



Education as an Art

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*Cover drawing, linoleum block print,
seventh grade student, Waldorf School,
Adelphi University.*

RUDOLF STEINER (1861-1925) *Austrian philosopher and educator. Founder of anthroposophy and of the first Waldorf School, Stuttgart, Germany.*

LISA D. MONGES *Eurythmist and translator. Founded the Eurythmy Training Course of Spring Valley, N.Y. As one of the students of the first Waldorf School, she took part in the eurythmy performance of children to which Dr. Steiner gave the Introduction printed in the following pages.*

KARI VAN OORDT *Born in Norway. Eurythmy training in Dornach, Switzerland. Taught eurythmy and performed in England, Norway, Switzerland, Jugoslavia, the United States and Mexico. Eurythmy teacher at the Rudolf Steiner School, Oslo; director of the Eurythmy Workshop for children, Jugoslavia; eurythmy teacher at the Rudolf Steiner School, New York, for 21 years. At present teaching in the Eurythmy Training Course of Spring Valley.*

COLIN YOUNG *Born in Edinburgh, Scotland; educated at the Rudolf Steiner School, Edinburgh. Came to this country in 1966. Class teacher of the present second grade at Green Meadow School, Spring Valley.*

ALAN HOWARD *Former teacher in English state schools and then at Michael House School, Ilkeston, Derbyshire. Former teacher and now advisor at the Toronto Waldorf School. Lecturer and author.*

GAIL SIMON REED *Entered the Nursery Class of the Rudolf Steiner School, New York, and graduated 14 years later from the High School. A.B. Bryn Mawr; M.A. Yale (Woodrow Wilson Fellow). At present a member of the Department of English, Hunter College, New York.*

HARRY S. BLANCHARD *B.S. Chem. University of Vermont. Ph.D. Chem. University of Michigan. Research scientist for the General Electric Company for 14 years. Teacher of chemistry, physics and math at Kimberton Farms School since 1965. Was Faculty Chairman last year.*

ANNA L. NEWHOUSE *Studied Music Education at S.M.U., Dallas, and was piano pupil of the late Miriam Wagner. B.S. University of Southern California and a graduate of the Highland Hall Waldorf Teachers' Training in Los Angeles. Taught at Highland Hall six years. Class teacher of the present seventh grade at Green Meadow School.*

All communications should be addressed to
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From an Address by Rudolf Steiner

Introducing a eurythmy performance given by pupils of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart, Germany, March, 1923

Eurythmy constitutes an integral part of the curriculum of the Waldorf School. Whenever it was my task to justify the insertion of eurythmy into the curriculum as a required subject, I stated that we had, in this respect, to see in it an ensouled gymnastics, permeated by the spirit.

Gymnastics has to do with those movements and exercises that place the human body in a position of equilibrium in regard to the world around it. It seeks to establish the relationship of man's systems of circulation and movement to space and the inner dynamics of space.

Eurythmy, as a means of education, is a direct continuation into the human organism of what takes place in gymnastics. In eurythmy we have to do with the qualitative inner dynamics active between breathing and circulation. Thus man gains through eurythmy an intimate body and soul relationship to himself. He experiences the inner harmony of the whole human being, which in turn strengthens him. The nature of this ensouled gymnastics permeated by the spirit has a strong effect upon soul and spirit, whereas ordinary gymnastics is chiefly a bodily activity. In eurythmy, however, man is active in body, soul, and spirit. Soul and spirit flow into the physical body when we carry out eurythmy movements. Since eurythmy is a lawful expression of the whole human being, just as speech and song are an expression of part of the human organism, the eurythmy exercises act upon the child in a natural way, just as the infant is open to the streaming in of the organizing forces of speech.

We have experienced that children who are introduced to eurythmy at the proper age feel themselves within eurythmy activity just as naturally as does the infant when it develops the sounds and forms of speech. The whole scope of human endeavor is enriched, and since all instruction and education must take hold of man through

man himself, we feel justified in employing eurythmy—which primarily is an art—in instruction, in the form of ensouled gymnastics permeated by the spirit. It has an effect upon the whole human being. It can be observed how the eurythmy exercises act upon the whole being of the child, making his capacity for thought more mobile and receptive. His world of thought becomes more structured and filled with interest. He turns in love to the objects of the world around him and enters readily into the subjects being taught.

On the other hand, the eurythmy exercises act strongly upon the will, upon the most intimate capacities of the human will. In words we might tell a lie; eurythmy, used in the proper way, can counteract this unhealthy tendency in a child. For when the words have to stream into the movements of the body, when we speak visibly, we cannot lie. When the utterance of the soul becomes manifest in the movements of the whole body, the possibility of lying ceases. Truthfulness which, as a capacity of the human will, is ethically of such great significance, will be developed through proper eurythmy training.

Thus we may say: for the child, eurythmy is a gymnastics derived from the soul; in turn, the soul receives a great deal from it. Eurythmy affects the capacity of thought and the capacity of will by developing mobility of thinking, interest, and truthfulness. It also affects in a beneficial way the feeling life, which lies between the capacity of thought and will.

When he carries out eurythmy, the child takes hold of the inner harmony between the higher, the more spiritual man, and the lower, the more bodily man. This creates initiative of will. Today this has to be striven for above everything else. Whoever is able to observe the psychological situation of the present age knows that initiative of will is terribly lacking and that it has to be more and more inserted into our social life. Eurythmy is a means to create this initiative of will and is therefore greatly needed in the education of the child.

(Translated from the German by Lisa D. Monges)

How Eurythmy Works in the Curriculum

An Answer to a Question Asked by an Elementary School Parent

The 'blueprint' of the idea behind a Rudolf Steiner school lies in the planning for each subject to be taught in relation to the right age of the child. This 'Waldorf School Curriculum' is a living organism, guiding the teachers in a broad and creative way, from kindergarten through the twelfth grade, and emphasizing the importance all along of applied imagination. Eurythmy comes in as a great help at every age level. In eurythmy we learn to control movement by means of rhythm and form. Eurythmy is controlled movement.

Practically every eurythmy lesson in all the grades begins with the forming of a circle—not just standing in a circle but actively forming it together, the teacher and all the pupils present. It is an image of wholeness in balance; it combines form, movement and rhythm in one gesture. As soon as the circle begins to move, swinging to the right, to the left, in toward the center—becoming very small, or out toward the periphery—becoming larger and larger, there is rhythm. The circle, as a balance between all these directions, contains every possible rhythm. Rudolf Steiner speaks about rhythm as 'the healer'; we try to have rhythm in everything we do in school, particularly in the elementary school years.

The swinging rhythms we do on the circle can lead us directly into the musical part of eurythmy, tone eurythmy, and at the same time can give us structure and form. The better we learn to mould the form, the more we are free to swing and sing rhythmically in the movement. If we can build a really firm eurythmy circle together, we can also let the 'builders' run loose in a free eurythmy swing and quite easily bring them back to order. In the lower grades it is better that each child has his own definite place on the circle line, whereas it is good for the older children to stand in different places and thus have to create a new circle every time. They will then benefit from

the selfless activity employed in forming a harmonious circle together with everyone else in the class. It may take time but it will give strength to the continuation of the lesson.

These rhythmic movements on the circle are done in a very simple way in first and second grade. Gradually the children become able to develop more complicated rhythmic form-patterns in the following years.

In the first grade we work with the colorful pictures of the fairy tales, whose rich material is needed at this age to nourish the imagination. The king and queen are given their dignified steps and eurythmy gestures. The changing over from the rushing of the wicked witch to the graceful movement of the princess is in itself a powerful rhythm. This approach to rhythm, the lively change from one quality to another, rather than by clapping or stepping out syllables with the feet, is altogether fitting for this age, when the children still dwell in dreamy pictures.

To make them experience the change from contraction to expansion, the teacher might let the children dive into and live for a long while in the element of contraction and then let them realize the relief of expansion, a change from the picture of something dark, heavy, narrow, tight, or sad into the opposite, bright, light, wide: letting them perhaps as dwarves crouch down and with tiny, tense steps hammer their way through a narrow passage . . . and then come to a bright opening where, becoming swallows, they can soar out over the sunny meadow in free-flowing flight.

These fairy tale images will then also suggest an immediate movement of the various consonants and vowels, without naming them as letters. Even in the second grade, where we continue with fairy tales, adding the fables and legends, we avoid giving a movement the name of a letter, waiting rather until the child is ready to discover it himself. In that way he will be able to enjoy the movement with an aura of imagination around it, instead of dropping it down to the level of intellect. The animal stories lend themselves particularly well to the experience of the movement of a consonant. We can characterize each wonderful animal in a concrete manner right down into our feet. There is a whole world of intangibles in

the difference between the child who performs the mighty D. . D. . of the elephant foot being placed on the ground, and the child depicting the dainty d. .d. .d. . of the hopping robin, the sneaky n. .n. .n. . of the fox or the heavy, warm B. .B. . of the good brown bear.

As we continue the rhythmic work in second and third grades, we can also make use of nursery rhymes which bring all kinds of rhythms both for stepping and clapping, as well as a rich variety of words and images. It is now time to become more secure with regard to left and right, and we can use the ringing, swinging bells of so many nursery rhymes to develop quite skilful changes from left to right,—even with two children together, swinging in various directions and rhythms.

In the third grade these exercises are brought further, expanding the movement to a larger reach and better control. The third-grader's imagination reaches right up to heaven with the Bible stories, as he learns at the same time to build his house here on earth. He also experiences these two 'reaches' in eurythmy, where his movement can swing out freer at this age than later on when the intellect may hold him back. It is expanding and freeing for the children to move and breathe eurythmically with the glorious largeness of the psalms, while at the same time they are learning precision and firmness in rhythmic stepping with their legs and feet.

These two opposite reaches can come closer and closer in the development of the child until he wakes up to a stronger self-awareness (and often becomes a nuisance to himself and others!). The far reaches change as the fourth-graders come a step further down to earth and now learn about the difference between man and animal . . . or, in the language of eurythmy form: they come into the square. The squareness is a rather rigid condition in which the fourth-grader can be guided to 'controlled freedom' in becoming aware of the four directions of space . . . in geography they are learning about their home town. In eurythmy, moving forward is an entirely different experience from moving backwards or sideways; in moving to the right, the child will feel strength and upsweep; in moving to the left, he can express inwardness and stillness. Working up to a certain security within the squareness and the four direc-

tions, the fourth-grader slowly develops into a fifth-grader and will then be ready to free himself from the square and from the circle.

There will be less and less the need to face the center of the circle or the need to be sustained by the class unit represented in the circle. He may now stand in a place where the four directions meet, within himself, freed from the class unit, facing forward. This is rather an important moment in the child's development . . . when he begins to look differently at the world around him. He is still 'behind the fence', as it were, but beginning to peep over it into the world.

In this transition toward self-awareness the child is getting ready for the rod exercises, for which up to now he has been carefully prepared, without getting into any particular 'body correction.' The fifth-grader excels in rod exercises as he grows more firmly into his body. He now reaches out to the palm of his hand, so to speak, and from now on we can require more active forming with the hand. In the work on dramatic poetry or music and in the experience of major and minor music, we have a wonderful opportunity to let the children enjoy the two contrasting forces of expansion and contraction that are alive in man. The fifth grade corresponds to the age of the balanced Greek, and we swing easily in the harmonious lemniscate (one of the eurythmy forms suggested by Rudolf Steiner), realizing that the supple grace will soon disappear when the children reach the sixth grade.

The sixth-grader has come even deeper down into his body and is open to law and order (in spite of his violent opposition toward it!). The curriculum calls for Roman history and geometry. In eurythmy we deal with geometric forms in all variations. The work we have done up to now with geometric forms has been more out of a sense of flow; now in the sixth grade we concern ourselves with the shaping and the precision of the form. The underlying laws, too, of a poem or piece of music are being studied and brought out in eurythmic movement. This can lead us to the understanding of the ballad form, which is scheduled for the seventh grade and which gives the boys and girls full opportunity to express the soul-filled moods of poetry. The children at this age experience intimately the

realm of the inner soul-life, at the same time that they are brought into contact with the laws of the star world in the study of astronomy. Both realms, inner and outer, can be expressed in eurythmy, the one through definite gestures characterizing a variety of soul moods and soul conditions, such as expectation, inwardness, hope, longing, love, etc., the other through moving in geometric forms or according to the grammatical structure of language.

The eighth grade is given the opportunity to develop further in this direction and to work strongly at the sculptural quality of language from many different aspects. This can awaken the eighth-grader to a balance between the outside world around him and the inner turmoil in which the girls and boys so often find themselves at this age. The work with these opposites helps to lead them to the inner security so needed when they reach high school age.

In the high school classes, the young people follow the poets and poetry of the various historical epochs. Now they can approach eurythmy with more artistic detail: expressive positions and movements of feet and hands, the heightened use of the laws of color, a deeper study of music; everything is raised to a more conscious level. As the curriculum moves forward in a spiral fashion, it touches again on the elements already studied in the lower grades.

Now it becomes more and more evident that eurythmy is not just a study for itself, as an intriguing school subject, but it is the means by which every child can be helped in his whole development. Thus throughout all the school years the eurythmy curriculum follows closely the main lesson curriculum, for this is adjusted to the development of consciousness at the various stages of the child's life.

—KARI VAN OORDT

Television and Learning in the Lower Grades

It is not the intent of this article to discuss the value of television programs from the point of view of the quality or esthetics of the subject matter. That is in itself material enough for another article. Nor will the more medical questions regarding the physical effects of television viewing be dealt with at this time.

Instead, I would like to focus, quite specifically, on television in relation to the learning process in the early grades and in particular to the development of the memory.

Quite obviously, academic learning is not possible until the child has developed the ability to use the faculty of remembering. In a Waldorf school the teacher helps the younger children to develop the process of remembering through a faculty which is readily available to all young children, namely, imagination.

Through the use of imagination, learning becomes a process which calls forth an activity on the part of the student. It is not a process of being asked to somehow remember a series of "interesting" facts, but an awakening to, and becoming conscious of, a deeper inner experience. Specifically how such an experience is brought about in the classroom may be seen in the following example.

The teaching of writing and reading (in that order), through the medium of the story, will proceed somewhat in this manner: as he listens to a story, every child becomes inwardly active by means of his imaginative faculties; he is constantly creating images and pictures, in his mind's eye, of the story to which he is listening. In this sense listening is an activity. On the following morning the children are asked to retell the story. Let us look more closely at what is involved in this process.

As he retells the story, the child does not remember the specific words or sentences, as used by his teacher, but rather, he calls before his mind's eye the images that he himself created on the previous day when the teacher told the story for the first time. He remembers the creation of his own activity and retells the story by reading from his picture memory.

Let us now compare what I have just described to the watching of moving film such as on T.V. programs.

The first question which must be raised is what activity is called for from the viewer? Certainly not the use of the imagination, for the story is conveyed, not only by sound, but by a sequence of very defined images, one following the other in rapid succession. The imagination is not challenged, nothing is asked of the child but passive absorption and just as with all faculties, when they are not exercised, the imagination becomes dulled and less and less available to the child. If then, as described, the imagination is the mainstay of early learning and of the development of the memory, the consequences of subduing it are very serious. Furthermore, children who are permitted to watch T.V. are being asked to carry a tremendous burden in that they are not only expected to learn in school, but to combat, at home, an influence which works directly against the very process of learning itself. In school one can often observe these "T.V. children" as the ones who, as if in a daze, are unable to take part fully in the lesson. Generally they tend to be poor learners with little capacity to remember much of what takes place in the class.

A question often asked by parents, and one deserving the scope of another article, is "How does my child develop his own individual gifts and capacities in a class situation where all the work is presented from one source, namely the class teacher?" Here I will attempt to answer this question only from the limited context with which this article has been concerned.

When a class of thirty children listen 'actively' to a story, there are as many different pictures created inwardly by the children in the class as there are children, each influenced by all that goes to make up the individuality of each child. On the other hand, if the children were to watch T.V., how many different pictures would be created? Where is there a place for the individuality of each child to find expression? Where, in fact, is his freedom?

—COLIN YOUNG

The Psychology of Moral Education

All education rests ultimately on the educator's conception of the child. That is psychology; and the psychology of Waldorf education is really nothing more than applied common sense. It is based on an observation of the growing child that anyone can make. Naturally, there is much more to it in detail, but that is fundamentally what it is. It may be outlined as follows.

Compare a new-born baby and the same child in its seventh year. The child has grown. Its physical body has matured in size, physiognomy and inner structure to a degree which will not be repeated in an equivalent period throughout the rest of its life. Compared with what it will be at six or seven, a child is hardly human, physically speaking, at birth. It cannot stand or sit, it cannot co-ordinate its movements, it cannot orientate its senses; it is physically helpless.

But already, helpless as it is, it begins to exercise what capacities for movement it has; and by seven can walk, run, throw and catch a ball with precision, use tools and direct its attention this way and that. Though still bearing a likeness to one or other of its family, it now has a characteristic physiognomy and build which set it apart from all other children. It is possible to mistake one new-born baby for another—as witness the precautions taken in maternity hospitals; but it is unlikely that a child of seven could ever be mistaken for another. While everything else has been 'growing' too, a certain concentration of emphasis has made it unmistakably a physically independent individual.

Now look at the same child seven years later. It has grown some more, admittedly; and in addition developed those extra physical characteristics which distinguish sex. But the overall physical difference between the child now and seven years earlier is nothing like so great as it was between then and birth. If you had known the child at seven and did not see it again until fourteen, the chances are you would still immediately recognize it as the same child. That would have been impossible between birth and seven.

The difference at fourteen is something you have to look for elsewhere than in physical changes. At fourteen an inner development manifesting in a marked personality has taken place. The child may still be recognizable in physical appearance to the one you knew at seven; but in the way it now regards you, speaks to you and in its whole stance and bearing, it reveals to you an inner sophistication not there before. Brash, immature as the result may yet be, the child has been developing and has now acquired all the rudiments of a distinct personality.

And now think of such a fourteen-year-old as a young man or woman some six or seven years later. Again there will be some physical changes, but slighter, nothing like so dramatic as those in the previous years. Now you are aware of a quite definite individuality active in a mind of its own, whose maturity is comparable with yours. Physical likenesses to the family are most likely still there, and certainly physical likenesses to itself seven or fourteen years earlier. Prominent similarities of personality might still remain too, but toned down, sophisticated, matured *by something that only now is coming to the fore*.

And this is what the whole business of growth has been about: to bring this 'something' to birth. This is what has been moving silently and unseen through all the changes of growth, integrating the whole — and now comes to self-consciousness within that whole as the human I or Ego. All the rest: body, personality — mind, even — is the instrument for this hidden being within.

The phenomenon of growth, then, in Waldorf education, is taken to mean the emergence of this I within a threefold being of body, personality or soul, and mind or spirit. It proceeds in three stages of emphasis, as has been indicated above, in order to accomplish it: first in the body, then in the personality or soul and finally in the mind.

It must be noted, however, that this view presupposes the I or Ego as something which was there from the start. It is not a 'side-effect' that has been added somehow, somewhere, along the way. It had already embodied itself at birth in what parents and ancestors had contributed by way of procreation and heredity. From then on,

unconsciously of course at first, it begins, together with whatever comes to it from the environment, to mould these three 'gifts' into a unitary being of its own design. It succeeds in so far as it is not completely overshadowed by the environment; it fails in so far as this is not the case. But it never entirely fails. There will always remain something uniquely himself in the most traditional, conventional person.

It is the business of education to recognize this; for if in childhood and youth while this process is going on, a child can be in touch with those who understand this, and who work with the child on this understanding, the chances are that he will come to maturity conscious of himself as an individual in his own right. Armed with a confidence in his individuality, he will act out of his own initiative and strength in co-operation with other individuals. Without it, he will tend always to live in a reflected individuality based on 'being the same as everybody else.'

The prevailing view tends to regard individuality as the sole product of heredity and environment. The man '*himself*,' as an independent contributory agent, is either ignored or flatly denied, with the result that there is nothing tangible to appeal to in all questions of moral and social behavior. We have to resort more and more to modifications of the environment in the hope that they will produce the desired moral effect.

This overriding importance of heredity and environment originates in just those circles where the most exhaustive and authoritative researches are done on the being and nature of man. They explain man entirely on the basis of material and objective research. From the time that sperm and ovum—both external objects—unite to form the germ cell, everything is supposed to take place in pre-conceived order; and any man can subsequently be read off as the result of these and those biological, material and environmental influences. Individual man is a phenomenon only, a sample of a species, who can be explained wholly in terms of that species.

This is an anomaly which contradicts all common sense; and although it may have some value for moral purposes in that it 'cuts man down to size,' and undermines those delusions of grandeur

which makes him at once so ridiculous and dangerous, it also deprives him of any real responsibility for himself or his fellows — which is the heart and soul of morality. If I really am nothing more than what can be read off from the composition of genes and environment, and if my claim to being also myself is nothing more than a built-in trick of some gland or other that I don't even know exists, then I may well be indifferent to trying to make anything other of myself than what those same glands and the environment are already doing. *I* cannot do anything *myself* by this token; and conversely *I* cannot be held responsible for anything I may do. Right and Wrong cease to be criteria for my self-conscious moral judgment. They are only categories of environmental and biological response. All talk of morality as the activity of an independent being becomes meaningless.

We are driven into this anomaly because while we have a science of practically everything else, we have no official science of the I or moral being of man. Our science is impersonal and amoral. It rests on a strict separation of subject and object. When therefore it comes to investigate man, it can only do so as another object. But man is not just an object in that sense. He cannot be external to himself. As subject he is at the same time his own object; he is the beginning and end of a knowledge out of which he *acts*, as an independent being with individual purpose.

And that is morality.

That such moral motivation is also mixed up with all sorts of other motives coming from the more external (objective) part of him, that is, the instinctive, hereditary and environmental part, goes without saying; but to regard the latter as the sum and substance of all he is, is to rob him not only of the possibility of morality, but even of real knowledge itself.

For the two go together — knowledge and morality. You can't know something without also wanting *to do* something about it and that doing takes its cue from a higher, more intuitive knowledge of the doer himself. Indeed, it is just because we can know at all, that we can also be conscious of ourselves as doer at a higher level of knowledge. "Man feels through knowledge," said Emerson, "the pri-

vilege to be;" and it is this feeling of being as the result of knowledge which makes all moral action possible.

Education is a matter of knowledge and knowing; and side by side with learning about things, must go the discovery by the learner of himself as the knower, one who can be at all times in command of knowledge, and able to act out of himself because of it. Otherwise, he becomes the victim of knowledge; and instead of standing in the world as morally responsible for what he does, he will be tempted to explain himself away in terms of something which he may indeed know, but which he neither feels nor is. Only when this inner self-consciousness is discovered at the center of all knowledge, and confirmed by the experience of knowing, does it become possible to explore moral ideas in freedom, and implement them in action.

And that is the goal of all true education. It was so in the past. It would be so in the present, but for the fact that as scientific knowledge has increased, so too has the materialistic conception of the world and man on which it is based. That has meant the death of real moral freedom. But it will not always be so. The moral science of man must come into its own again.

But it will have to come in in a different way than before. It will not come by persuasion and argumentative dexterity. We need something more than that now to restore the human spirit to its rightful place in learning and education. It must be seen to be known; and more and more people must be so taught that they will indeed come to see for themselves what, in another sense, has always been so obvious — the activity of the human spirit in knowledge.

All education is at bottom curative. The materialistic conceptions rampant in knowledge, as in everything else today, are not facts. They are injuries; injuries which the human spirit has done to itself in trying to explain itself away by something else. As such they must be healed; and they can only be healed by a re-examination of the whole experience of knowledge.

When a blind man whose sight Christ restored was afterwards brought before the all-knowing authorities of that time, they used every argument in the book to try to prove to him that he was in error about what had happened. Ignorant as the poor man was in

comparison with his judges, he stood his ground, and countered all their arguments with that triumphant, "One thing I know; whereas I was blind, now I see."

We need men and women like that today; men and women whose eyes have been opened to the reality of their own moral and spiritual integrity, and are not afraid to say so. We shall not get them, however, by preaching moral and spiritual values to them any more. Something different has to be done. We have to let knowledge speak its own inner language to the human spirit. They must themselves discover within themselves as the essential part of knowing that which transcends the thing known.

We need have no fears that knowledge itself will suffer thereby. Nor will its thousand and one applications to the needs of our daily life. Rather, a higher, more intimate knowledge of man and the world will enable us to discover more, not less, and better ways of serving the evolution of the human spirit. And to know and consummate the evolution of the human spirit is, after all, the only thing worth knowing and doing.

—ALAN HOWARD

*The Dehumanization of Language: Student Writing in the Machine Age**

"Modern man is no longer haunted by other men, or grandiose projections of men, but by machines."—Bettelheim

"A speaker who uses that kind of phraseology has gone some distance toward turning himself into a machine." — Orwell

For the past few years, I have taught "Expository Writing" to evening college students in New York City. Though the students' backgrounds — educational, social, and ethnic — vary widely, they are united in a search for better lives. Some are beginning life in a new country, a few strive for economic advancement, others seek a way out of sterile, intolerable jobs, and many, ex-dope addicts, shattered war veterans, divorcées, begin college as a road from crisis to stability. The students to whose writing I shall refer¹ are mature products of our culture, and their written expression of experience and idea reveals some fundamental truths about our society and the way it influences our thinking.

Here are some isolated examples:

(a) The tempo died from a roar to a slight din, made up mainly of inside jokes and caustic remarks.

(b) My mind is taking a picture of the huge melting pot spread out before me.

(c) The rocks that mingled among the greenery were of various shapes and sizes.

(d) Where he stands, the earth entrenches his boots as it sucks gropingly for a victim.

(e) Especially when that same fluffy whiteness flocked on them sparingly too.

(f) A childhood spent among the hills and lakes of rural upstate New York triggers many pleasant recollections. The autumn season is especially memorable when thinking of the past. Autumn . . . was an enriching time when the whole environment assumed a magical transformation.

These sentences come from assignments which call for description of personal experience and concrete reality, rather than the abstract and symbolic possibility which most college work requires.

Their flaws are nevertheless instructive, because they show a breakdown in the ability to use language in a disciplined way which in more abstract matter will lead to chaos. The writers remain unaware of the images their words evoke, and hence lose control of the particular meaning they intended to communicate. In (a) "tempo" "dies from a roar," and a din is made up of jokes. In (b) the figurative becomes literal through use of "spread" so that a city liquifies. In (c) the misuse of "mingle" breathes autonomous motion into stone. Example (d) is hardly decipherable. Even granting that the earth itself can "surround with trenches,"² can it stop digging only to suck, a separate action carrying with it a separate image? "Gropingly" introduces a third contradictory motion, while "as" makes the three simultaneous. The fragment (e) shows the breakdown of meaning affecting the grammar and syntax of the sentence. The "fluffy whiteness" referred to is fog, though when it "flocks" the image is of sheep. "Sparingly" shifts the meaning back to the literal level, the fog, but somewhere the reader has gotten lost.

Clearly, this writing disregards the concrete images inherent in language while attempting to retain unperceived, figurative meanings. But blindness to the concrete leads to a loss of insight into human action that language, as a part of historical, psychological, and cultural tradition, affords us. For instance, if we ignore the metaphor, the expression "to delve into a subject" means only to read about, or study a topic. We learn nothing of the actual experience of acquiring knowledge, nothing of the labor, nothing of the pain, nothing of the possible need for commitment. When we know that to delve means to dig, and then see both the vehicle and the tenor of the metaphor, the realm of experience opens up for us. We may understand the possibility that learning sometimes requires a purposeful joining of mind and body. If we do not "see" when we read, how much less our ability to write at more than a surface, factual level, to clarify for ourselves and others the extent of a conviction! Thus, neglect of the concrete imagery in written expression leads to a dehumanization of language.

Another aspect of this dehumanization is the abdication of a conscious will to clarify. In (d) the emotions of the writer, not he

himself, take control. The imagery seems to progress by emotional association, so that the sentence stands or falls through accident, not through the efforts of a disciplined imagination. Although he tries to express emotion, the writer does not assert responsibility for coherent meaning.

Sometimes the sentences seem to write themselves. The writers use ready-made phrases, in George Orwell's words "tacked together like sections of a prefabricated henhouse."⁸ The whole of (a) is constructed of ill-fitting parts; example (f) illustrates the robot-like deadness of such prose. The author writes of his own childhood, but cannot breathe life into his memories to share them. His memories themselves are impersonal "pleasant recollections" which his childhood unfortunately "triggers." Fall is "the autumn season," "especially memorable," "an enriching time"; the vivid colors are an "environment" which manages to "assume a magical transformation." Such phrases

will construct your sentences for you—even think your thoughts for you, to a certain extent—and at need they will perform the important service of partially concealing your meaning even from yourself.⁴

Writing may then become so depersonalized that words become a barrier between the writer and his meaning.

Why does student writing reflect the impersonal, confused, inauthentic? In part because the function of language in mass society is to manipulate people, to treat them as objects. Political language offers an obvious example.⁵ The distortions of totalitarian propaganda are blatant, but the use of political language in democratic mass society is insidious. Frequently it obscures, misleads, and lulls. Thus an unpopular invasion of Cambodia becomes a "forward protective defensive reaction." Language which obscures instead of informing separates a man not only from the horror of acts committed in his name, but also from the need to act on his knowledge as a moral individual.⁶ Verbal distortions may prevent a man from facing his own acts as well. In the Mylai massacre, the use of "waste" for kill protected the participants from knowledge of their actions, from exercising personal judgment, and hence from acting autonomously.

Advertising is a second example of a manipulative language which treats us as mechanical objects.⁷ Clarity is not its end either, for advertisements appeal to our fantasies and insufficiencies, then cause us to associate products with desired gratifications. Catch phrases, jingles, and clichés blunt our faculty of understanding, and with purpose: we are meant to react. Ironically, much advertising plays on our sense of helplessness as mass men and women, for it offers us products presented to lift us magically above the mass and make each of us "a Special One." Nor is the process accidental: an enormous industry has evolved to diagnose our desires and associations, to pinpoint the way we can best be conditioned.

That these intellectually empty, reflex-evoking phrases have invaded student writing is not surprising. Advertising surely accounts for the mechanical phrases in example (f) which turn childhood memories plastic, removing from them their life and warmth, their humanity. But the tendency to dehumanize invades the language and thinking of society as well, so that man is literally portrayed as a thing. Writing on the language at the Watergate hearings, Israel Shenker notes that

"men decay, denatured into 'avenues' and 'conduits,' 'programmed' as victims and converted to 'capacities.'"⁸

Nor is one stunned to find phrases in the sentences of mass circulation magazines and newspapers which imply that a human being is a machine. "A gentle scholar turns to hate," read one sub-heading a few years ago. Hatred is considered external, something one turns to, a swivel of a chair away from gentleness, not an inner emotion so powerful it may burst through the veneer of scholarly docility. This image graphically depicts the dehumanization of language, for this language denies the self, a center of emotion, idea, commitment, control. Rather, it evades the self, substituting conduits and facilities, allowing a break between intended and actual meaning, resorting to ready-made phrases to depersonalize experience, sacrificing communication to the supposed exigencies of emotion, or rhythm.

The elementary and high school education of the students I teach has in too few cases effectively counteracted the environmental

pressure of mechanical language and prefabricated thought. Students swallow facts and regurgitate them whole, undigested, unintegrated. No one has helped my students incorporate facts, or illuminated connections between learned fact and personal experience.⁹ Given the opportunity to formulate ideas about what they read or observe, many instinctively duck, try to "psych-out" what the teacher wants rather than ponder and reach their own decision.

The students' language reflects this lack of integration: when requested, memorized information spouts forth in its original phrasing. No verbal processing, no transformation of learned fact to personal utterance, but an echolalia of the classroom. No wonder that when asked to reflect on material in the light of their own experience as adult human beings, and to share their perspective of it, so many cannot transform perception into language, and in desperation let the words and sentences write themselves, surrendering responsibility for meaning, yielding the self.

The tendency towards dissociated fact, away from integration of knowledge and experience, is not limited to elementary and secondary school. Each profession evolves specialized, disconnected terminology, the inaccessible jargon of initiates: "No, sir, I would not characterize his comments to that regard. We indicated there was a problem in an operation that in effect was something we were aware of . . ." ¹⁰ Even in the humanities, solving theoretical problems of technical definition often takes precedence over seeking insight into the realm of human experience.¹¹ That language at so many levels of society flees the self is no accident. Jules Henry, the anthropologist, reminds us that each

culture must have a way of . . . channeling talent so that it does not blow the culture to bits. . . . [For instance,] in warping good brains into . . . war and space research, our own culture channels . . . intelligence so that it will not interfere with traditional thought on socially sensitive problems.¹²

Similarly, the dehumanization that we perceive in the language of our culture is mass culture's way of protecting itself from our scrutiny.

Society thus exerts pressure for conformity of language, ac-

quiescence of thought, denial of the potential of the self. That student writing confirms the effectiveness of this pressure requires us to ask how the presentation of language might strengthen the self rather than fail it.

Problems of composition have deep roots. At the same time, language emerges as a central means to the discovery of self, the perception of external reality, and the analysis of their interrelationship. Only through language, says Bruno Bettelheim, does the I separate from the you, and only then

can we validate experience enough so that intellectual learning can take place, as opposed to conditioning. This means that language is tremendously useful not only for transmitting knowledge but also for validating and making objective all that would otherwise remain a solipsistic way of perceiving the world.¹³

How language is used in early schooling, before "English" is even a subject, may well influence a student's later ability to use language actively, as a tool for acquiring knowledge of the world and of himself.¹⁴

Surely the young child who listens frequently to the clear prose of Dorothy Harrer's stories learns through its concreteness to cherish images, not discard them. Consider Twig, the caterpillar, emerging from his cocoon:

When, at last, he awoke to crawl out of his leaf blanket, he . . . had fewer legs and they felt very weak. As he rested in the warm, spring sunshine, they grew stronger, and he stood up. Then he discovered that he was wearing a close-fitting cloak. As it slowly spread out around him, he trembled with joy. "How beautiful they are, how beautiful!" he whispered, fluttering his wings slowly up and down while the sunbeams sprinkled them with gold.¹⁵

The simple, accessible words capture the emotion of discovery, its tentative dawning, its wonder, its exhilaration. The child, identifying this experience with his own, moves back to the story where he shares the emotions with the newly born butterfly. The situation in the story, and the feeling engendered by it, are concordant. The imagery is appropriate to, indeed part of, the emotion experienced.

Rather than disregarding the literal level, the child rediscovers through it the excitement of his growing potential. Concrete imagery does not mislead, or reveal divergence between literal and figurative levels, but clarifies. The words which form the concrete situation lead to inner truths.

In later years, when this child studies objectively the miraculous transformation from caterpillar to butterfly, his composition may not creak woodenly, but radiate understanding of the meaning of transformation, emanate from the self: the objective fact integrated by a sure intuition of the bonds of inner and outer worlds.

A child may also experience language as part of the growth process by listening to and reciting poetry. Northrop Frye reminds us that oral poetry, the earliest form of literature, evolves from and appeals to primitive forces within us, and directly to the child, but that poetry rarely is presented as living expression in school.¹⁶ Truly, the epic, with its powerful stresses and alliterative repetitions, celebrates strength and courage in its very sound. This poetry speaks to and for the child bursting with energy, emerging as a self who tests muscle and nerve. It stirs him to listen; reciting, the rhythm pulses through him, becomes part of him, because it expresses his own growth process. He will nurture within him the sounds and rhythms he hears and recites, and may well reproduce them when he writes. Again, language becomes an ally of the self, brings into concord the story and the inner feeling.

If this child is encouraged to write frequently about what he learns in class and discovers without, in such a way that his new-found knowledge comes alive for the reader, he not only makes that knowledge his own, but in the very act of writing calls upon powers of expression awakened by the stories and poetry, and thus incorporates them. I am not suggesting a fact-filled composition cribbed from the nearest encyclopaedia, or "purple prose" which celebrates the solipsistic, but writing which combines the informative and expressive functions of language, which not only states the species and number of legs, but captures the graceful dart of the dragonfly.

In my work with adults, I must approach from without, to let

them discover the potentials in a language they possess. They are ignorant of the evocative power of imagery. "There were many flowers" is a typical descriptive sentence. They learn that whether the flowers are cornflowers, dandelions, or roses matters to the sentence; that whether they line the path, dot the meadow, or grow quietly under an oak works changes of scene. This simple truth astonishes, for my students have never before "seen" what they seek to describe. How else could a melting pot spread out for a photo taken by the mind (example b)?

Because changes in single words transform mood as well, the emotive potential of disciplined language begins to emerge. The possibility arises of asking, "which words will most truly create the feeling, or idea, I wish to convey?"—a first conscious step towards accepting responsibility for meaning, and one that implies that intention, without willing craftsmanship, does not guarantee intelligibility.

Insight, unfortunately, does not coincide with acquisition of skill, for language has not developed as an expression of inner growth. They write painfully, with great difficulty, the way a man walks who has been condemned to months of immobility. Though they slowly learn to see, identify, and question opinions, to listen to themselves, they reach down into a reservoir of feeling for words and rhythms which are simply not there.

Like the hypothetical child above, these students, who are deathly afraid of poetry, need to hear and read language in which clear imagery speaks of inner experience, — the winter song from *Love's Labour's Lost*, for instance, which celebrates the joy of the warm hearth, while outside "blood is nipp'd and ways be foul." They need to feel in their bones the rhythmical power of words that sweep along like the mower's scythe in the final line of Marvell's stanza:

*When Juliana came, and She
What I do to the Grass, does to my thoughts and Me.*

They need to discover that each of us can transform intense emotion into shared communication, not by splattering words on paper, but through rigorous selection and control. Few poems teach this better than Ben Jonson's "On My First Sonne":

*Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy;
My sinne was too much hope of thee, lov'd boy,
Seven yeeres tho 'wert lent to me, and I thee pay,
Extracted by thy fate, on the just day . . .*

Before wrestling with ideas and formal organization, these students need to recapture the concrete aspects of words, then their expressive power. They need assignments which demand a careful and specific use of words: description of scenes, motion, or objects; characterizations of a person through description of gesture and outward detail; later, paragraphs which evoke a mood without naming it. These exercises are not irrelevant to expository writing: concrete examples should follow general topic sentences in the paragraph. They add life and interest, test and support the proposition. More importantly, the student who writes about what he sees will more willingly strive for accuracy. Disciplined "creative writing", properly presented, should not be banned from the composition classroom, but encouraged, for it helps form the basis of clear, personal exposition.

What have poetry and personal experience to do with writing college exams and papers, specifically the "thesis-centered" essay? Since memorization and paraphrased research satisfy most subjects, why not teach organizational skills mechanically? Organization is an irreplaceable discipline. Students must learn to elaborate an idea, support it, develop it, oppose it, present it. But ideas themselves cannot be taught mechanically. To write a thesis one needs an idea; to communicate that idea successfully, one ought to believe in it, though admittedly with practice one can argue any side of an issue. Deeply held belief, coming from the self, requires powers of expression equal to the depth of conviction. Moreover, we each bring to what we learn and observe our particular perspective. Only by translating what we learn into the language of our experience can we make it our own and evolve ideas truly ours. When we communicate ideas truly ours, we risk our individual selves, and by the risk, challenge the impersonal forces of mass culture which erode our humanity.

—GAIL SIMON REED

NOTES

- ¹ I exclude from consideration here students whose native language is not English, and those who have serious dialect problems.
- ² "Entrench," *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam, 1953), p. 275.
- ³ "Politics and the English Language," *A Collection of Essays* (New York: Doubleday, 1953), p. 159.
- ⁴ Orwell, p. 165.
- ⁵ See Orwell.
- ⁶ Jerome Doolittle, "The Search for Peace of Mind—Through Lies," *New York Times*, Thursday, Sept. 20, 1973, p. 47, discusses the motives for governmental distortion of information regarding the "secret" bombing of Cambodia.
- ⁷ See Northrup Frye, *The Well-Tempered Critic* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana Univ. Press, 1963), pp. 41-46, for a complex discussion of the relationships between demagoguery, advertising, and a writing style which "obliterates the sense of personality."
- ⁸ "A Point in Time Has Come to Define Watergate Lingo," *New York Times*, Saturday, Aug. 11, 1973, p. 10.
- ⁹ We should understand the student demand for relevance in this light,—as a plea for personal growth.
- ¹⁰ Jeb Stuart Magruder as quoted by Shenker.
- ¹¹ See Ellen Cantarow, "Why Teach Literature?" in *The Politics of Literature: Dissenting Essays on the Teaching of English*, ed. Louis Kampf and Paul Lauter (New York: Random House, 1972), pp. 57-100.
- ¹² *Pathways to Madness* (New York: Random House, 1972), p. 116.
- ¹³ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Empty Fortress: Infantile Autism and the Birth of the Self* (New York: Free Press, 1967), p. 56.
- ¹⁴ The following discussion draws on my recollection of the way language was presented at the Rudolf Steiner School.
- ¹⁵ *Nature Ways* (South Windsor, Conn.: Inspiration Press, 1973), p. 10.
- ¹⁶ *Op. Cit.* pp. 25-29.

Book Reviews

EDUCATION IN AMERICA; George Charles Roche III. The Foundation for Economic Education; Irvington-on-Hudson, 1969

Education in America is a straightforward, hard-hitting statement on what is wrong with education in America and what we ought to do about it. Dr. Roche, President of Hillsdale College, Hillsdale, Michigan, is a man obviously imbued with much common sense. He addresses himself to a wide variety of topics, including human freedom and the soul of man, creativity, scientism, discipline, morality, the perpetual adolescent, and public funding for education.

Unlike so many of the books being published almost daily on the subject of education, Dr. Roche's book is clearly based on reflective thinking. Here is a man who has truly pondered the questions and knows that the answers must involve the nature of man. We know he is on the right track when he quotes with approval from *Crisis in Education* by Canon Bernard Iddings Bell.

I am quite sure that the trouble with us has been that we have not seriously and bravely put to ourselves the question, 'What is man?' or, if and when we have asked it, we have usually been content with answers too easy and too superficial. . . .

This alone should interest and delight anyone concerned with Waldorf Education. Dr. Roche has much more to say to us; for example, "Choice becomes increasingly difficult when our educational system turns out men capable of running the technical machinery of civilization but totally ignorant of the principles upon which that civilization rests."

How true! And how gratifying to find such support for the centrality of history throughout the Waldorf pedagogy from someone completely outside the movement.

This brings me to my final point as to why I think this is an important book. It is simply that Dr. Roche is a realist. He is willing to look at life and to accept it on its own terms. He knows that man is more than a physical being and he knows that education, right education, takes place when it includes such a view of man. In his book he tells us how we can get back to this. I hope that many will want to read it.

—HARRY S. BLANCHARD

DARWIN RETRIED, AN APPEAL TO REASON; Norman Macbeth. Gambit, Boston, 1971; A Delta Book pb. 1973.

Today, in education as well as in many other sectors of our society, we cannot but be influenced by the doctrines that have been handed down to us under the name of Darwinism. They affect our social structures, our cultural institutions, and our philosophies of life. For years we have been taught the tenets of classical Darwinism as axioms. Many educational institutions have presented this theory as the only respectable one. Now, thanks to Norman Macbeth, we novices have a chance to survey the issues afresh in the form of a modern debate.

The book starts by pointing out that French, German, and Russian biologists have always harbored doubts about Darwin's solution of the problem of evolution. It then examines the tenets point by point, showing that classical Darwinism is in a sad state of disrepair. A lawyer by profession, Mr. Macbeth uses his courtroom techniques to present in a logical way the flaws that he found as he examined books by Sir Julian Huxley, John Maynard Smith, Garrett Hardin, and Loren Eiseley. Along with these notable advocates we are given an array of ideas on science from Mark Twain to the leading neo-Darwinists such as Ronald Fisher, E. B. Ford, Sewall Wright, Ernst Mayr, G. L. Stebbins, and others.

The dialogues and discussions are humorous and thought-provoking. As one is led through the postulates, corollaries, and arguments of the neo-Darwinians, one has to marvel at Mr. Macbeth's ability to present the weaknesses out of the mouths of the men themselves. His research is impressive. The chapters on Natural Selection, the Struggle for Existence, and Adaptation are filled with scientific information on a multitude of questions, including an exhortation to the biologists to assert themselves against the sterile influence of the mathematicians.

Mr. Macbeth does not deny evolution in the broad sense and he does not discuss genetics. His aim is to show that Darwin's own views have been discarded by the professional biologists, but that the zealous champions of Darwin, especially Simpson, Mayr, and

Huxley, still present the overall doctrine as the best theory available. One of the neatest points in the book is the demonstration (the Best-in-Field Fallacy) that there is little merit in being the best theory when all the other theories are worthless.

How important are these findings, discussions, and arguments to teachers and parents? Having been taught this theory without discussion or doubt, most of us are blind to its weaknesses. Mr. Macbeth reproaches the evolutionists for not dispelling our blindness and for clinging to the total theory despite rejection of its parts. He phrases it tersely: "Since decayed parts will never make a sound whole, the total theory must also be decayed if we are correct as to the parts." Study of the book gives one a healthy feeling of being less blind and less decayed.

—ANNA L. NEWHOUSE

BOOKS ON EDUCATION BY RUDOLF STEINER

The Education of the Child
The Four Temperaments
Discussions with Teachers
The Study of Man
Education as a Social Problem
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Elisabeth Grunelius, Early Childhood Education and the
Waldorf School Plan
Karl König, The First Three Years of Childhood
H. von Baravalle, Rudolf Steiner as Educator; Geometric Drawing
C. von Heydebrand, Childhood, a Study of the Growing Soul

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