the concept, "in-service programs related to teaching evaluation in this school," than the instructional group of teachers.

Concept V. The administrative group of teachers scored significantly lower on all three attitudinal dimensions toward the concept, "the post-evaluation conference used by this school," than the instructional group of teachers.

#### Conclusions

The follow-up investigation of teacher perceptions of the teacher evaluation process provided results that tend to indicate that teachers who feel evaluation is for instructional purposes are supportive of evaluation. However, those teachers who feel evaluation is utilized for administrative purposes (teacher's tenure, promotion, dismissal, assignment, salary, and permanent record file) tend to regard the teacher evaluation process in a negative manner.

The writer suggests that interested principals and other supervisory personnel administer the aforementioned questionnaire to teaching staff members. If a large proportion of the results suggest that teachers' perceptions of evaluation conflict with the administrator's view of the purpose of evaluation, then communications between administrators and teachers on this critical morale issue should be strengthened.

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This author thinks philosophers can learn from philosophy for children which attempts to recapture the spirit of the Socratic dialogue.

# Why philosophy for children?

by Darrell R. Shepard



Darrell R. Shepard went to Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas, in 1967 and became Chairman of the Department of Philosophy in 1971. He is Chairman of the American Philosophical Association's Committee on Pre-College Instruction in Philosophy, Executive Secretary of the National Forum for Philosophical Reasoning in the Schools and a contributor to the curriculum materials produced by The Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children.

"Philosophy for children" catches the imagination as much as "Tom Swift: Boy President." But while there may be few arguments for the latter, there are some very powerful arguments for the former.

But first let us be very clear what we mean by philosophy for children. We may mean dealing with philosophical questions; or we may mean dealing with questions philosophically—in a dialogical, critical and cumulative search for answers and awareness of alternatives. We would seldom mean dealing with the pronouncements of philosophers as such. While the child could undoubtedly be trained to spew back such pronouncements, I am at a loss why we should want him to do so.

We should also be very clear that philosophy already permeates our child's curriculum—sometimes by its presence, sometimes by its absence. Social studies, now understood simply as the study of man, must deal with the question "What is man?" by answering it or by ignoring it. More obviously, moral education has always had a place in the curriculum. The valueless classroom has never existed. The issue is not whether philosophy shall have a place in the curriculum, but whether the hidden curriculum will become the open curriculum, whether we can do it better by doing it consciously.

Let us then consider some reasons for doing it consciously.

Surely it is obvious that if Johnny can't reason, Johnny can't read. Reading without understanding defies analogy. But, understanding requires grasping fundamental logical relationships and the development of imagination. It is a source of continual amazement that educators who have been so suspicious in recent years of the transference value of foreign languages for English and of psychology for social development still trust to transference when it comes to reasoning. "If we teach the child to reason mathematically, scientifically, creatively, etc., then the child doesn't need to think about thinking." It is interesting to note that in a recent field test of a philosophy for children curriculum, sharp increases in reading scores occurred.

It is also an obvious pedagogical point that one begins any instruction where the student is and with the questions the student is asking. Many of the questions asked by children are philosophical questions dealing with issues such as justice, death, where the world came from, etc. To ignore these questions, hoping they will go away, diminishes either the child's respect for himself, or for the school, or both. To treat these questions haphazardly is sophistry and violates the integrity of both the child and the teaching profession. It is dubious whether the child need recognize his questions as "philosophical," but because such questions require special handling, it is essential that they be recognized as "philosophical" by parents and by teachers.

Today we bemoan the sense of anomie and meaninglessness which is seen in students and teachers alike. While the observations of sociologists regarding the fragmented nature of society may contribute to the pathology seen in the schools, it is hardly the whole story. The curriculum itself may be partly to blame. Children, as their art reveals, have a very comprehensive point of view. They seek connections—meanings. Contrast this propensity of the child with the curriculum which is divided into unconnected segments. When Dewey spoke of philosophy as the method of education, he may have had in mind logic which gives structure to the various disciplines, or he may have had in mind the integrating nature of philosophy which Charles Sidgwick felt was so important. Or, Dewey may have been reflecting upon the fact that each of the disciplines rests upon philosophical presuppositions which, among other things, establish the point of the discipline.

If our worry with meaninglessness is in the larger sense, that of the meaning of life, the curriculum is still of little help to the child. Meaning in this sense still requires connections which the child has little practice in making. Moreover, if the connections are made for the child, we are indoctrinating rather than educating. As Matthew Lipman has noted, these meanings must be discovered by the child for himself. But where is he to look? What opportunities does the curriculum afford the child for such discovery? It is also interesting that schools which have established philosophical reasoning programs have seen a heightening of enthusiasm and a decrease in dropouts.

Even before Watergate, parents, educators and employers were concerned with the value crisis. Into the gap stepped moral education, now mandated in several states. Students have had their values clarified or their development from theoretical stage encouraged. But as ethics, normally thought of as a part of philosophy, has been presented as a separate part of the curriculum in a package empty of philosophical content, the problem has intensified and psychological harm has often occurred. Students are now pronounced as being at Stage 4 or Stage 5 who still cannot distinguish between an "ought" and an "is." Indeed, it is extremely dubious pedagogy to offer such courses as separate ingredients in the curriculum, thereby indirectly suggesting that ethical dilemmas come into our lives with signs hung around their necks reading "Alert! I am an ethical dilemma." Effective moral education can only take place when the moral dimensions of problems are probed on the home territory of the problem in question.

Because moral education has become a part of the curriculum even in states where it is not mandated, the issue of indoctrination has arisen as it has not since separation of church and state was guaranteed by the Constitution. Whose values will be taught, teacher's, parent's, society's or Kant's? Many have seen philosophy for children as the best protection against indoctrination whether it be in the area of value theory, political theory or

mathematical theory. This is because philosophy is often characterized as a search for and an awareness of alternatives. Furthermore, the recognition that *X* is a logical alternative will not allow us easily to disregard or to demean the person who believes *X*. In other words, the search for alternatives may simultaneously promote respect for persons.

Perhaps we philosophers have much to learn from philosophy for children which often attempts to recapture the spirit of the Socratic dialogue and to inculcate the virtue of thinking for oneself. The dialogue, as amply illustrated in the *Meno*, builds—is cumulative—with logic as its structure. How different from the bull-sessions in which we and our students participate—"Now let me tell you what happened to me!" As the dialogue builds, the questioner becomes the one who is questioned, and all parties assume responsibility for the conclusions which they draw.

Again, the questions dealt with in the Socratic dialogues were as often addressed to Socrates as by Socrates. They were questions in the minds of his questioners. This, perhaps, also speaks of the pedagogical relevance of philosophy for children for philosophy begins with thoughts which all children have. Not every child has had the experience of grandfather's farm to share with his classmates, but every child does have his own idea of what is fair and his own idea of his own thoughts. The realization of this ever so fundamental level of commonality has prompted claims to be made for philosophy for children as a builder of camaraderie and respect within the school as well as the promoter of the ideal learning environment where all participate as equals.

But suppose we step back from all these arguments for a moment and attempt an historical survey of the curriculum. Is it not the case that our curriculum has become more and more specific, particularized? Compare a reader of today with a *McGuffey Reader*. Today college entrance examinations testify to the inability of the young adult to generalize properly or to handle abstractions. Our conclusion must be that they have been trained, but not educated—able to handle situations in which they have found themselves before, but unable to handle situations slightly or greatly divergent although related by principles. Our answer to this inability has been anything but pedagogically sound, but it has been self-fulfilling. We have further particularized and specialized instruction, catering instead of challenging. Sure enough, our efforts have been vindicated. Abstractions and generalizations are hard and all of our efforts at specialization and particularization have not succeeded in developing the ability to abstract or to generalize properly.

To the extent that philosophy is that discipline which fosters this ability to generalize, to assume responsibility for one's decisions, to connect ideas which otherwise remain unconnected, to respect the ideas of others and to understand, the case for philosophy for children has been made.

This article explores the semantics of the term, "learning disabilities." As currently used, the term often tends to reflect the professional and/or personal interests of the user rather than a concern for the respect and treatment of the child so labeled. The authors suggest that if the field were re-oriented toward learning how to teach these children, it could, perhaps, evolve as an instructional discipline with more tangible benefits for the children, their teachers and their parents.

# Learning disabilities: description, diagnosis or explanation?

by Dale Baum and Maximino Plata



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Maximino Plata is assistant professor and Director of the Center for Special Education at The University of Texas at El Paso. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Kansas in 1971 and is currently involved in developing competency/performance based preparation programs for special education teachers. He is also very active in training regular class teachers in individualizing instruction for exceptional students.

The term, *learning disabilities*, (LD) has become literally a household term during the past 10-15 years. It has become, through common usage, an acceptable part of the vernacular or common language of lay and professional persons alike. The term is used descriptively by some, diagnostically by others and as an after-the-fact explanation by still others. The various meanings of the term, *learning disabilities*, is the subject of this paper.

## LD As Description

Educators, perhaps more extensively than other persons or professional groups, employ the term, LD, to describe the children whom they teach. Inasmuch as learning disabled children are often grouped for instructional purposes, the term serves to describe the group as well as each individual who comprises the group. Grouping children for instructional purposes implies that the children share one or more commonalities such as chronological age, rate of learning, or interests, that will contribute to effective group learning. Although many group instructional practices have not been successful with most LD children, the children themselves do share in a number of educationally relevant descriptions.

When compared with other children of the same ages and ability levels, LD children learn differently, i.e., usually more slowly, more inconsistently, more haphazardly and more inefficiently.

## LD As Diagnosis

Psychologists and others concerned with identifying and specifying the source of an LD child's failing typically use a battery of test instruments to study the child and to pinpoint the cause(s) of his failing. As the child progresses through the tasks of the various tests, his areas of strengths and weaknesses are observed.

For purposes of interpreting test results, the child's performance is viewed through an information-processing model. In this model the child is considered as a mini-computer. The diagnostician controls what is input to the computer and how it is input, either visually, auditorily, by touch or in combination. He then studies the output of the computer to determine which central processing functions are intact and which may be dysfunctioning.

Since the central processing functions or psychological processes of the child cannot be observed directly, they must be inferred from the output furnished by the child. In this manner the child's preferred mode of reception may be determined as well as his stronger or preferred mode of expression.

Since the central processing functions of the child are not available to direct observation, many theoretical systems have been developed to explain what does or does not function within the LD child. If, for example, a child who has failed to learn to read through the traditional approach were subjected to psychological testing, it is likely that a number of *test-related* dysfunctions would be identified. These may include the perceptual problems such as visual, auditory, social or motor. Integration problems as well as conceptual problems may also be indicated. Perhaps memory problems such as visual or auditory sequential memory difficulty may also be observed. In some cases the alleged dysfunctions may be attributed to cross-modal transfer problems. This type of meandering assumes there is something wrong with the child. As processing dysfunctions are observed through test instruments, it is often assumed that these dysfunctions are causing learning problems. Therefore, what began as a problem in school learning—with some obvious implications for teaching—is often redefined as a psychological problem very much the fault of the child.

#### LD As Explanation

The field of learning disabilities appears to have emerged rather clearly from the accumulated knowledge of brain-injured individuals. When one considers the symptoms associated with brain injury and the symptoms of many LD children, the overlap is striking and obvious. However, the severity of the symptoms and the interference of the symptoms with normal functioning is not clearly differentiated in the literature between the learning disabled and the brain-injured. Many individuals with known brain injury do not suffer learning disabilities. Also, brain injury cannot be demonstrated in the vast majority of children with learning disabilities. However, subtle brain injury or cerebral insult is assumed to exist even though it cannot be demonstrated diagnostically in many LD children.

Recently, social scientists have observed that many juvenile delinquents are deficient in the tool subjects of reading, writing, spelling and computational arithmetic. This observation is not unique to the 1970's as the juvenile delinquents of earlier decades were also noted for their poor academic achievement. What is unique, however, is the increasingly popular interpretation that LD is not only related to juvenile delinquency but, in fact, may actually cause it.

Many parents have seized upon the term, learning disabilities, and its related terminology as an explanation not only of the shortcomings of their children, but also of their own shortcomings. It is not unusual to encounter parents who have become somewhat expert in employing the terminology of the field after having learned it from educators, psychologists, physicians, optometrists or perhaps from articles in popular magazines. It is a particularly strange phenomenon to observe lay persons employ highly theoretical terminology so convincingly in conversation that the listener may believe a known entity is being discussed. Such is simply not the truth. The terminology used to depict the theoretical constructs

assumed to be relevant in the field of learning disabilities are not firmly supported by empirical data and certainly are not fact.

#### Consensual Data Source

In order to determine if a consensus of the meaning of learning disabilities exists or is imminent in the near future, the authors consulted a data source not commonly employed in educational investigations—the prefaces of standard texts on the subject. Most—but not all—authors tend to reveal their views on the LD child and the educational alternatives they require in the preface of their books. The following are short sections extracted from the prefaces of a collection of texts on learning disabilities. Hopefully they will provide a concise and clear view of the meaning of learning disabilities by the various authors.

Although Kephart (1960) addressed his book to slow learning children, a number of contemporary researchers and writers have suggested that he had essentially described the LD child before the term had been advocated and generally accepted by educators.

To most teachers, as well as parents, the slow learning child is a complete enigma. One day he learns the classroom material to perfection; the next he seems to have forgotten every bit of it. In one activity he excels all the other children in the next he performs like a two-year-old. His behavior is unpredictable, and almost violent in its intensity. He is happy to the point of euphoria, but the next moment he is sad to the point of depression (Kephart, 1960, 1971, p. v).

At the Institute for Language Disorders at Northwestern University, Johnson and Myklebust (1967) describe their students with learning disabilities as follows:

Some had deficiencies in learning to read, some in learning to spell or in acquiring the written word. Many were aphasic or dyscalculic. Most had deficits affecting academic learning although some were deficient in social perception, in ability to tell them, in distinguishing between right and left, in orientation and direction. Others could not judge distance, size, and speed or learn to use maps—though otherwise there was no impairment of intellect (Johnson and Myklebust, 1967, p. xiii).

Frierson and Barbe (1967) describe learning disabled children as:

... the child with special learning disabilities has learning needs and problems similar to those of children classified in other categories, but just as often he has problems, unique to his special deficit, which may be perceptual, neurological, biochemical or other specific disorder (Frierson and Barbe, 1967, p. vii).

Meyers and Hammill (1969) provide a somewhat different viewpoint in moving from a medical/neurological approach toward a behavioral/instructional viewpoint.

The medical orientation ultimately rests upon the assumption that something is wrong with the child. It emphasizes his liabilities and shortcomings, ignores his assets and strengths, and encourages grouping children on the basis of their disabilities. An alternate approach, advocated by the authors, views the so-called brain-damaged child within a

behavioral frame of reference and describes him as a learner with a difference. The point is not that he learns poorly but that he learns differently. A behavioral description of his learning style dictates the selection of appropriate instructional techniques and materials as no medical model can (Meyers and Hammill, 1969, p. v).

The pervasiveness of learning disabled children is noted by Lerner (1971) in that it is usual to find a few in every classroom.

A typical school class includes two or three children who are destined to become educational discards unless their learning disabilities are recognized and diagnosed and ways are found to help them learn. Although children with learning disabilities are not blind, many cannot see as normal children do; although they are not deaf, many cannot listen or hear normally; although they are neither retarded in mental development nor deprived of educational opportunities, they cannot learn and many develop personality and social disturbances. Moreover, many of these youngsters exhibit other behavioral characteristics which make them disruptive in the classroom and at home (Lerner, 1971, p. v).

Other authors note the lack of consensual agreement on this very important subject of children with learning disabilities.

We do not think it possible to write a distinguished treatise on the subject of learning disabilities at this time, though many would yearn to write such a book and even more to read it. There is no such thing as professional consensus on the subject because there is so little in the way of firm data to support a given point of view (McCarthy and McCarthy, 1971, p. xi).

Although he did not describe the learning disabled child in the preface to his book, Gearhart (1973) did address the pick and choose, or cafeteria style, method of selecting educational approaches for these children.

... in attempting to explain the variety of educational approaches, systems and methodologies ordinarily included under the learning disabilities "umbrella," I have repeatedly found it necessary to utilize a number of texts and resources because all needed materials were not available in any one volume (Gearhart, 1973, p. ix).

Wallace and Kauffman (1973) deal with learning and behavioral problems rather than with the labels typically used to describe unsuccessful learners.

Learning problems are defined in terms of specific behavioral deficits rather than in terms of non-functional categories or traditional special education labels. Principles of behavior management and academic remediation are described in understandable language and illustrated with examples drawn from the classroom. Early detection and good teaching are discussed as primary facets of prevention of learning problems (Wallace and Kauffman, 1973, p. iii).

Although not alike in many respects, they all come to the attention of the teacher of learning disabled children. What the future holds for these children and how the educational system will deal with them is currently unclear in the views of Bryan and Bryan (1975).

He is the brain damaged, the poor reader, the poor speller and the poor mathematician. In other words, the learning disabled are a melange of children with a variety of academic problems. Clearly, all of these children are not really alike in important elements, but they all fall within the scope of the learning disability specialist. How they will be grouped, viewed and otherwise treated in the future remains to be seen (Bryan and Bryan, 1975, pp. xiii-xiv).

Ross (1976) suggests, perhaps, that educators are overlooking an important source of information in their attempting to understand the problems of learning disabled children.

At first these children were known as underachievers; then people seeking a cause for the problem spoke of minimal brain damage. Later, when no brain damage could be demonstrated, the phrase "minimal brain dysfunction" was coined. Most recently, the term "learning disability" has attained wide acceptance. The problem of these children has been described as hyperactivity, impulsivity, distractibility or short attention span. Labels such as "hyperactive child syndrome," "perceptual handicap," and "specific learning disorder" continue to have currency. The problems of the learning-disabled child lie in the areas of perception, attention, memory, association and information processing. Psychologists have investigated these topics for many years, yet the results of these investigations have rarely found their way into the literature on learning disabilities (Ross, 1976, pp. xi-xii).

## Discussion

At least two major currents of thought emerge from this cursory investigation of authors' views of LD. First, children are seen as inefficient learners due to a presumed neurological dysfunction within the child. The child may be brain damaged, hyperactive, impulsive, distractable, perceptually dysfunctional, or his disability may be specific in that he cannot read, write, spell or work arithmetic problems. However stated, the meaning of LD in this view is "something is wrong within the child." It is the child who is responsible for his learning problems; and if anyone is to be blamed, it must be the child.

The second current of thought emphasizes the LD child's differences as a learner rather than his liabilities as a child. Rather than addressing labels and the categorical concerns of special education, this approach emphasizes the academic and social deficits of the child and specifies the tasks which the child must learn. Rather than placing full responsibility on the child for his failure to learn, this approach advocates a responsibility for learning shared between the child, his teacher and the learning environment. Some authors refer to this approach as behavioral. Regardless of its designation, the approach is child-oriented, positive, constructive and continually guided by an instructional strategy of "can do."

This brief investigation has led to the same polarity of thought one would glean from an investigation of the research literature. That is, the field of LD after perhaps 15 years of research, thought, and practice is still as nebulous and as polarized as it was shortly after its inception. Specialists, professionals and lay persons alike use the terminology of the field with ease and authority, but what they actually mean with their verbiage is often of

doubtful value to the teachers who must teach these children. This is a critical issue in the field of learning disabilities.

Perhaps if the field were more oriented to the needs of the teachers who must often struggle alone in trying to meet the needs of these children, much of the nebulosity of the field could be eliminated. If the crucial recipients of research and expert opinion were to be identified as the "teacher," perhaps Grossman's (1974) observations of the morale problems experienced by LD specialists; and the considerable doubts they harbor concerning the validity of their professional activities could be eliminated. Perhaps if more consideration were directed to the needs of the teachers who live and work daily with LD children, a unified front could be developed within the field and the full resources of the field focused on the serious business of educating the child who happens to be a different learner.

In conclusion, while a state of confusion may be healthy for researchers and scholars in the development of a new discipline, it is of small comfort to the teachers and parents who must live and work with LD children on a daily basis. Perhaps if the field were to become more concerned with learning *how* to teach these children, it could evolve as an instructional discipline rather than the semantic jungle it currently reflects.

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## Athletics and art

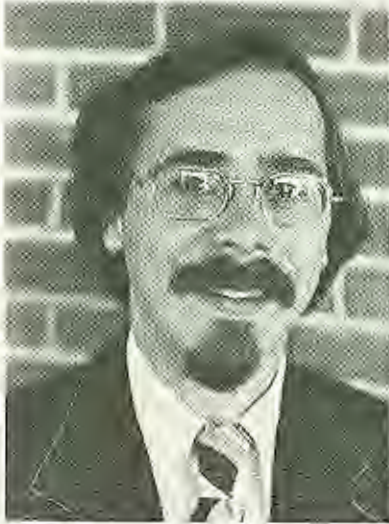
Among those many things most of us do as well as we can—without once considering them as acts of intelligence—are athletics and art. The nonathlete has long derided sports as the doltish domain of mental laggards and meatheads, but there is at least inferential evidence that such surpassing motor skills are in the truest sense intelligent. The finest sort of spatial and kinesthetic intelligence may not be limited to dance and sculpture but may also be tautly at work on a circus tightrope, in the pert muscularity of an Olga Korbut, in the crack of Hank Aaron's bat against baseball, in the fifty-yard "bomb" a quarterback lays in the outstretched arms of a racing flanker.

**Human Intelligence.** Jack Fincher. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1976. p. 133.

This article confronts the issue of homosexuality as it relates to the school. The treatment that educators have generally given to homosexuality reflects an unfortunate pot-pourri of prejudice and misinformation that is shared by a great portion of the public. This article provides basic information to educators who have not been in a position to objectively consider the issue of homosexuality and the school, and attempts to nudge educators toward further fact-finding and consideration of the problems so that they may foster change in their schools and communities.

# Homosexuality: out of the educational closet

by Walter M. Mathews



Walter Mathews, associate professor of educational administration at the University of Mississippi, teaches quantitatively-oriented courses in the graduate school of education. He has taught for several years in his home town of Philadelphia in addition to teaching in Turkey and Sri Lanka on Fulbright grants. In 1971 he received the Ph.D. in the research training program at the University of Wisconsin—Madison. He is active in regional and national activities in the areas of computers, research, and measurement and was the founder of the Mid-South Educational Research Association. He is also the director of the HEW-funded Women's Educational Equity Project at the University of Mississippi.

Of all the activities of human beings, those connected with sex have been subject to the most intense efforts at regulation. Various societies have had varying attitudes towards sex, ranging from almost unlimited permissiveness to absolute prohibition. Our Western Christian civilization, based on Judaic morality, has clearly tended to be repressive in this area (Linder, 1963, 57)\*

Our schools reflect society and enforce and transmit this repression. During the years of bodily growth and sexual maturation, shame and guilt are frequently attached to various forms of erotic play, while illogical and mythical fears, anxieties and punishments are too often brought to bear on sex-related activity.

The teacher's impulsive response to children's sex-play is in many cases modified by the "acceptability" of the activity. A young boy showing affection to a girl might be smilingly accepted as being "cute," but a boy showing affection to another boy too often would be treated as exhibiting an unnatural latent tendency that must be stamped out—for the good of society as well as participants.

The school's reaction to homosexuality generally has been one of disgust, anger, hostility and sometimes pity. Shame and embarrassment are the school's commonly used tools in the repair of homosexual tendencies in students. But, what is the school's reaction when homosexuality is a trait of a teacher?

## Homosexuality in the Teaching Ranks

Joseph Acanfora was graduated from Pennsylvania State University in June of 1972. He accepted a position to teach earth science to eighth graders in Rockville, Maryland. While he was a senior, he brought suit against

\*Even so, many well-known people have "come out of the closet," a few of the women are the Greek poet, Sappho, Queen Christina of Sweden and writers: Emily Dickinson, Wills Cather, Gertrude Stein and Virginia Woolf. Some men include the Greek philosophers; Zeno, Socrates, and Aristotle; great leaders: Alexander the Great, Emperor Hadrian, Richard the Lion-Hearted, Richard II, King James I, Frederick the Great, King Gustav III, T.E. Lawrence (of Arabia), Dag Hammarskjöld; others include: Sophocles, Leonardo da Vinci, Christopher Marlowe, John Milton, Lord Byron, Hans Christian Andersen, Walt Whitman, Samuel Butler, Peter Tchaikovsky, Oscar Wilde, Marcel Proust, E.M. Forster, John Maynard Keynes, Jean Cocteau, W.H. Auden, Jean Genet, Tennessee Williams and Brandon Behan. (Wallechinsky and Wallace, 1975, 1006.)

the University seeking equal rights for homosexuals. Soon after his legal dispute was publicized, he was transferred from his classroom to the central office of the school system. In May of 1974 he lost his legal appeal to be reassigned to the classroom. (See *The New York Times*, 1972).

The case is another instance of the growing visibility and militancy of homosexuals, challenging the long-standing educational response of dismissing acknowledged homosexuals. Most state laws permit the removal of teachers—even if they have tenure—if they engage in "immoral or unprofessional conduct."

Several American cities have anti-discrimination laws protecting homosexuals. Washington, D.C. has perhaps the most comprehensive law, but at least some employment is protected by law for homosexuals in Minneapolis, Detroit, Ann Arbor and San Francisco. Other cities that have banned some form of discrimination against homosexuals include Columbus, Ohio; Seattle, East Lansing and Berkeley. Chicago, Philadelphia and New York City are considering laws. (Johnson & Herron, 1974).

Recent court decisions have held that homosexuality in and by itself is not cause for disqualifying a teacher, and that is the official policy of the New York City Board of Education. In 1969 the California Supreme Court in the case of *Morrison v. State Board of Education* (82 cal. rptr. 175, sup. ct. 1969) held that the State Board of Education cannot abstractly characterize homosexual conduct as immoral unless that conduct indicates that the person is unfit to teach. The court added that the power of the state to regulate professions and conditions of government employment must not arbitrarily impair the right of the individual to live his private life, apart from his job, as he deems fit. Teachers' unions and educational and legal groups have frequently supported accused homosexuals. The United Federation of Teachers in New York City generally defends the right of homosexual teachers to teach, and the National Education Association financed the *Acanfora* litigation.

Still, employment in education is not easy for acknowledged homosexuals. Because we make it difficult for homosexuals to be happy, many are not.

### Some Thought for Educators

Traditionally, principals and school boards have not had too much difficulty in detecting homosexuals when they applied for teaching positions. Teachers, too, seem to be able to spot the homosexual—for that matter, many of us pride ourselves on our ability to pick the "queer" out of crowd.

I do not mean to say that *all* male homosexuals walk with a sway and have a limp wrist or verbal lisp, but they *are* usually "arty" or "feminine" or at least non-athletic—*aren't they?* When I was in high school, it was easy: they all wore either yellow or orange on Thursdays.

It is a common misconception that men who appear physically effeminate, with extra fat deposits, wide hips, feminine hair distribution, etc. are more likely than others to be homosexuals. This assumption was tested at the military induction center in Detroit, and the finding was that homosexuals were no different physically from individuals who have a heterosexual orientation (Ruben, 1965, 8-9).

The truth is that homosexuals who are obviously ef-

feminate males or mannish females constitute only a small fraction of the homosexual population. Most cannot be identified simply on the basis of appearance or behavior. An estimate by the Institute of Sex Research of Indiana University at Bloomington is that perhaps 15 per cent of male homosexuals and five per cent of female homosexuals are easily recognizable. A recently published study of 2,437 homosexual men in the United States, the Netherlands and Denmark who were not psychiatric patients reported that most of its respondents—68 per cent in the United States, for example—still attempted to conceal their homosexuality from heterosexuals (Weinberg and Williams, 1974). Forty-five per cent said they would not want to give up homosexuality even if they could, as opposed to 28 per cent who would wish to do so, with 27 per cent "not sure."

Hooker's studies (1963, 141-61) of well-adjusted homosexuals in the community indicated that, on careful and objective psychological testing, they could not be differentiated from a control group of adjusted heterosexuals in their communities. These findings have been confirmed by other investigators of the homosexual community.

The military services expend considerable effort to exclude homosexuals from their ranks, yet Gebhard (1972) found that 47 per cent of his sample of homosexuals had military records, and of these, 75 per cent had received honorable discharges. Williams and Weinberg (1971) found that almost all homosexuals in the military served with honor.

Freedman (1971) summarized more than a dozen of the many recent studies which show that when homosexual subjects are compared with heterosexual control groups, except for sexual preference, there is no significant difference between them. Simon and Gagnon (1967) pointed out that when the mental health of homosexuals and heterosexuals is judged by the same standard, homosexuals are found to function quite well.

Parker (1972, 695) asserted that as the study of homosexuality shifts from the medical-psychiatric to the sociological field, researchers are coming to look at homosexuals as a minority group distinguished by their sexual nonconformity and characterized by needs and attitudes similar to those of other minorities. In the vocabulary of the social sciences, Parker concluded, homosexuals are not sick, sinful or criminal; they are deviants. The American Psychiatric Association decided in April of 1974 to stop describing "homosexuality per se" as a mental illness. Instead it voted to define problem cases as those "who are bothered by, in conflict with or wish to change their sexual orientations" (Kihss, 1974).

In 1935, Freud wrote in his famous letter to a distressed American mother: "Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation, it cannot be classified as an illness; we consider it to be a variation of the sexual function produced by certain arrest of sexual development." (see *SIECUS*, 1970, 5)

In the majority of human societies studied homosexual behavior has been condoned or even encouraged for at least some members of the population. It should be noted that this majority does not include the complex modern societies and that the meaning or significance of a given sexual practice varies widely from culture to culture (Ruben, 1965, 8). Weinberg and Williams (1974) described the United States as one of the most anti-

homosexual of modern Western societies in terms of laws and popular opinions.

The Institute for Sex Research prefers to speak in terms of homosexual behavior rather than of homosexuality, and to classify persons according to their position on a 7-point scale that ranges from exclusive heterosexual behavior to exclusive homosexual behavior. The Institute estimated that one out of about 25 white males in our society is exclusively homosexual all of his life. For females, the estimated incidence of homosexual behavior is about half of that of males.

Now four out of 100 is a small ratio, but when we consider the hundreds or thousands of students in any one of our schools, we begin to see the sizable minority involved. And, recall, these estimates are for the extreme position on the 7-point scale, i.e., exclusive homosexual behavior.

### The Last Hope: A Sensitive Educator

Traditionally as teachers we have avoided any discussion of homosexuality while supervising student behavior—particularly in dormitories and washrooms—and even when confronting some we suspected. Weinberg and Williams (1974) concluded from their international study of homosexuals, that probably their most salient finding pertains to the beneficial effects of a *supportive* environment for homosexuals, which included social relations with other homosexuals, their institutions and publications.

For reasons of tradition, societal pressure and ignorance, the school usually provides the opposite environment. It is not expected that schools will now sponsor gay-student groups, however. (Although that may not be a bad idea.) The first step toward change in a school usually happens in a nervous conversation in the counselor's office or with a trusted teacher after class.

Homosexuals are individuals, and aside from their sexual activity, little can be said about them as a group except possibly for their paranoia with respect to "straight" society. They have the same wants, needs and fears as all people—including the needs to be recognized, liked, accepted and understood.

Assuming a counselor attempts to meet these needs for *all* students, he or she could take another step for homosexuals by becoming familiar with the local and national organizations of, for and about homosexuals—from NIMH to community gay-lib groups—and by having copies of some representative literature from these groups for distribution or circulation to students, parents and colleagues.

According to Hooker (1961) efforts should center around three things: (1) creating a climate that allows homosexuality to be openly and sensibly discussed and objectively handled; (2) providing for adequate sex education of both parents and children, so that the homosexual can understand himself better and the community can free itself of its punitive attitudes toward all sexuality; and (3) increasing efforts to provide family coun-

sel and child-guidance services designed not only to promote healthy family life but also to provide specific help for parents whose children show early signs of developmental difficulties. A sensitive teacher or counselor is frequently in the best position in a school to help mold a climate that allows the issue of homosexuality to be sensibly discussed and handled in an objective way. It starts with one student contact and extends to and through all the other contacts that he or she has, and these must include other sensitive administrators and teachers.

Gay is not beautiful to all of us, but it is a way of life for a significant minority of our students. Shall we continue to treat them with disgust, anger, and hostility or merely choose to inflict our damage by failing to be knowledgeable about the realities of homosexuality and by ignoring the existence of homosexuals in our schools?

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Competency based education can promote development of a positive self concept in students.

# Competency based education: catalyst for reform

by Howard D. Hill



Howard D. Hill is an assistant professor in the Department of Foundations of Education at the University of Houston. He holds a B.A. degree from Philander Smith College, an M.S.E. degree from Arkansas State University and a Ph.D. from Kansas State University. He specializes in teaching the cultural foundations of education and conducting in-service workshops for teachers who work in inner city schools.

For nearly a decade, competency based teacher education (CBTE) has been widely discussed among those whose major commitment is the preparation of teachers.<sup>1</sup> Its strongest supporters view it as an agent for educational reform and as a vehicle for bringing more humanistic attitudes to evaluation of student performance. Detractors of competency based education attack it as being anti-intellectual and costly, as well as providing the means for dehumanizing education.<sup>2</sup>

This paper presents a rationale in support of the competency based approach as a method for improving teacher training and educational programs.

Before examining some underlying assumptions of competency based education, a definition is in order. According to McCleary, the term "competency based education" is used with such abandon that there is danger of its usefulness being destroyed. Unfortunately, the term has as many meanings as there are people presenting themselves as "experts" in the field.<sup>3</sup> Hamilton provides the following definition of CBTE:

... this approach can be defined as one which specifies objectives in explicit form and holds prospective teachers accountable for meeting them. Teacher competencies and measures for evaluating them are specified and made known in advance of instruction.<sup>4</sup>

This same method is then utilized by "competency" trained teachers in working with students and is generally referred to as competency based education (CBE). The above definition is congruent with that proposed by many writers in the field and will provide a point of focus for this paper.

Many of the criticisms waged against the competency based approach are not really justified. For example, some studies comparing the traditional vs. the competency based approach in working with academically disadvantaged students have yielded results strongly supportive of CBE in specific areas of student achievement.<sup>5</sup> Far from dehumanizing education, a competency based

approach can promote development of a positive self-concept in students—assuming that the teacher has been well educated in the approach and holds values consistent with it. After all, CBE shuns the norm-referenced system of grading which places a premium upon “discriminating” between students. What can be more dehumanizing than having one’s work translated into a point on a curve?

A totally different set of assumptions seems to underlie the evaluative method used in CBE—that of criterion-referenced grading. Here, it is more important to ascertain an individual’s status with respect to a pre-established criterion. (Not empirically based, they say?) Thus, one student’s scores are not compared with other students’ scores. A teacher may insist that 90 per cent is the criterion for passing a unit exam, so that all students must make that score before going to the next material. This message from the teacher could possibly help to eradicate negative self-concepts on the part of some students, such as “I’m just a C student,” “I never do well on tests,” etc. The expectation of the teacher in this example is that all students are *capable* of a 90 per cent score. (It is a well-established principle that people tend to perform the way they are expected to perform by others.) If a large number of students fail to meet the criterion, the teacher needs to take a serious look at the objectives and method of instruction.<sup>6</sup>

Also, traditional approaches have held time constant, sometimes resulting in great variability in student achievement. In CBE time may vary, but attempts are made to hold achievement constant. After all, is it really valid to say that the student who scores 90 per cent on an exam the first time knows the material better than the one who scores 90 per cent after two attempts?

Another characteristic of CBE is the accountability system utilized in assuring that the student achieved the stated competencies.<sup>7</sup> The teacher is held accountable for specifying *objectives* and *criteria*; the student is held accountable for *meeting* them. This system aims toward clear communication between teacher and student, hopefully removing some of the ambiguities students have traditionally encountered in trying to “figure out” what teachers expected of them. In traditional educational programs the criterion for a “good” instructor is how much he/she knows about the subject and how well it is presented. In CBE, the criterion for a “good” instructor is the extent to which he/she is effective and efficient in helping students acquire the competencies they are seeking.<sup>8</sup>

An additional advantage to CBE is that it is one of the few curricular frameworks where there is a built-in potential for self-correction through feedback.<sup>9</sup> A combination of product and process evaluation can be used to assess a CBE program’s effectiveness.

In summary, benefits of competency based education include:

- The students know what is expected of them.
- The specificity of objectives can lead to improved evaluation procedures.
- Learning activities can be self-paced and individualized, leading to increased student independence.
- The teacher can more easily become a true *facilitator* of learning.
- The individual student competes with himself rather than other students.

Competency based education, if given a chance, may provide the most viable agent for reform of our educational system that has been proposed to date.

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Several factors have caused many universities to review and revise their graduate teacher education programs.

# Innovative masters degree programs in teacher education

by Pat Haas, Judith Redwine  
and L. James Walter



Judith Redwine is the author of another article in this issue. Her biography and photo appear on page 6.

Pat Haas has been a research assistant at Indiana University at South Bend and worked extensively on program revision projects. She has also worked on career education projects and developed a booklet entitled, "Alternative Careers for Teachers." During her tenure as a secondary English teacher, she taught in Indiana and California. In California she designed a series of English programs for Spanish speaking adults.

Program development in higher education and individualized instruction are two major interest areas of L. James Walter, an assistant professor of education at Indiana University at South Bend. He has also taught at the University of Nebraska and served as an assistant research professor at the Teaching Research Division of the Oregon State Systems of Higher Education. Author of several articles, he also writes on performance objectives, computer-based testing, teaching centers and performance-based in-service programs.

Teacher education programs in institutions of higher education are in a period of transition. Numerous factors, such as: reduced teacher turnover rate, revised certification standards, influence from humanistic and behavioristic psychologies, salary plans which provide additional compensation for teachers with advanced training, and rising expectations for schools, have stimulated the design of new models for the professional preparation of teachers.

In the past five years these innovations have taken place primarily in undergraduate teacher education programs. Among these innovations are: performance-based programs, earlier and more extensive use of field experience, micro-teaching, individualized programs and specialization in areas such as urban education, humanistic education and multi-cultural education.

Until recently, graduate teacher education programs have remained relatively traditional. Several factors have caused many universities to review and revise their graduate teacher education programs. Enrollments at the undergraduate level have declined in recent years while enrollments in graduate teacher education programs have been increasing. Continued large graduate enrollments are motivated by state certification requirements, teachers' felt inadequacy as new models of instruction are developed, additional compensation for advanced degrees and the limited job market for teachers at the present time.

An increasing proportion of the graduate student population has had innovative undergraduate training. These students expect something worthwhile from a costly (in terms of time and money) graduate program. Faculty members have been encouraged by large enrollments to devote time to graduate program development. Graduate faculties are beginning to recognize that a traditional "master's degree" with its heavy emphasis on research and theoretical foundations may not be very appropriate for a practicing teacher. The resulting willingness to compromise with a far more practical "fifth year of study" approach stands a much better chance of actually increasing teacher effectiveness for elementary and secondary teachers. As enrollments swell, institutions of teacher education must expend their time, energy and resources redesigning the too long neglected graduate programs.

The literature found in journals, publications, ERIC documents, monographs and other information received from graduate teacher education programs throughout the country has been perused in search of innovative master's degree programs and the current status of existing programs. Programs evolve and the literature does not always accurately reflect the changes. Written materials cannot completely illustrate the nuances of a program. Also, one report or article is not enough to give a total picture of a school's program; usually some aspect of a program is highlighted. Nevertheless, a few programs can be chosen to show the diversity and range of new and existing programs; no attempt has been made to provide an exhaustive review. An examination of innovative graduate level teacher education programs reveals four major trends which influence graduate teacher education programs in the colleges and universities in the United States.

### Multiple Programs

The first trend is that of single institutions offering multiple programs in teacher education. A student can select the program which best suits his/her interests, present career needs or anticipated career needs.

An institution which is characterized by an array of at least 20 programs is the University of Massachusetts. There a student can choose from a range extending from a performance-based program to one with a philosophical belief that teaching is an art. One can elect an off-campus or an on-campus program; one can choose courses in urban education or more traditional courses. Another program sends students into the community. Students can specialize in terms of grade levels, subject curriculum areas, instructional process or a combination of areas. (Allen:44-45). Although the University of Massachusetts and Dwight Allen have been severely criticized of late, the concept of multiple programs has had its influence on teacher education programs throughout the country.

Other institutions offering multiple programs in teacher education include Indiana University and the University of California. The larger universities are able to offer multiple programs more easily at present than the smaller universities due to larger more diversified faculties and more financial resources. The movement to offer multiple programs appears to be growing despite inherent administrative problems. Finding and keeping qualified professors so that programs can continue to be offered and evaluation problems certainly are to be considered before instituting multiple programs.

### Performance-Based Teacher Education

The second trend is that of performance-based teacher education (PBTE) also called competency-based teacher education (CBTE). This movement is having a profound influence on undergraduate teacher education throughout the United States. It is now beginning to impact on graduate teacher education programs. Although there are variations, most programs are characterized by preassessment to place students within the program, the absence of strict time constraints (grades are often deferred until work is completed at a satisfactory level) and micro-teaching.

There are several indications of the influence PBTE has had on education at many different levels. Twenty states have introduced performance-based education into their credentialing systems and at least 14 other states are

considering such a move. (Schmeider:19). Many universities throughout the country have comprehensive performance-based undergraduate programs (the University of Houston, Kansas State University, the University of Nebraska and the University of Toledo to name some of the first to institute such programs). Graduate teacher education programs are now feeling the influence of PBTE.

Many universities have graduate performance-based courses in their programs, and other universities have the learning of competencies as an essential part of more comprehensive graduate programs. Illinois State University, the State University of New York at Stony Brook, the University of Wisconsin and the University of Bridgeport are just a few of the universities that can be cited. In fact, the University of Bridgeport is a competency-based, individualized graduate program called ModMAP (Modular Multiple Alternatives Program) for the training of elementary teachers who are, for the most part, presently employed and planning to remain in their present job for some time. A student in this program experiences a comprehensive needs analysis in order to determine the competencies which would improve the student's teaching effectiveness. After this analysis the student's individual program is planned around clinical activities, workshops, and independent study modules. All the activities are oriented toward competency achievement and an ongoing evaluation of competency achievement is conducted. (Kranzyk and Keilty:26-29)

To the dismay of PBTE advocates, an "inhumane" image clings to the use of goals and systematic instructional procedures. PBTE advocates feel that the real emphasis in their programs is on people and not objectives. Although it is a controversial subject, PBTE is not incompatible with the humane treatment of students.

The fact that so many states have introduced competency-based education into their credentialing systems and the vast number of competency-based undergraduate programs makes PBTE a very important trend for graduate teacher education.

### Humanistic Program

A third trend which exerts influence on many programs is best exemplified by the humanistic program at the University of Florida and the philosophy of Arthur Combs. The promotion of the self development of the individual teacher is the basis for this program.

The humanistic program at the University of Florida is based on several principles. A few principles central to the movement can be identified:

1. Acquisition of new information and the discovery of the personal meaning of that information are the two aspects of learning.
2. Efficient learning takes place when the learner feels the need to know that which is to be learned.
3. If students help make important decisions about their learning, they learn with more ease and alacrity.
4. Too much pressure on students results in negative behaviors such as fearfulness, cheating, and avoidance which are detrimental.
5. Improvement of a teacher's mental health frees creativity, self-motivation and a concern for others which increases the teacher's effectiveness. (Atkin and Rath:18-19)

Although many universities have not adopted humanistic programs, certain of their ideas are appealing and no doubt will have influence as programs are developed.

### Field-Centered Approaches

The fourth trend to be seen is the wide-spread use of field experiences. The theories that people develop most of their competence on the job and that teachers teach as they have been taught are popular ones. Providing earlier field experiences is an important trend in undergraduate education, and its influence can surely be felt at the graduate level. Even experienced teachers need help with their own particular teaching situations or anticipated ones to become master teachers.

Many universities have field experience as a basic component in their programs. In some universities it is possible for both undergraduate and graduate students to take part in the same field experience project. The University of Chicago and its Ford Training and Placement Program in Chicago area schools is one example. (Schwartz: 1-29) Student teaching experiences are common to all in undergraduate teacher education programs. A similar component can be seen in master's programs. The University of Houston requires six hours of supervised classroom internship in their master's program as well.

In addition to cooperating on field experiences for individual students, some universities and school districts share a responsibility for all phases of the program. Project MERGE and Project OUTCRIE provide examples. Shared responsibility is evidenced by a merging of a school system's and a university's physical facilities, personnel and fiscal resources. Project MERGE combined the talents and resources of the Toledo Public Schools and Bowling Green State University to improve the quality of education. (Project MERGE:1)

In Project OUTCRIE Ohio University and the Meigs Local School District combined resources to improve the poor reading achievement and lack of academic stimulation of the children in Appalachian schools. In Project OUTCRIE 20 graduates of teacher education programs received professional training in a competency-based and field-based teacher education program. They received a Master of Education degree with a specialization in reading at the completion of the program. The university offered graduate courses in other cooperative public schools, and tuition was waived for those teachers in the Meigs Local School District. One other important aspect of Project OUTCRIE is the revising of the reading program and curriculum of Meigs Local School District so it is more conducive to the needs and interests of the Appalachian students. (Project OUTCRIE:1).

With federal support a tripartite (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont) graduate program for the preparation of early childhood specialists was set up at the University of New Hampshire. In this program both experienced and beginning teachers may earn a master's degree while they demonstrate theory in the classroom. The graduate students spend a summer of child study at the University of New Hampshire. At the end of the summer the graduate students form teams of two and depart to design, create and staff a multi-age learning center in a cooperating school district. Each graduate student, returns to campus approximately one week a month for independent study, related course work and seminars. The students have also

taken international field trips to a school in Toronto, Ontario, and to British schools.

In order to operate such a program it takes the cooperation of many. Local school districts provide the school children, classroom space for the learning centers, instructional materials and a paid aide. Resource visits to the learning center sites are provided by the State Department of Education personnel. They also help to identify new learning center sites, meet with the advisory committee and take part in the international field trips. The time, effort and coordination needed to offer a program of this nature represents a great commitment on the part of all involved. (Stone:1).

Rural education in Minnesota provides inservice education through a consortium of school districts and the cooperation of Bemidji State College's Education Department. Programs range from a face-to-face relationship in the teacher's setting with a college instructor to computer-assisted instruction through a mobile van. Bemidji State College also offers inservice workshops in various schools following the IGE model. The federation of school's request specific types of inservice workshops and teachers are granted graduate credit through college extension. (Askov:1).

Countless other examples of field experience at other universities could be cited. Field-oriented activity is a well established and accepted component of every program described in the literature no matter whether the program is a traditional one, competency-based, humanistic or included in multiple programs.

### Conclusion

Graduate teacher education programs are gradually beginning to change. The relatively few institutions which have made changes have not had time to conduct evaluation studies to determine the impact of their modifications. The impression that the focus on innovation in teacher education has been at the undergraduate level is an accurate one. Several trends in graduate program modification can be found, however; among these are: single institutions offering multiple programs, performance based programs, programs which center on a humanistic approach to teacher education, and a dramatic increase in the use of field experiences in graduate teacher education programs.

If teacher educators desire to have impact on K-12 education by providing teachers with better preparation, one has to wonder about investing resources to modify undergraduate teacher education programs and seemingly making few changes in graduate teacher education. Too few teachers with initial training obtain teaching positions to effect needed impact. It would seem that in the not so distant future that graduate teacher education programs have great potential for influencing the quality of teaching in K-12 education. If this is true, colleges of teacher education need to begin systematic development of graduate teacher education programs.

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Brosio originally prepared this paper as an oral presentation to a secondary school faculty for an in-service day.

# An in-service address; the foundations of education

by Richard A. Brosio



Richard Brosio has been an assistant professor of Secondary Education at Ball State University since 1972, the year he was awarded his Ph.D. by the University of Michigan. He also holds a B.A. in History (1960) and an M.A. in Education (1962) from the University of Michigan. From 1962 to 1969 he taught in the social studies area at two San Diego, California, high schools. Dr. Brosio's responsibilities at Ball State concern in-service participation and the social foundations of education, and he maintains a strong interest in the concept of—and quest for—community.

If one is to accept an offer to come and help conduct an in-service program, he must be confident that his potential contribution will be helpful to those who are to be serviced.<sup>1</sup> Unless one is an adviser or consultant in a highly technical field, it is not always without diffidence that one agrees to help. Education is a field, and an institutional reality, in which fierce arguments are raging. There simply is no consensus regarding what good education is in America in the last quarter of the twentieth century. There are no experts and no consensus, but we are still committed to wrestling with the most difficult questions concerning the school and the society.

In the absence of experts on profound educational questions, it may be that each teacher, and each maturing student, must develop the tools and proclivities to establish value criterion for him or herself. As Walter Lippmann wrote in *A Preface To Morals* (1929): we are beyond the time when an enduring orthodoxy is believable to large numbers of people.

Professor G. Max Wingo wrote in 1974,

"Our thesis is that American society is involved in a great transition, in which our whole way of life is being transformed. The common core of ideas and beliefs that once represented cultural solidarity is dissolving. We can no longer perceive what is constant and what is open to choice. The turmoil, therefore, that is so evident in American education is reflecting the confusion in American society."<sup>2</sup>

There are many self-appointed experts and consultants in education, who will tell anyone who may wish to listen, how to improve human relations and make the business of education run more smoothly. There are soul engineers in the world of business, the military, government and even the schools. Perhaps such people tread optimistically where others do so with greater caution, because those more diffident and fearful have wrestled with the tough existential questions confronting us all.

## II

In spite of the scorn which has been visited upon intellectuals in the twentieth century, it is the purpose of this section to sketch an honorific picture of persons who are intellectuals—persons who strive to make sense out of opaque existence.

An intellectual is not an expert on the hard questions of self, school and society in the same way that a physicist is an expert; but it is he or she who has historically led in the search for meaning in Western civilization.

Michael Novak has written, that the real task of an intellectual is to be a conscious part of what he is attempting to write or speak about.<sup>3</sup> The authentic intellectual must know what the experiences of the persons in the society are before he begins the difficult, but necessary, task of helping to articulate a description of the human condition for his own and his contemporaries' time and place. The person who comes to be honored with the descriptive adjective-intellectual-must be one who is able to speak out with pen, voice, or through cinema, theatre, etc. in such a way that his readers, listeners or viewers nod in recognition when they experience the ideas and insights being presented. An authentic intellectual person does not tell people things that they must do; he does not necessarily tell them things they don't already know. Instead, the intellectual helps a person, or people, to articulate what is already a latent feeling or recognition.

Expertise is not the same as wisdom. We are all intellectual persons when we are struggling in courageous and obstinate fashion with the profound questions which bedevil us within the human condition. An intellectual person is one who continuously works at developing the intellectual dimension of his character, but with a realization that the intellectual dimension is not co-existent with the whole rich matrix of human complexity.

We in education have too often concentrated our efforts on in-house questions—efforts which lead to short term, and sometimes specious solutions. The tougher questions do not go away. Lippmann has written,

At the heart of it there are likely to be moments of blank misgiving in which he finds that the civilization of which he is a part leaves a dusty taste in his mouth. He may be very busy with many things, but he discovers one day that he is no longer sure they are worth doing. He may be much preoccupied; but he is no longer sure he knows why . . . He finds it hard to believe that doing any one thing is better than doing nothing at all. It occurs to him that it is a great deal of trouble to live, and that even in the best of lives the thrills are few and far between.<sup>4</sup>

We are all submerged in the difficult questions facing us. This is the case because we are human and subject to the empire to time. When the Social Foundations<sup>5</sup> approach to education is done well, it is to these tough questions of the human condition that intellectual persons, who are educators, address themselves.

## III

Without having seriously grappled with the great and abiding questions which Western civilization has perennially addressed itself to, the cry for "better human relations" sounds like a pitch by an advertiser. The history

and tradition of the academic subject areas are at least a partial story of how the men and women of Western civilization have raised the abiding questions, and how they have sought to make sense out of experience. It is the position of this paper that one cannot have better human relations, in the profound and accurate sense of the term, if shortcuts are attempted which seek to pretend that the perennial concerns are not worthy of attention.

One knows his or her own history in comparative terms; consequently, one must know a great deal about the human condition itself in order to authentically and successfully deal with contemporary and individual problems. The educated person with whom one can have better human relations is not merely a dot upon a cold white surface—he is not an atom which is incapable of understanding and having empathy for another; he is instead, a person enmeshed in and heir to a complex inheritance which is made up of genetics, race, ethnicity, class, religion, etc. One is capable of real dialogue if he is profoundly grounded in the knowledge of his own history. One's knowledge of self is always worked through and is had within the rich mosaic of the history of the species. When a person knows himself in this manner, then he can empathize with a partner in dialogue; and this is the crucial factor in the process which can lead to the betterment of human relations.

The school must be a place where young persons are taught about the historic task of manipulating—from a hominocentric point of view—the stuff of a universe which may be benignly indifferent to human purpose. The various academic disciplines must be seen, as they were in fact historically developed, as a specialized assault upon chaos. Intelligent action is possible when men and women have become familiar with the disciplines, and have learned to act cooperatively within a democratic community of shared meaning.

## IV

Objective certainty is not believed to be easily had in the twentieth century. The series of revolutionary changes which have occurred in the Western world since the acme of medieval civilization in the thirteenth century have caused men and women to experience a splintering of perception itself. A lack of consensus has plagued Western civilization in the modern period. It becomes increasingly difficult to find *terra firma* upon which to base objectivity. We live in an age marked by the fact that orthodoxy is a state which is possible for only a few. There are, as we have seen, certain narrowly defined areas in which expertise and instrumental certainty is perhaps fleetingly possible. A modicum of objectivity and warranted assertibility can be gained, but when the ethical and ontological questions are raised, then the situation becomes more difficult.

Albert Camus has written, that although the world we experience seems to have no ultimate meaning, men shall go on giving meaning to things and events as long as we remain human.

I continue to believe that this world has no ultimate meaning. But I know that something in it has a meaning and that is man, because he is the only creature to insist on having one. The world has at least the truth of man . . .<sup>6</sup>

Although there are no experts and no certainty, we are not without ballast. There exists, within the West, a

verbal, musical, literary, conceptual tradition which can be discerned and studied. The record of this history is sometimes confusing because there have been disagreements and even wars over various and opposing interpretations of the tradition. In spite of this confusion, which is inherently part of the tradition, the record contains within it a distinguishable thin red line of consistent achievement. The thin red line has been based upon the assumption (perhaps not "provable") that human life is precious—that it is sacrosanct. The thin red line of agreement which we seek to describe is based upon the assumption that suffering is not inevitable—that suffering is bad. Furthermore, the agreement has included within it the corollary assumption, viz., that man should be able to maximize his potential during his time on earth.

The thin red line of agreement which we seek to describe is not easily explainable. The reader is invited to think through his or her own recollection of history so that the necessarily brief description herein can be supplemented. The thin thread of consistent human insistence upon the condemnation of suffering and savagery can be called man's quest for dignity. When human beings have temporarily stemmed the chaos inherent in suffering, ignorance and death, they have described that temporary state as being dignified. Dignity is a word which has been used to describe how man and women would like to be treated. When one achieves temporary harmony and clarity *vis-a-vis* the opaqueness of existence, then Western man has thought of himself to be dignified.

For the sake of clarity, let us assume that there have been different and classifiable emphases upon the historic quest for dignity in the West. For purposes of this analysis, we shall consider five facets or emphases in man's quest for dignity: (a) religious, (b) philosophic, (c) political, (d) economic and (e) psychological.

It can be said that Western man sought religious dignity when he defined his creator in anthropomorphic terms. The Judeo-Christian God has been said to intervene in man's history and has promised salvation. Closely related to man's demand for religious dignity, has been the quest for philosophic dignity. Plato spoke of the existence of eternal and universal forms of which men could partake, understand and share. There existed a realm of unalterable truth for the classical Greeks, and man's reason allowed him to share in that truth. If man's soul was thought to be capable of allowing him to conquer the empire of time, then the fourth and fifth century B.C. Greek contribution was a belief that man could share in the eternal through his reason.

We have seen a drive toward political dignity in the attempt of Western man to build political institutions which allow participation by more and more people. It is beyond the scope of this paper to analyze the whole problem of modern democracy, and/or the lack of it—but the fact is that almost no modern government can claim legitimacy without appealing to support of, and participation by, most of the citizens within its borders. There is a tradition within the West which has refused to settle for a definition of the good life which does not include participatory democracy as an integral part.

Since the time of Karl Marx, we have heard the cry which reminds us that while man does not live by bread alone, political, philosophical and religious dignity can be empty slogans without economic dignity and well-being. It could be argued that our own century can be charac-

terized by man's determination to secure economic dignity for himself and his progeny.

Our own century has also seen the quest for dignity translated into psychological terms. Since the time of Freud, we have been especially aware of the need for man to be free from psychological distress. We have come to realize that there can be no political democracy worthy of the name, if there are no democrats. It is more clearly recognized now, that religious and philosophic constructs can be more helpful if they are built by persons who enjoy mental health.

The ballast, anchor or thin red line is integrally related to man's insistence upon asking normative questions of whatever *status quo* he happens to live within. Herbert Marcuse<sup>1</sup> explains that Western man has refused to accept the legitimacy of *what is*; on the contrary, he is contrasting *is* with *ought*. There is a tradition which has refused to accept the legitimacy of the unrationalized *status quo*, and that refusal has been stated in the name of man's historical search for dignity. Men, using their own philosophical or religious ballast, fortified by historical memory and community support, have always asked normative questions of a *status quo* which they considered to be harmful to the well-being of the human beings—harmful to the possibility for better human relations.

As Marcuse and others have explained, the realm of *ought* has not simply been conjured up out of thin air, moreover it was not given from on high; instead, it has been, and continues to be fashioned out of the experience and imagination of men and women who have asked themselves the perennial questions we have been analyzing in this paper. The *ought* is hammered out of our personal history, when the individual chapter is understood as part of the larger story of human condition. Perhaps the normative *ought* can never be fully realized; nevertheless, it is a constant goad to all of us who are tempted to accept the injustice which is inherent in the human condition.

Education is the focal point of the human species' attack upon the inherent injustice which results from living within a world which was not made specifically for us. Education means the fashioning of tools which allow us to re-arrange the furniture of our existence. Better human relations, if they are not to be merely a slogan, can be aspired to by men and women who ask and work through the perennial questions—who construct grids and attempt to anchor them to the thin red line of the human attempt to live a dignified existence within a democratic community.

#### Footnotes

1. This writer is opposed to the term and concept—"serviced." Paul Goodman has articulated my dislike of the term "personnel" in his book, *People or Personnel* (1963). People or persons are better terms than personnel. Perhaps the reader can think of a better concept/word than "serviced?"
2. G. Max Wingo, *Philosophies of Education: An Introduction* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Company, 1974), p. 3.
3. Michael Novak, *The Rise Of The Unmeltable Ethnics* (New York: Macmillan Publishing, Co., Inc., 1971), Chapter Six.
4. Walter Lippmann, *A Preface To Morals* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1929), p. 4.
5. The social foundations approach to education attempts to place the school into the focus of what is occurring in the larger society. Questions of *ought* are raised—a normative dimension is used to analyze and criticize the descriptive *is*, or what might be called the *status quo*. Traditionally the social foundations of education have used philosophical, historical and sociological tools.
6. Albert Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion And Death* (New York: The Modern Library, 1960), p. 22.
7. *Vide, passim*: Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).

## Review

# The planning of change—reconciling the arts with science

Warren G. Bennis, Kenneth D. Benne,  
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*The Planning of Change*, Third Ed.,  
New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1976

The third edition of *The Planning of Change* continues the attempt to reconcile the social arts with the sciences evident in the first two editions. Recent developments are conspicuous, however, by the inclusion of numerous new readings. Structurally, the book consists of four sections: *Part One*—"Planned Change in Perspective," *Part Two*—"Diagnostics of Planned Change," *Part Three*—"Interventions for Planned Change," and *Part Four*—"Values and Goals." Readings in each section focus on central themes in current fields of inquiry.

In *Part One*, selections present an historical perspective of planned change and differentiate between the various current theories and practices. The historical perspective describes the evolving nature of relationships between social scientists and practitioners. Distinctions between contemporary theories and practices focus on different units of organization as targets of change, as well as intervention strategies applicable to each unit. In addition, consideration is given to current thought and action to induce change in extra-organizational targets.

*Part Two* explores the technical aspects of the concept of system, along with knowledge utilization, emerging views of planned organizational change, and sources of support in the legitimation of change efforts. The technical approaches of the system model are viewed as enabling planners to approach change with a degree of reliability not possible with more simplistic concepts. Points of view on the relationships between the general knowledge of scientists and the specific knowledge of practitioners are discussed. Sources of validity of knowledge are explored in terms of science, practice and interaction between the scientist and the practitioner. The effects of discrepancies between espoused or idealized theories and theories-in-action, as expressed in intervention strategies, are also analyzed.

Readings on emerging perspectives of planned organizational change center around the increasing

pressures from the political, economic, and cultural environments of organization. Embryonic direction for coping with forces in the environment in contention with intraorganizational pressures is given.

Developing support for people is set forth as being necessary for the legitimation of change efforts. Inherent in all the viewpoints expressed in this section of *Part Two* is a commitment to the direct involvement of those to benefit by the change considered. These positions seem to be premised on the assumption that people must have the requisite motivation and skills for autonomous action in order to effectively participate in meaningful change activities.

Readings in *Part Three* treat planning structures and processes, education and re-education, and power in the "new" politics as they relate to interventions for change. The selections dealing with planning structures and processes point toward the desired holistic conceptual system. An attempt is made to indicate direction for serving personal needs, as well as organizational goals reflecting environmental needs. Normative re-education approaches to planned change focus on underlying processes. Kurt Lewin's views are appraised, the implications of relations between consultant and client are explored, and the role of the community change educator as a helping professional is described.

"Power and the New Politics" (pp. 259-423) is a collection of readings not included in earlier editions. The "new" politics are characterized by techniques which may seem shocking, or at least alien, to those committed to traditional strategies. The techniques espoused by the radicals represented in these readings tend to evoke optimism and, at the same time, create disequilibrium in value structures.

*Part Four* of *The Planning of Change* discusses the implications of the value dilemmas faced by change agents. Readings focus on identifying meritorious goals and confronting ethical issues. The process of identifying goals is approached as a set of interactions between society and the learning communities of society. Goals for future societies are presented as the basis for establishing a shared world culture. The continuous psychic re-creation of man's "self" and his perception of his fate is seen as a strategy for dealing with contemporary and future psychohistorical cultural dislocation. Means of dealing with the ethical issues confronting planners of change are presented as a cluster of value commitments—to collaboration; to the basing of plans upon valid knowledge; and, to reducing power differentials between men and groups of men.

The third edition of *The Planning of Change* is somewhat disjointed, but at the same time consistency in underlying themes is evident. Views on planned change have undergone considerable growth and refinement in recent years. The contemporary nature of these views is reflected in the readings selected for the latest edition—eighty percent of the readings are new! With new content, the third edition of *The Planning of Change* becomes the current standard reference for advocates of change.

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## Review

# Public policy and the education of exceptional children

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Alan Abeson, Joseph Ballard, and Martin LaVor, (Ed.),

*Public Policy and the Education of Exceptional Children.* (Reston, Virginia: The Council for Exceptional Children, 1976) Pages: 378.

The 1970s have signaled the advent of a new era for the education of the handicapped child. Concepts such as *right to an education, least restrictive environment, due process* and *individualized education plan* emanating from litigation and legislation have had a significant impact on the education for the handicapped. The public policy arena in which these changes have occurred and will continue to evolve is the focal point of the Council for Exceptional Children publication titled *Public Policy and the Education of Exceptional Children*.

Through an examination of topics which include the rights which have been obtained for the handicapped, current federal and state policy, avenues for policy change, operation of the political process, and the rights and responsibilities of professionals, the editors have compiled a resource book not only for the exceptional education advocates but also policy makers. Tracing the historical movement of education for the handicapped to the present through legal decisions and legislation as well as exploring implications for the future enables the reader to gain additional insight into the relationship between education of the handicapped and education in general.

For organizational purposes the book is divided into five sections with a total of 20 authors contributing to the product. With a number of authors examining similar topics, there is a certain amount of overlap and repetition in the discussion of the various court cases and federal legislation; however, this detracts little from the overall book as each section can be read or viewed as an independent component.

One of the most valuable sections of the book from an administrative aspect is the first section. In this section, the educational rights of exceptional children are delineated according to recent court decisions and legislation. The section which consists of seven chapters includes an examination of the right to an education, due process of law, educational placement and confidentiality and record keeping. The chapters are permeated with summaries and discussions of the key court cases and their implications for education. In addition, the editors have concluded the section with a chapter containing excerpts from these cases.

The section on state and federal policy for exceptional children provides a useful compendium of past and present laws especially at the federal level. Most notable, Public Law 94-142, Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, is explored in detail and included in its entirety. Although the rights and financial assistance conveyed by this law were expounded, there was no discussion on compliance problems which states may encounter in applying for this aid. A comprehensive chapter on financing exceptional education explores the costs of special services and programs, patterns of state and federal aid, and the role of the three levels of government in funding special education. The author has succeeded in providing a concise overview of the issues involved in exceptional education finance.

In the third section litigation, legislation, attorney general opinions and administrative policies were identified as the major avenues for effecting public policy change. The purpose of this section is to familiarize the reader with the procedures that must be followed to achieve gains for the exceptional child in these areas. Resulting from this effort is a practical handbook or "how-to-do-it" approach. For example, the litigation chapter covers such questions as these: When is litigation appropriate? What is the issue? Does the plaintiff have standing to sue? What factors should be considered in selecting an attorney? How is the appropriate court selected? and so on.

The section devoted to understanding the political process aptly succeeds in demonstrating that educational changes are not apolitical. Although politics is a complicated and often frustrating process, the authors present a primer of basic strategies, procedures and practical advice from experience to enable the reader to operate more effectively as a change agent in the political environment.

Addressing the issue of professional rights and responsibilities appropriately concludes the book. This issue has been and continues to be a nebulous area for the professional educator since a firm legal base has not been established. Cases which have implications for the special educator are reviewed; however, the reader is admonished to proceed with caution in applying interpretations to other situations.

It is imperative that educators and policy makers familiarize themselves with the educational "rights" of handicapped children—rights which often have been ignored or misinterpreted. This book provides a comprehensive source for initiation into the public policy area where these rights have evolved.

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