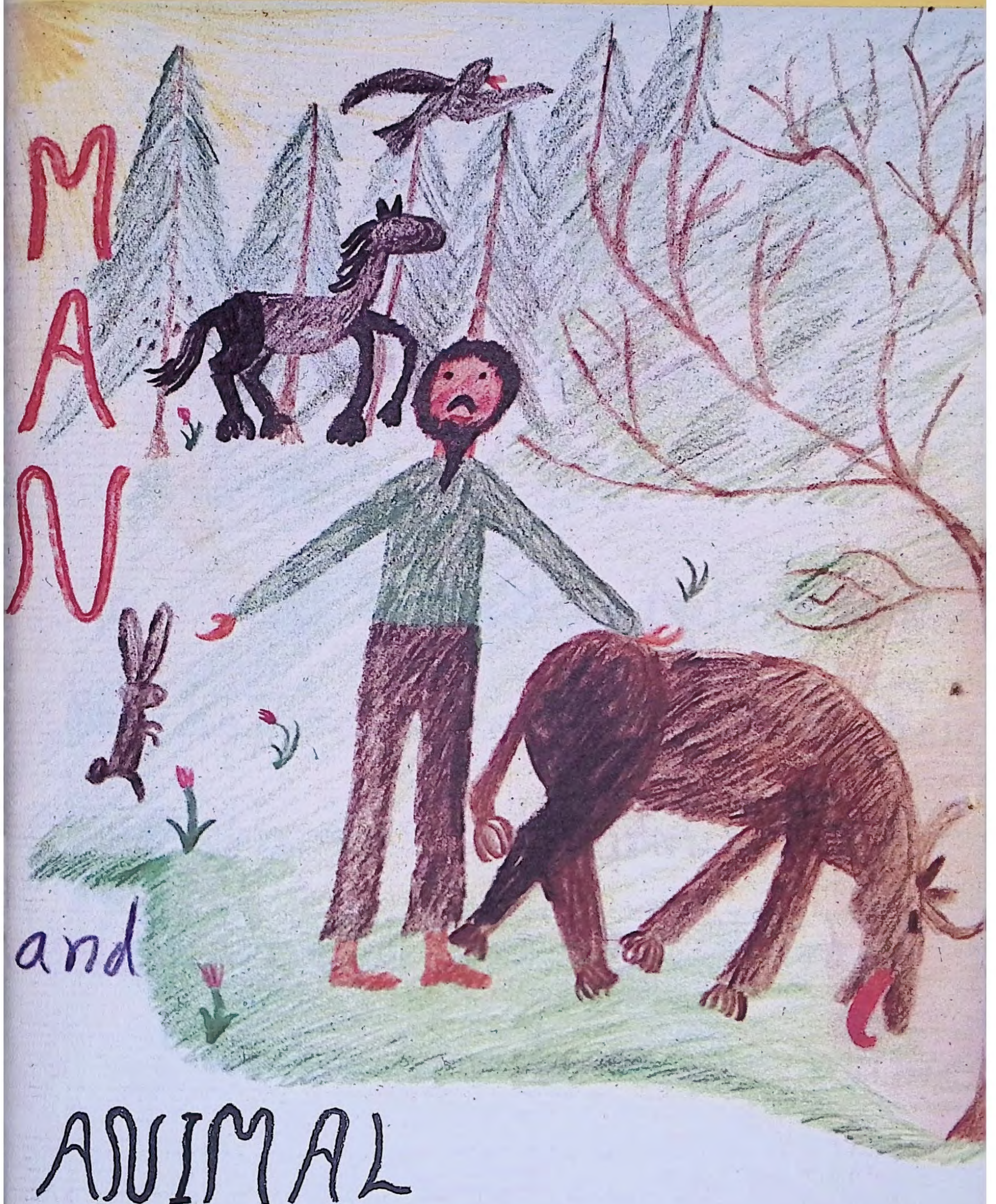


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Editorial:

Man — or Animal?

‘Man is a higher animal’.

Although for a long time we had believed that man was made ‘in the image of God’, today all that has changed. In those quarters where such things are decided, a later fiat has gone forth, “Let us remake man in our image, for we have discovered that we are only a branch of the animal kingdom”; whereupon it has been taken up by schools and colleges, printed in textbooks with appropriate diagrams and descent tables, and the media, not to be behindhand with the latest discoveries, has taken every opportunity to repeat it far and wide, so that nobody should be in any doubt as to who and what he is.

But is it not strange that with all this effort not a single person really believes it? If in any doubt, just try calling your neighbor a higher animal, and see what happens; or refer to the latest work of that well-known authority on human evolution as an important book by a “higher animal, Professor Soandso, who has recently . . . etc. etc.”

What enables such a dictum to get by, of course, is the clever use of the epithet ‘higher.’ That not only allows the animal bit to pass; but, in any question of moral conscience, being a higher *animal* saves us from trying too hard to be anything better. We can be more or less what we like in the ‘No-man’s land’ of the higher animal.

Some confusion does exist, of course, in the fact that there is already a branch of the real animal kingdom, which is also known as that of the ‘higher’ animals. It includes such creatures as elephants, horses, dogs and cats and many others. Naturally, none of us are meant to be included among them. They are ‘higher’ only because they show a higher degree of animal intelligence than the so-called ‘lower’ animals. But man is higher still. In fact, intelligent as the higher animals undoubtedly are, they are still nothing like so intelligent as man, even at his most stupid.

But how comes it then that we haven’t enough intelligence to see that there is something in man of which no animal, higher or lower, shows the slightest trace? That is, that man can *know* that he is anything at all. There is no evidence of any group of animals — the non-human animals, of course — gathering together and deciding what they are in relation to other species and what they shall be called, and publishing it to all the animal world.

All *knowledge*, as distinct from just instinctive, feeling awareness, is a process taking place between a subject and an object, where the subject is not the object. That I know that I am

hammering this out on a thing called a typewriter rests entirely on the fact that I can tell the difference between myself and a typewriter. If I couldn't, if I had even the least doubt about it, then I shouldn't be able to know anything. Therefore, when I know something about myself, I make an object of myself; but however many similarities to the animal I discover in that object, I who make that observation am still not an animal.

This is the fundamental axiom of true self-knowledge (and, incidentally, the guarantee of sanity, too); and self-knowledge is what makes man Man, and no animal.

Because of this, man is essentially different from the animal, even though outwardly he exhibits animal characteristics. This is what makes him free and creative, and also moral. Man isn't moral because he has to be subservient to an external moral law. He is moral because he can make independent moral judgments about his actions, and incorporate them in later actions. Animals can't do that. They certainly do things, too: move about, eat, struggle, and reproduce their kind as well as man; but they are relieved from all the moral doubt and indecision that plagues man, because what *they* do they do out of instinct.

This is what makes animals so attractive to us, whereas man can so often be contemptible by comparison. Nobody has felt this so keenly perhaps as Walt Whitman; at least, nobody has expressed it so forcibly:

"I think I could turn and live with the animals, they
are so placid and self-contained;
"They do not sweat and whine about their condition;
"They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their
sins;
"They do not make me sick discussing their duty to
God."

Nor are those lacking like another poet, Lord Byron, who raised a memorial to his dog because he felt it to be a far nobler creature than any man; he had commendatory verses inscribed on it, which included:

"Oh man! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
"Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,
"Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame."

Nonetheless the animal cannot be other than Nature made it. Man can. Man is both a product of the creative spirit of Nature, and that creative spirit itself becoming conscious of itself in man. The one is his animal form; the other his free creative spirit. That the latter can, and often does, use its creative potential only for the satisfaction of animal desires, and thereby sinks lower than any animal, does not invalidate that

creative spirit as such. In the hierarchy of being, the creative spirit stands as far above the animal as the animal does above the plant, and the plant above the stone.

In evolution, creative impulses first manifested in lifeless matter, then in living matter, and finally in sentient, living matter. The plant is a living being incorporated in and transforming lifeless matter; the animal is a sentient being incorporated in and transforming living matter. In man the creative being itself comes to expression in self-consciousness, but is incorporated in a synthesis of the other three, and engaged in transforming it. This is *human* evolution as against natural evolution. Both take place in man, but man only truly evolves to the extent that the former gradually takes over the latter.

If we are going to keep only to objective natural fact, it would be more correct to say, 'Man is a higher animal-plant-mineral'; but why not stick to 'Man', and ponder the ineffable wonder that he can call himself anything at all?

—A. H.

*Nine Year Olds and Their Study of Man and Animal **

By nine most of the changelings of the year before have accomplished their change and reappear in school after the summer holidays with a strangely different look and a new reserve. It is a sad day for them and their teacher if he cannot become a new person with them and win their trust afresh by revealing strengths they have not yet known in him. For their new selfhood sits insecurely in the saddle, filling them with a deep sense of uneasiness. Now, more than ever, they have need of adults whose character and talents make them feel how fine it is to be a human being. To have such a teacher throws light on the path ahead. And they need this illumination, for the rosy glow of early childhood which once made the world so magically bright has gone forever.

Inner and outer worlds are no longer one world for the nine-year-old. They have been irrevocably sundered. The greatest care must now be taken to bring the outer world to the child in a light that everywhere discovers its human meaning.

No study is so ideally fitted to offer strength and comfort to the child at this critical moment of his development as the study of man himself.

This accordingly begins in the fourth grade with a contemplation of man's upright stature. Of all the myriad creatures in the universe man is best able to wrest his head free of the hold of gravity and to stand erect. Only in him is this the entirely normal posture. He moves over the earth in perfect balance. How different he looks from the animals with their horizontal spines and their heads dangling almost to the ground!

Man's hands too are free. They need not serve him as humble carriers like the animal's forepaws, but can be used to perform the most varied and wonderful functions.

And man has another great gift, the gift of speech. Animals cannot tell us what goes on inside them. We can only guess at their feelings when they bark, mew, grunt, roar or whinny. But human beings are able to pour their experiences, thoughts and desires into clear and even beautiful expression.

To have a really vivid impression of the contrast between man and animal, teacher and children may get down on all fours and find out how it feels to be in the position of a dog, a cat, a pig, a horse, a cow, or any other familiar creature, to have one's head down near the earth, one's nose sniffing and rooting, one's mouth biting, gnawing, tearing, one's hands and arms mere feet

**From an unpublished thesis, "Toward a New Art of Education."*

and legs, one's voice inarticulate. And when one disengages oneself from the animal position how lofty the head seems, how large and coolly detached its perspective! Somewhere deep within him, the child now understands what has made man a thinker. Regaining the free use of his hands he knows what makes man a creator and an artist. In his hands and head he discovers the basis of his capacity for human freedom.

When he studies the human form again, the child sees it with a different consciousness. He notices how still the head is, compared with the animal's. It sits motionless on the shoulders and is carried about like a rider. The head's position makes it an aristocrat. It leaves physical work to other members of the body. The legs and arms are the laborers of the organism. Our legs take us where we need to go. But they can serve only their owner. They can never be lent to work for others as the hands may be. Hands can do deeds of service. With their hands, men become the helpers of man and nature.

Animals use their heads as men use their hands, to thrust and pull, to lift and carry. The human head performs none of these lowly functions. It sits aloft like a sentinel in a watch tower. It is an overseer guiding and directing effort. Whereas in animals the head continually moves and reaches out into the environment, in man its stillness and its lofty, secluded position actually signify withdrawal from the world. Indeed, it would be completely isolated were it not for the senses through which impressions of the outer world may enter.

The human form reveals a wonderful harmony in its design. No part is overemphasized at the expense of the other. This is not true in the case of animals. The giraffe and kangaroo, for example, exhibit extreme deviations from a balanced structure, deviations which fit them for survival in their natural environment. Their forms make them out of place in any but their native habitat. But man is in a different category. He is everywhere a stranger to the earth, and at the same time at home in every part of it. He preserves his form essentially intact no matter what environmental influence is brought to bear upon him.

The head and limbs of man are in striking contrast. The head is formed on the principle of roundness, being almost a perfect sphere. Inside is the soft brain-mass, outside a bony covering as hard as rock. The limbs are built on just the opposite principle; they are essentially linear, and the bone here furnishes the inner support rather than outer covering. The chest, lying between the head and the limbs, is a structure combining both round and linear principles.

The head tends towards stillness, the limbs towards motion. The chest in its middle position alternately dilates and contracts in a rhythmic pulsing that wrests life itself from an active balancing of two extremes.

The threefold organism of head, chest, and limbs thus becomes a study in both form and movement. Children who have had several years of modeling and eurythmy are prepared to enter into it with a capacity to experience these realities very vividly.

Once they have grasped the threefold structure of the human form, the children's attention may be called to the fact that each separate part of the body is built on the same threefold pattern. One can begin with the head. It is a head proper only in its domelike upper part where it is at its roundest and most immobile. The head's breathing organism forms a kind of dilating chest in the middle region. The limbs of the head are the mobile jaw and tongue.

The legs and arms too embody the same three structural principles, exhibiting the round, immobile head structure in the knobs inserted into hip and shoulder sockets, the chest principle in the flexibility and partial freedom of the knee and elbow, and the limbs proper in the agile hands and feet.

The hands and feet in their turn carry out the same form-motives. The heel at the one extreme is round and rigid, the arch flexible and curving, the toes and fingers linear and highly mobile. The children will make many similar discoveries as they look for the head, chest and limbs in the various parts of the body. And they will find them even in so small a portion of the organism as a single finger.

When they again compare the human form with that of various animals, their respect for man is heightened by finding that in man alone have these three basic structural principles been harmonized and carried through to some degree of perfection. There is not a single animal whose head, for example, has attained approximate roundness, whose foot has all three principles embodied in heel, arch and toes. The ape, man's nearest relative among the animals, makes an excellent object of comparison. Studying his head form with its crushed and sloping forehead, its heavy thrusting jaw, its fearful fangs, its flattened nose, observing its stooping posture, its dangling upper limbs, which are more like legs than arms, its strange hands, its flat-foot, the children see how great is the difference between this brute beast, which has fallen so pathetically short of humanness, and man. A visit to the zoo to have a good look at him makes a tremendous impression on the children. When, back in the school-room, they try to get under his skin in a faithful impersonation, adapting his posture, his gait, his voice, his expression, they will realize as they never could through words how far removed man is from that specialized deviation from a balanced structure betrayed by each animal form.

A study of the forms of various animals will make this principle of specialization still more clear. The horse's life in his environment has changed his earlier foot form almost beyond

recognition. His toes have disappeared and been replaced by a horny hoof. His heel is actually part way up his leg, making him look as though he were walking on tiptoe. Studying the cow, one sees that this animal has specialized in the direction of becoming all metabolism. One stomach is not enough for the cow; she must have several! And the heavy head that looks so hard to lift is more an extenuation of the cow's long digestive tract than a perceptive organ as it is in man.

The specialization of a great variety of other animal forms is observed in detail. The giraffe, for example, presents an extraordinary picture of over-emphasized neck-development. Its whole body is as though fixed in a gesture of craning. The kangaroo is in many ways an opposite pole to the giraffe: the whole giraffe has gone up into its neck, whereas the whole kangaroo has gone down into its hind legs. The giraffe's spindly legs hardly look as though they were meant to carry it. The kangaroo's hind legs are mightily developed, while its forelegs are grotesquely stunted.

In the tapir and the elephant, the upper lip and nose have grown together and become one elongated organ. The squid or cuttlefish is a head organism with many tongues. The jelly-fish may be likened to a brain floating around without its skull. The bat, which has no legs at all, is outfitted with claws on the ends of its wing-tips by which to hang.

The child's attention may further be called to the fact that each animal species over-emphasizes some one of the three systems which in man are held in perfect balance. The lower animals may be described as one-sided head developments in both form and function; the fish as trunk or chest organism; the higher mammals as limb and digestive systems. Such specialization in one of the three systems takes place at the expense of a stunting of the other parts. Man's capacity to refrain from specialization has preserved him from this stunting, and we therefore see in him a beauty, a perfection and a harmony of form which no animal can equal.

Grotesque though their forms may sometimes be, animals are all distinguished by the possession of some special gift which in man is far less perfectly developed. The eagle has keener vision than any other creature. It can look down and see a rabbit or a chicken on the ground a mile below. The monkey, the squirrel, the leopard are sure climbers, as much at home in tree-tops as on solid earth. They do not grow dizzy at great heights and fall. The dog has an acute sense of smell. The deer, the horse, the kangaroo are specialists in locomotion. Each animal is found to have a special ability inherent in its structure.

Man is not gifted by nature with these special talents. But the very non-specialization of his form gives him the freedom that is his human specialty. His behaviour cannot be predicted as can the animal's. His life in his surroundings has an entirely individual character.

The same evolution which gives man the potentiality of freedom has also endowed him with the power of thought. Through exercising this power he has invented means whereby he can easily outdo the animal creation in specialized performance. He can fly more swiftly than a bird, travel at high speed over land and under water, ascend great heights and look out into spaces which the eagle's eye can never penetrate. His hand, so ill-fitted for digging and climbing, can make instruments which serve him better than the most specialized animal paw. He makes use of it to become an artist or a scientist.

In all these studies, man and animal are contemplated only in their external forms. No investigation of their structure is pursued below the surface of the skin. Most children of nine have not yet developed to the point where they can look without the wrong kind of fascination at denuded bones and inner organs.

The study of man and animal offers rich opportunity for the telling of stories and legends, the learning of poems, the painting and drawing of pictures. And modeling plays an especially important role. Now for the first time the child is concerned with exactness and detail of form. In the first three grades his modeling had an entirely different character. There he created whole scenes made up of all the figures in some story or real life situation. But now he models the heads and forms of man and the animals he has been studying. And as his fingers shape the sphere of wax or clay into the rounded head of man or the elongated head of some animal, he can experience in still another way the forces which have been at work to create these differences.

Such a study is an important contribution to the child's social training. To come to know man in concrete detail as the crown of creation is to inspire the deepest reverence for human beings. To have a vivid experience of the animal's limitations is to arouse compassion and a sense of man's responsibility toward this lower kingdom.

After this survey of man and animal, the children will understand in what sense man may be called the whole animal kingdom resolved into a single perfect form — the animal kingdom a fan-wise projection of specialized fragments of the human being.

—Marjorie Spock

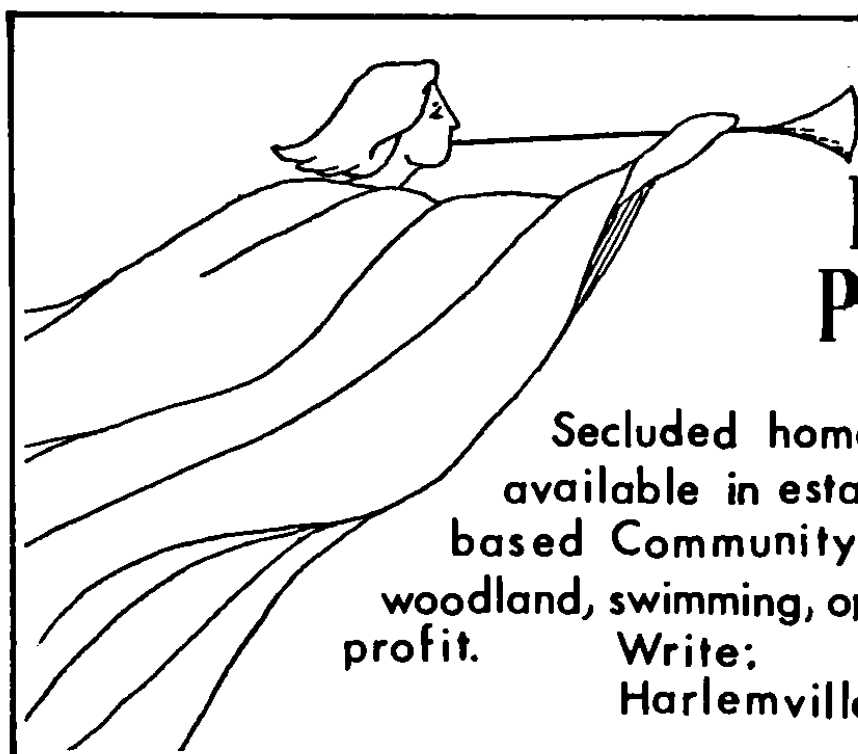
A Poem for the Fourth Grade

Fourth graders are about to embark on a three-week unit in English, where they will work daily on penmanship, speech exercises, recitation of poetry, composition, rules of spelling, and a chapter or two of grammar.

The first lesson of this unit begins with a conversation about human speech, the gist of which is then crystallized into a verse — which may become the content of the first page of each fourth grader's notebook:

The angry bear growls,
The lonely wolf howls,
A contented cat will purr;
The squeak of a mouse
In the silent house
Tells that the creature's astir;
The fox barks,
The trilling of larks
Sings of their joy in the day;
The whine of a hound
Is the sorrowful sound
He makes when his master's away.
Thus creatures all
With song and call
Tell of their joy or woe.
But to speak at will
Or decide to be still —
This only a man can do.

—Susanne Berlin



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The Woodchuck

At night the woodchucks sleep in their holes, the burrows they have made themselves, well protected from cold and danger. Their bodies are like little barrels; their heads seem but slight extensions of their short, thick necks; their short legs end in strong claws. They are built perfectly for digging holes and living in them.

In the morning after the sun rises, before leaving home, they test the world outside with their sharp senses. Eyes, ears, noses, all take part in this test. Then one of them — the watchman — slips out and, sitting up on his hind legs, makes the inspection once more. Only then do the rest of the family come out of the hole. And now there they are, right in the midst of their food supply. They choose the finest, juiciest plants for their breakfast. Then they satisfy their craving for light (which they have in common with other burrowing animals) by long sunbaths on warm stones. If danger looms, the little watchman alerts them with a shrill whistle and instantly they scurry into the nearest entrance to their burrow, where they know they are safe.

But the lovely long summer finally comes to an end. Well fed for many months, they are abounding in good health, and now they prepare their winter beds in their burrow. When the cold and the snow arrive, they close up the entrance and curl up in some dry hay. To begin with, they have several short sleep periods; also they wander into neighboring passageways for evacuation. Then finally they settle down for their long winter sleep. The northern winter covers the earth with snow, but these little animals are unaware of its menace. They lie warm and safe in their hole, their life functions lowered to just a flicker. When spring comes, when the sun has already melted the snow in a few places, they wake again to full life, claw open the entrance to their hole, and venture forth to allay their hunger with the first shoots of spring plants.

(The original description is of the marmot, a small rodent in the Alps, whose nearest American relative is the woodchuck. Ed.)

The Chamois

And the chamois — like tiny mountain goats — how agile, how sure-footed they are as they climb among the steep rocks of the Alps! Their small form is compact; their legs are strong; their hoofs have hard edges that give them firm support in their leaping, even onto the narrowest rock shelf. They swing their heads up boldly and carry them erect on their slender necks. With sharp senses they scan a wide expanse around them. Tall horns emphasize the taut control of their whole body.

Soon after sunrise they are searching for pasture. Later they find places hardly accessible to a man, where they can chew their cud in quiet security. They choose resting places at night from which they will be able to escape in various directions. In

flight from an enemy they slide, jump, leap over jagged cliffs and broken rock into a ravine, or they climb with amazing speed to safe heights over mountain paths and ledges.

But winter comes and the little chamois must battle with it. At the start they are well nourished and covered with dark winter hair. But we in the civilized world can hardly imagine the life force such an animal must have to combat storm, cold and avalanche, subsisting on the poorest, most scanty food and with its paths of escape from enemies constantly obstructed. The battle goes on for long months. Some of the chamois succumb to it. Many others endure, though emaciated, rumped, exhausted, until in the spring they find better living conditions once more.

* * * *

Perhaps these descriptions can show how the children's introduction to animal study should be through lively characterizations of various animals, not through definitions. Through representative examples such as these, the children should get a vivid experience of the different species. And a teacher learns that the simple device of presenting two contrasting species in succession, one right after the other, enhances the effect of each one. One is amazed at the intensity of the children's interest. The phlegmatics sit there with smiles of quiet contentment as they picture the woodchucks' easy, luxurious life during the warm summer. The nervous children are happily relieved when the frightened animal scurries into his hole. The class listens with awe as one tells of the tiny chamois' brave fight with the dread mountain winter.

Every human being has something of a woodchuck in him: he lies back and enjoys life while it is flourishing, and rushes into hiding when dangers threaten. Everyone has also something of the chamois in him: he stands fast during life's storms and does not give way until the crisis is past. Out of these human soul qualities the teacher can count on the children's understanding and interest in the life habits of these two animals.

—Robert Pfister

*From an article, "Zoology" in the book
Waldorf Education in Public Schools
(not yet translated from the German),
published by the Freien Pädagogischen
Vereinigung Bern, Herder Verlag, 1976.*

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Fourfooted Playmates

During the quarter of a century my husband and I made our home in the Midwest, we were able to keep a variety of animals on our acreage at the edge of town. And we liked to share them. The college where my husband taught maintained a nursery and kindergarten, and the children were sometimes brought to visit.

I kept small tin cans ready, several dozen of them (for which I had had to search, since in our vegetarian household with a large biodynamic garden, commercial canned food was unknown). A small amount of grain in a can was handed to each child, and then the poultry (kept without breakfast that day) were called into the large half-circle of children.

Sometimes it was necessary to have the children hold hands at first, to keep them from running after the fowl. "We must not scare the animals. They will come if we wait."

A few minutes had to be filled with introductions. "Look at the guinea hen! She has white pearls on her feathers. See that proud Bantam rooster? Watch him! When he finds a grain of seed he will call his hens. Do you see the pigeons coming down from the roof? Listen to the ducks' quack-quack . . ."

Then everyone was allowed to throw some feed. Oh! those little gestures, shy or aggressive, all individual. "You are lucky," a little boy said. "You can feed them every day!"

In the pasture a small girl sat very still and smiled at me while a tiny goat nibbled at her hair. "He thinks it's hay!"

The water pump handle had plenty of use. Children stood in line, working it in pairs after they had learned the rhythmical movement. Oh, the flow of clear, fresh water!

A nine-year-old girl managed to bridle a tall, well-trained horse by herself. She said, "He lowered his head because he knew I was short."

My own childhood in pre-war Germany seems now to have been — thanks to my mother — a never-ending source of lessons about animals. But my mother neither lectured nor assisted much. She just listened to our longings and made it possible for us, even under difficulties, to gather experiences in the direction which the inner call of each of us was taking. She had farming background, had been a talented horsewoman, and was also a trained artist. She ignored her own interests. Her good taste formed our surroundings. Who else would have thought of such a handsome way to keep white mice?

For years a few white mice lived on a table about four feet high and half a yard square, covered on top with dark green linoleum. In the middle of the table was a large earthenware crock full of pine branches, which were renewed from time to

time. A tiny wooden house stood beside the crock, and some small dishes completed the set-up. The mice climbed about in the branches, allowed us to balance them on our fingers, and looked beautiful on the green background, which enhanced the complementary, jewel-like red of their eyes. There was no odor. My mother's only warning was, never move the table near the window or the mice will reach the curtain and climb down.

Why are so few children today allowed to have animals or see them under proper conditions? One reason is, that too often no one is at home. Couldn't there be more cooperation between neighbors, helping one another even when a substitute is needed? Then the animals could be left in their usual setting.

Commercial feeds make it easy to keep animals today. But they do not create the right relationship between foodstuffs and their consumers. A child likes to help trim vegetables because he gets the trimmings for his pet. He should select bits from the leftovers from the dining table — and occasionally sacrifice something well-liked from his own plate — for his cat or dog. He should be taught that their sniffing is serious work, to learn the nature of what is being offered them and to discover whether the dish is clean (this they appreciate!).

Commercial foods are always more or less the same. They cannot awaken much interest. And they have a long shelf-life, which means little life in the sense of formative forces. Animals kept entirely on them cannot compare with others; their soul-response and intelligence are lowered. Still, a busy mother may take a can along on a trip, as emergency rations for the family dog.

They become too much attached? This is a common argument. Well, teach the kind of love that leaves the other one free. However, freedom for a domestic animal does not mean running loose everywhere on his own. Even wildlife has very fixed habits and habitats. Animals want to learn. They want to live in harmony with their human brothers. But they need clear instructions to orient themselves. One can see that this offers useful lessons for a young handler. A child can teach his dog to heel, to watch, to bring lost items.

I have known a house-broken rabbit. Anyone who has had the chance — rare today — to observe rabbits in a comfortably large wooden hutch knows that the rabbits use instinctively only one corner for their droppings. The cruel all-metal cages with wire bottoms force them to live constantly on top of this manure, against their nature. Pellets and water coming to them in plastic dishes or pipes is all they know. There is little educational value in this kind of animal-keeping. Rabbits don't need water at all if greens are given them. They will not destroy their wooden housing if hedge-trimmings are given and branches to gnaw. They are sweet-tempered, soft, peaceful playmates (and furnish good manure for the garden).

Do animals need a second one of their kind to be happy? In general, I don't think so, if the children spend time with them. The children will be accepted as their companions.

Even a small garden can house a Bantam hen with chicks. And again, naturally hatched chickens are superior to machine-hatched ones. You may have friends who would let you have a broody hen and help you set her, perhaps on just a few eggs (which have not been stored in the refrigerator or their life would be killed). Oh! the excitement when the eggs can be candled at half-time, in the late evening, and growth can be seen! Break an egg to study it? No, never! Enough life is being wantonly destroyed every day. At least let the children live in a caring, life-respecting world.

I have carried small hens with tiny chicks to Sunday-schools and kindergartens. Only during the very first few days will the mother hens allow such trips, while the chicks still hide in their plumage. Watching silently, the children will see a sweet show: the mother hen feeding and watering her young.

Fairy tales and fables make their animal heroes comparable to man. That is the group soul, all animals of one kind represented in one Being of great wisdom. We feel, without an intellectual explanation, that this Being must live in higher realms, and that we should apologize to him when we slaughter one of his kind. A single animal is not the whole species, it is like the leaf of a tree: it can be replaced. This may comfort us at the loss of a pet. We must be aware of the differences between man and animal. Between the two, great friendship may exist, and interdependence. But the direct bridge is love.

—Ingrid Buchinger



A three-year-old boy was taking a walk in the city and saw a horse standing in the street.

"She probably doesn't have any electric current!" he said, revealing in this short phrase that a new generation of children is now with us, for whom electric trains, trolleys and so forth, are better known and understood than a horse.



George cut a worm in half with his toy spade.

"Why did you do that?"

"The worm was lonesome. Now there are two of them — it is more cheerful for them that way."

From Two to Five, Kornei Chukovsky
trans. by Miriam Morton
Univ. of Cal. Press, 1966

Comment

There is one fundamental question which seems to run through all the reports and articles in the news media, whatever aspect of education they touch on, and which everybody seems to be trying to answer:

What are we really educating our children for?

There are so many different answers, from so many different sources, that the people who are really trying to work it out, the teachers, are neither able to unfold their own initiative, nor are they particularly inspired to carry out what they are told to do. And as for the pupils, they seem either to be engaged in open rebellion or to have sunk back into listless indifference.

That children should be educated, and that it should be done in schools funded by public money, seems to be the only thing we agree on — and we only do that because we've come to accept public education like a law of Nature, which we couldn't radically alter without upsetting the order of the universe.

Marc Bloom, writing in the New York Times out of his experience as an eighth grade teacher in New York, plumbs frustration to the depths as he describes one by one the conditions under which he works, and the state of the pupils he works with. It is not a bitter, 'angry-young-man' article either, but an objective assessment of the situation, made poignant by the fact that it is so objective. "It is all too much for us to handle," he says, and with that 'us' one feels he includes the whole adult world which is, or should be, vitally concerned in education.

But that, of course, is just where the trouble lies. We have made what should be a very conscious responsibility of every mature human being, a state department. As such we leave it to 'them'; and the teachers who are really only the spearhead of what is a national concern, as the front line soldier is of a unified national effort in time of war, is a victim of a departmentalism and bureaucracy from which there is no court of appeal.

How any socially conscious, educated young person can *want* to be a public school teacher these days often beats us completely. And yet we never cease to rejoice that so many do; and in spite of the conditions not only find it worthwhile but *do* something worthwhile, too. We don't hear enough from the 'Kotters' of the profession.

As a society we have even gone beyond looking for a scapegoat. We are all victims of our time, all alike unable to find a solution for the better running of this national multicorporation called Education. (A left-wing friend of ours suggests, and not without reason, that the main reason for keeping the schools open is that the labor market would otherwise be flooded with unemployables. The money spent on schools is another form of welfare to keep the unemployment figures down, and gets by under the high-sounding title — Education!).

The New York Times in commenting on Marc Bloom's article draws attention to the obvious in saying that schools "should not be expected to work in isolation from social agencies". But how does one get schools to work more closely with them? Where it isn't a matter of closed-shop professionalism, it is simply one of dollars and cents. New York had to get rid of its *para-professionals* (doesn't the name itself damn what educational value they may have?) simply because it had to cut down on its budget.

It was the same picture in a bigger frame that was presented to Vice-President Mondale, when he went to the Teachers' Convention in Boston. Teachers' initiative was stifled; too many experts were interfering who had never done a day's teaching in their lives; supplies were so niggardly that teachers had to buy essentials out of their own pockets. But what could even a Vice-President do, with other things like the Alaska pipe line and diplomatic relations with China on his mind? He made a speech, of course, and said some worthwhile things; but the teachers had to go back to the same problems.

Is education as an organization so big and massive today that at the point where education really takes place — where teacher meets child — it has ceased to be effective? Or is it because it is still effective there, in spite of everything, that we are not in a far worse plight than we are?

They had to cancel reading tests for 700,000 New York pupils recently because of a breach of security. Security apart, the New York Times asked the obvious enough question, "Cannot the schools be relied on to give assurance of the pupil getting a fair chance to learn without all this massive testing?" And the New York Times had to answer its own question — with devastating simplicity, "In the real world of mass-education, NO!"

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that under such circumstances minorities get an even poorer deal. It is the very nature of a minority that it has something unique about it, in culture, language and way of life that adds depth to the flat surface of modern global uniformity. But that too has to go. The University of Chicago has just done a study of native Indian education. It found that the education they received a hundred years ago in their own schools was superior in every way to what they're getting now. Native culture is educationally ignored — except in museums and profit-making boutiques.

Are we then educating for a future cosmopolis of nondescript, uniform, white, computerized, televised, pasteurized, graduated, vaccinated, fluoridated, chlorinated, creditated, emasculated, and — who knows — test-tube pollinated zombie citizens?

If so, our only hope is in our rebels.

And a nice bit of poetic justice in this regard seems to be

shaping up in the province of Quebec in Canada. The provincial National Assembly has just passed a French language bill, which will make it impossible for anybody to be educated in English unless they come from an English family. And there is justice behind the bill. They want to preserve their French language and culture. They are not going to let the rest of Canada anglicize them out of existence.

But what do they do when the Inuit Eskimos round the Hudson Bay area of Quebec protest against the bill in defense of *their* culture?

They send in the riot police!

After all they can't have these Eskimos spoiling their plans by defying an express order to be educated in French.

And then there's the story — true — the New Yorker tells about a toy firm that makes dolls. They decided to make dolls that looked like famous people, but they wanted to make sure that the famous people they made dolls of were popular among children. So they employed a psychologist to visit the schools and ask, among other questions, "Who is your most famous person?" Unfortunately it didn't dawn on them that the concept 'famous' might present problems, especially among those they wanted to sell the dolls to — first and second graders. So although Jimmy Carter's name came up a few times, the majority plumped for "Mrs. Flugmann" and "Mr. Burpie", where Mrs. Flugmann and Mr. Burpie represented respectively their class-teacher and principal.

So perhaps thanks to the Mrs. Flugmanns and Mr. Burpies things aren't all bad with education; and at least "out of the mouths of babes" we can still get some sense of reality, if not what the psalmist expects from them.

We would like to have commented on an item in the tiniest clipping we received, in which it was reported that T. H. Bell, Federal Commissioner of Education, is supporting a movement to make "child raising a basic part of every high school student's education". But that would take far more space than we have left, so we'll give that priority next time. But here are a few words to be going on with, which did our heart good to read, "We must teach a new generation that sensuousness and materialism will bring neither lasting joy nor promise for their children, or their children's children."

—Alan Howard

Painting in the Lower Grades

I've covered the tables. In front of each little first-grader I've put a painting board with a large sheet of white paper on it and beside it, very neatly, a broad paintbrush, a tiny sponge, a glass of clean water, and a small paint dish of fluid color, today just blue. The children are all sitting there full of anticipation, in inner suspense. They are going to have their first painting lesson.

"So now, children, take your sponge and dip it in the water and wet the entire surface of the paper spread out on your painting board. Then turn the paper over and wet the other side." First, soft exclamations, which grow louder and a bit frightened: "Oh, help! My paper is full of creases!" It is an exciting task for small awkward hands. The children had never expected that the preparation itself would be difficult. But how important these self-reliant, basic hand-skills are! They must be acquired early so that later they not only contribute to really beautiful creations but also become learning capacities. At first I go around to a few children individually and do a bit for them, showing them how all the creases disappear if one creeps with the sponge carefully from the center of the paper outward and gets rid of each air-bubble as one comes to it.

Finally the painting can begin. The white paper, thoroughly wet, lies before us. "Now, children, you may take your paintbrush and dip it very carefully into the little dish with the blue color. Then press it ever so lightly against the edge of the dish so that it won't be too wet." One must let consciousness enter into every hand movement, so that always the whole human being is engaged in the action. "And now lay the blue color in long strokes over the paper, very quietly, beginning with the outer edges. Gradually come in from all the sides. In the center it should stay the lightest; on the outside it can be made darker. Then it will look like a great enormous sky." In contrast to the inner and outer fidgeting at the beginning of the lesson, there is now absolute quiet. Quiet in their careful painting, quiet in their observation of what is becoming visible.

But the "picture" is not yet finished, not nearly finished. One child has hard edges, so that there is not a beautiful transition from the deep blue through the intervening shades to the very light blue in the middle. With another child one can see each stroke of the brush, and this makes the whole picture restless. A third child has painted much too wet, so that there are hardly any details visible. By holding a paper up now and then for all the children to see, I correct many things without many words. This belongs to the so-called imponderables that make one's teaching effective. These short interruptions in the artistic "continuum", and thereby the children's observation of one another's pictures, help social capacities to unfold, which are far more important for a child than mere finger skills. For each child then comes out of himself, out and away from the product

of his own imperfect work, and sees how the others are struggling with the same problem.

For the second painting lesson (in about a week's time) the children find, instead of blue, a dish of red waiting for them. Preparation of the paper takes place exactly as it did the first time. Conscious repetitive action works strongly on the human will. Exactly the same rhythmic repetition of the same action plays an important role: only in this way can good habits be formed.

Red has quite a different tendency of movement from blue. This time we begin painting in the center of the paper. In contrast to the quietness of blue, red bursts out, springing, spreading. One can see it happen too in the atmosphere of the class: there is joy now, courage, ebullience. An entirely different temperament is called forth. It can even happen that a choleric boy gives complete outlet to his glad energy by finally rubbing a great hole in his paper. But then that paper can have special pedagogical value. Such free involvement with pure color is indeed a loosening experience for a child. For color stirs human feelings more than form does, more than line. It raises the painter to a higher state of consciousness. One can clearly see how different paints are for a child from the ordinary stiff crayons, which bring about a far more intellectual activity: putting down lines which fence in the "coloring" of some object. (It is otherwise with so-called Form Drawing. There, line functions as the impetus for movement, and it completes itself dynamically and rhythmically. It calls upon a child's sense of balance.)

In the third lesson the character of pure yellow is experienced: its cheerful outstreaming.

After that we go on to find the relation of these colors to one another — but just these three primary colors, blue, red, yellow, and always given to the children in liquid form. Any color mixture, the child himself must bring about; at first, however, it is strictly supervised by the teacher. The children are never allowed to "play" with the paints. The colors are now made to talk to one another. One remembers Goethe's words in his Tale, "The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily": "What is more enlivening than light? — Conversation!" A give-and-take from one to the other (as in all development) must be brought about by a careful, conscious choice of colors in order to create a whole which is the "composition".

Perhaps, for instance, one asks the children to lay the blue heavy and dark across the "ground" of the paper, while up above a light yellow moves over the broad free expanse. Somewhere a bold, saucy spot of red sits on the blue. When the second color comes on to the first, it must adapt itself to the other, so that they all are friendly with one another. There is always a relation to be concerned about. Nothing is there just for itself alone.

Another theme could be this: through a broad stretch of blue, spread out like a curtain, peeks a cheerful yellow or orange. Actually, with such a task one has introduced a first experience

of inner color perspective that later will play an important role in the curriculum; it should be experienced and practiced *before* external spatial perspective is studied, if this latter is not then to become mere dry subject matter.

So far in the painting lessons one has busied the children mostly with harmonious color "conversations." One might now proceed with obvious contrasts. For instance, it can be a healthy color experience to put blue-yellow next to blue-green. The children are encouraged (in silent recognition of the teacher's authority) to judge the first more beautiful than the second. Only in this kind of comparing would one give the children the green already mixed. Also one can now give them their first encounter with complementary colors: blue-orange, red-green, yellow-violet. "Instruction about" complementary colors will come only in the later grades, as part of introductory physics: the after-images in optics. One should consider it a pedagogical law, in the early grades to introduce only to the children's feelings what they will later be learning very exactly with their heads. First the phenomenon, then the law.

These first painting exercises should be as lively and varied as possible, so that they may work strongly on the children's fantasy; only later should one require a certain degree of exactness. So, for instance, with the complementary colors one can do "exchange exercises", by which first the yellow is inside, next time the violet; one day one is stronger, the next time the other; and so forth. An inner mobility comes about through this free activity; it will reveal itself later in other areas as an ability to deal flexibly with concepts, that is, to use them in the most varied life situations. If the children see that the colors *do* something to one another, it works strongly on their souls at this impressionable, formative age.

Fairy tales play a large part in the curriculum for the first school years. One can also make an exercise in pure color—with no physical objects whatever—by giving the colors a fairy tale quality. But do it indirectly: that is, do not give the colors the names of the fairy tale characters, but have them in your own mind as the background of the lesson. One day, tell a certain fairy tale. Then the next day at the end of the painting session, and only then, when all the colors are on, let there be an "interpretation." Otherwise the children are pulled too easily out of a purely artistic experience and begin to work out of their heads, wanting to paint external figures. Dreamy fantasy can too soon become fixed notions. As an example: a horizontal stretch of yellow in the middle of the paper; in the lower part of the paper, blue; left, between the blue and yellow, a piece of red coming up out of the blue; below, across the paper, several pointed bits of blue or other colors. At the end of the lesson one could look at the pictures all together. "Look, children! The bright yellow there in the center, doesn't that look like Snowwhite lying in her glass coffin? And that shining red coming out of the blue, perhaps that's the prince coming to save Snowwhite. And down be-

low, all those blue and brown points, why! surely they're the caps of the little gnomes sitting there so sadly?"

In the following painting lessons this fairy-tale color experience could be carried a step further, so that gradually more exact forms come to view. The figures, however, are not painted *in*; they grow *out* of the color that is there. The object or figure is always secondary. The color itself is the primary thing. Form is the consequence of the color.

It is very good, indeed essential, if we want to help the children to comprehend what is happening around them, that we paint with them, many times even, what I will call "soul moods arising out of a child's feeling". For instance, after telling a fairy tale on one day, I introduce our painting lesson the next day in this way: "Children, do you remember how it was yesterday with the little goats? how happy they were? how they danced and jumped about joyfully when that wicked wolf was drowned in the well? Today we're going to paint just how those little goats felt!" And then there will emerge a pure-color mood that could be called "Joy" or "Rejoicing," done with only (or mostly) the active colors, red, orange, yellow.

Color experiences can also accompany other teaching material. For instance, in the third grade when the Old Testament stories are told, it is good to bring those themes into the painting lessons, in order to deepen the children's feelings for the stories. One example: Noah's Ark floating on a broad, heavy expanse of blue water; above, a large sweep of light yellow, the sunny sky; the dove rising from the hatch of the Ark into the sky.

Like all the rest of the teaching material, the painting instruction should accompany the children's development and should help it. First their identification with the surrounding world, then the various moods it arouses, finally a more detached view of external things and external happenings — as, for instance, in the picture of Noah's Ark. Soul experience and world happening become one.

When the time comes in botany to let the collective plant kingdom "condense" to separate plants, this should take place out of the pure color chord of yellow-blue. "The sun is urging the plants up out of the earth." That is how one might talk to the children as he takes yellow down into the blue to create the green in various shapes, something entirely new. It is always a moving experience when suddenly through the joining of colors a quite new one arises. Just such an active process is important for a growing child, far more important than the finished picture, for unconsciously he sees himself portrayed in what is taking place.

Just as different plants are painted out of a preparatory color-mood, so different animal forms can be introduced in the zoology lesson. They can be formed out of their surroundings;

for instance, by first making (through painting) the element "water" a vivid experience and then "discovering" little fish swimming in the water and making them more visible. They are already there if only the living element, water, has been properly formed. It is a matter of being imaginatively alert, of observing the things that "just by chance" happen to stand out, and then raising them at once to a more conscious sphere. Children understand immediately that fish cannot live on dry land — in this case the bare white paper; the water simply has to be there first. One can follow up this painting session with a more precise, factual talk about fish. "First doing, then grasping in thought." Similarly, birds emerge out of the element of air, mice from the depths of a murky cellar, lions out of the hot desert atmosphere.

In the middle and upper grades, the color is formed more exactly into figures. Eventually the students use the same stretched paper for several consecutive sessions, putting one very delicate layer of color over another. This is quite different from the painting I have been talking about, which one could call "wet in wet."

Perhaps in closing one might point out how crucial it is that we help to preserve the human organ that perceives colors in the world. Rudolf Steiner, founder of the Waldorf schools, said to an artist at the beginning of this century: "If in our time a genuine color experience is no longer cultivated, and if the mechanistic theories of the nature of color are spread further among mankind, children will be born into the world no longer possessing an organ for perceiving color. Through color, life itself is revealed. But mankind will no longer have the faculty to see the colors, just as they no longer have the faculty to see the elemental spirits weaving in nature. The world will be gray."

We can see from these words the serious task that is emerging for today's teachers. Actually, painting can be one more therapeutic activity by which one can help to diminish the devastation spreading through our civilization. And indeed it is an acknowledged fact that for eyes that are physically sound, every kind of color blindness can be cured by continued, intensive involvement with colors.

—Harald Rudel

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Third Grade Farming

Each year our school tries to integrate the dairy farm across the road into the lower school curriculum — particularly during the third grade agriculture block. This year we developed a program that would not only integrate the farmers and the farm, but third grade parents as well.

This year's experience involved four days (we all rested on the 5th school day) of "living" at the school, using gym mats for beds and the school kitchen for meals. At least one parent from virtually every family volunteered several hours of time to help in many ways, from mealtime preparation to overnight supervision.

The class was divided into four groups of six each. Each morning one group was awakened early enough to go to the dairy barn at 4:30 a.m. to help with milking. (The Monday morning early group was the only group that stayed overnight for four nights.) The rest of the class slept longer, and at 7 a.m. one group went to the Burkey barn to do morning chores, feeding the sheep and calves. Another group helped to prepare breakfast, and the last group cleaned up the gym and set the tables. At 8 a.m. (or whenever the farmers arrived) we all had breakfast together and then divided once more into the smaller working groups. The same group that had milked returned to the barn to do chores; another group went to the Burkey farmhouse to preserve food by canning, drying, and salting; another group ground cornmeal and baked it into cornbread and muffins for the morning snack. The last group sub-divided into bread bakers, butter churners, and soup makers. At 10:30 a.m. the children carried the freshly baked cornbread and homemade butter to the barn to join with the other children and the farmers and parent volunteers to enjoy a snack.

After snack, the children worked in the classroom, spinning wool on drop spindles, and weaving the yarn through the tiny hand-made belt looms. They also did some basket weaving. At noon, lunch progressed as on any other school day except that the third graders dined with the adults who were helping with the program and they had their own freshly baked rolls to enjoy with their soup. Recess, rest and story time lasted until 2 p.m. when the class congregated for the afternoon project. (The early morning risers stayed behind for extra rest until it was time to return to the barn to prepare for afternoon milking.) On the first afternoon, the children had raked hay into windrows preparatory to baling. On the second (rainy) afternoon, the children shelled corn and made corn cob dolls. The third afternoon, they turned the long windrows to dry the underside, and on the fourth (and last) afternoon, they were able to see the completion of their efforts by loading the pint-sized hay bales onto the hay wagon, riding on the wagon to the beef barn, and unloading the bales. They handled 101 bales of hay (which had been made into half-size bales).

Each day's routine was essentially the same, but the groups rotated to give similar experiences to all. In the late afternoon, the morning milkers continued with afternoon milking; the group that did morning chores at Burkey barn now did afternoon chores; the group that helped with breakfast preparation now prepared dinner, and the cleaner-uppers did more of that, in the classroom as well as in the gym. The farmers arrived around 6 p.m. for dinner. After the dishes were cleaned and the floor swept, the children congregated for a variety of music, games and stories led by still more volunteers, mostly from our faculty, but also from the parents.

Many slides were taken during the week, and on some winter evening we will invite the children and their families to partake of a dinner to be prepared by the children using food they preserved last fall. On that same evening we will show the slides and recapitulate last fall's experience by playing the game "Who Remembers?"

—Wilma Beam



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"It has been damaging to our Waldorf School Movement that people continue to say with emphasis: 'Waldorf education can be achieved only in its own separate schools,' — while I have steadily declared that the methods can be taken into any school . . . The educational methods can truly be introduced into every situation where someone has the good will to do it."

Rudolf Steiner, in a meeting with the
Swiss Schulverein (Educational Union), December 28, 1923

And with this, we should like to bring you a short follow-up of James Peterson's article on "Waldorf Education and the Public Schools" in our last issue and the reprint of Alan Howard's description of the Berne, Switzerland, public schools and how they are incorporating Waldorf methods. We have recently received an important book, published by the Association for Independent Education, Berne: *Waldorfpädagogik in öffentlichen Schulen* (Waldorf Pedagogy in Public Schools).^{*} One chapter by Max Widmer, a teacher in a Liebefeld, Switzerland, public school, gives a history of the Berne developments. Since 1946 the Association for Independent Education has held — besides ongoing lectures and weekend courses — an annual public conference on Waldorf pedagogy with a week of seminars, artistic courses and discussions; participation has steadily increased. The Berne authorities now recognize these conferences as official contribution to the State Teacher Training program, and it subsidizes them. Also about 60 teachers from Berne and other Swiss cantons have attended regular Saturday and holiday courses in Waldorf education; this began in the 1974-75 school year and "the unexpectedly large number of enrollments has led to the plan to make these courses a permanent project."

Waldorf Education in the Public Schools II

A Parent's View

James Peterson's article "Waldorf Education in the Public Schools" in the last issue of *Education as an Art* blew fresh air into a stuffy room. Here is a teacher who, on the one hand, John Holt would say can't exist within the structure, and on the other, proves to Waldorf educators that it *can* be done.

Excited as I was five years ago about the prospects of my children's Waldorf school education, I felt guilty about abandoning the public schools. My guilt feelings return every time I find myself in the position of explaining to a certain kind of inquiring parent in my community why my children aren't in our local and highly-regarded school system. I say "a certain kind" because

^{*}*Herder Verlag, Freiburg, Germany, 1976.*

to the educational bigot who stops listening as soon as he or she hears the message "reading delayed beyond First Grade" it is easy enough to smile smugly and end the conversation with "Well, I guess it's just a question of values." In talking with other, more open-minded parents, it is harder because they listen with interest to my description of the kind of education my children are participating in, and often voice the very dissatisfactions with the schools that my husband and I felt when we took our oldest child out after First Grade. These talks frequently end, embarrassingly but predictably, with either an implicit or an overt appeal to the economic barriers which separate those who can afford to send their children to a private school and those who can't. (Just as awkward are those vivid turn-ons to Waldorf education I manage to convey to people who live nowhere near a Waldorf school!) However, most often the conversation ends with the other person declaring, "I feel we ought to do all we can to make the public schools better." These parents genuinely mean what they say: they work very hard at lobbying, both individually and in groups, for specific improvements, as well as trying to influence overall policy by running for positions on the Board of Education. They volunteer their time and skills in their children's classrooms. Many of them could well afford the expense of private schools, yet they reject the idea because they are as philosophically committed to the concept of public education as we Waldorf school parents are to that of Waldorf education.

I rationalize. I've often told myself and others that although a determined minority can and will change the quality of public education eventually, my children have only one childhood. One woman in an anthroposophical community told me, "Don't feel guilty. It will all filter down. Waldorf schools are the laboratories for the public schools." That statement, however, can only be valid if Waldorf schools view themselves as such and take an active part in disseminating their philosophy to interested outsiders. Like Peterson, I don't see that happening. Why?

I have been around teachers, parents and other people associated with several Waldorf schools for some years now, and what I encounter time and again is often an insular, and indeed snobbish, attitude toward the very idea of transferring Waldorf concepts to a public school setting. On one occasion I remarked that I did not think public schools were impervious to change. Granted the polaric differences in philosophy, I pointed out how the Montessori approach, once the province of a limited number of children of wealthy parents, is now being utilized in many public elementary schools. Change can and has occurred. To bring it about takes being there at the right moment with a workable idea. "But you couldn't *possibly* transplant Waldorf education to the public schools because the public schools are against religion," was the curt dismissal I got.

Yes and no, given the relationship between public education and the pluralistic society we live in. You certainly can't begin

the day with "From my head to my feet I am the image of God," doctrinally innocuous to many though that prayer may be. And it might be kind of sticky to dwell at any length on the lives of Christian saints and risk justifiable cries of "Separation of church and state" from irate parents whose cultural milieus are shaped by other religions or none at all. But I do not think there is one parent in a million who could not support a teacher who from his or her own inner convictions attempts to inspire a true reverence for nature and for all life, without which there certainly can be no reverence for a higher being. And more specifically, it seems to me that there are many, many aspects of the curriculum, methods of teaching and ideas about child development that could be implemented in the public schools. James Peterson, with his Norse Mythology, his rhythmic math lessons, his larger time blocks and his crayonning, is doing it. No, maybe it isn't exactly "Waldorf education." What it is doing, I suspect, is creating a positive zest for learning and for life among the children in his classes. Isn't that what a good education is all about?

Peterson tells us that "many people in the educational system are desperately seeking new answers to the problems of education." The status quo is being questioned everywhere. Bruno Bettelheim's best-selling and critically-acclaimed *The Uses of Enchantment* is a message to all parents that fairy tales, long dismissed from the nursery and the classroom, have a vital place in their children's lives. Marie Winn's *The Plug-In-Drug*, also well-reviewed, and written with no particular educational bias, documents the dangers of massive TV watching. Raymond Moore, whose work has appeared in major publications, traces the deleterious effects of too-early reading. There is even the dentist who has noticed a correlation between tooth change and intellectual development. Almost every week snippets of information appear in the educational sections of the newspapers about problems in the classroom which confirm or in some way parallel findings familiar to Waldorf teachers. And of course Waldorf teachers pat themselves on the back and say "See? We knew it all along." Which is great. But why not take it a step further and give these semi-enlightened people who maybe feel their job is to teach in Harlem, Whitesburg, Kentucky, or even New Trier High (Winnetka, Illinois) — to name one school whose town tax base could pay many times over for teachers to attend Waldorf workshops — a helping hand?

When James Peterson expresses a hope for workshops, minicourses and lectures designed to acquaint the public school teacher with Waldorf education, I say "Right On," but one must recognize that the negative or at best indifferent attitudes of the Waldorf school "establishment" itself represent a formidable barrier to be overcome.

I believe there are many Waldorf teachers who, individually, would support Peterson's efforts, like the eurythmy teacher who felt that "some eurythmy taught even by such a novice [as

Peterson] was better than no eurythmy." For a workshop, however, you'd obviously need more than one. You'd need a group of several teachers who believe that *all* children deserve a better education than they are getting — in other words, what Steiner hoped for himself — and who are not too proud to share the benefits of their training with their public school colleagues, for use in a public school setting.

The kind of effort needed to bridge the gap between Waldorf theory and public school reality is admittedly enormous. Interest *at first* might be slight. Results, *at first*, might prove inconclusive and isolated. But I'm willing to bet there are a lot of James Petersons out there who are crying for answers their education courses never gave them. Can you just visualize the impact even a few thousand of them could have on our country's children? *This* is where it's got to be at.

—Lee Haas

The Man

He weasels out of things; nothing
cows him; he never chickens out — he ducks;
he foxes millions; he squirrels away
everything; he snakes his way in, he bulls through,
he crows about going out on a limb;
doubts dog him secretly; he thinks people
are hounding him; he hogs the air; he geeses
himself; he rats on his brothers, skunks friends;
he wolfs down the night, hawks the sky; he apes
anyone; they have to ferret him out;
he crabs to you about them; he clams up
on you; he monkeys with you; he horses
with your life; you lionize him.

—Randy Blasing

*(Reprinted from his book of poems, Light Years,
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Book Reviews

LIVING MAGIC

NATURE SPIRITS, brush drawings by Ingrid Gibb, text by Marjorie Spock. Colchester, England: Iceni Publications, 1975. Not numbered.

“‘Pooh!’ said the little boy to some girls nearby whom he happened to overhear talking about fairies. ‘There aren’t such things, you sillies!’” So begins Marjorie Spock’s brief but charming text accompanying a delightful collection of evocative brush drawings by Ingrid Gibb. “You could tell from the way he said it,” she continues, “that he wished there were, though. But he was determined to be a man and face facts bravely.”

“Pooh,” indeed. That’s the prevailing view, and the little boy is already a man of his time.

But Marjorie Spock goes on to speak of “What a frightful loss it is to lose sight of fairies, to have exchanged the living magic of the fairy realm for the colourless mechanical world of jiggling atoms.” *Nature Spirits* is a delicate and lovely little paean to such “living magic,” with a spritely text and illustrations that capture all the wonder, imagination, and humor of “the living faces behind nature.” We meet The Old One, Dancing Frogs, the Old Tree Dryad, Goblins and Elementals, Gnomes and Sprites, Root Spirits, and visions of Elfin House and various landscapes from Middle Kingdom. The drawings capture with rare grace and wit the world they show us. We are quite *there* — looking through the “inner window” to a Land of Life peopled by amazing spirits.

Beyond that window there is a world we sorely need today — a world of living magic that adults perhaps more than children need to be reminded of. This book, then — for adults even more than for children — is such a reminder: one that takes us vividly behind “the veil of seeming,” gives palpable and convincing form to visions of the inner eye, and probably will prompt — as it did for me — fresh wonder at the living forces that are everywhere behind nature.

—Nick Lyons

THE BLUE RABBIT and FLOS AND BLANKFLOS

When one browses through the children’s section of the bookstore or library, one finds many an attractive and charming item that seems ideal for a particular child or group of children. Some books are beautifully and artistically illustrated, others are written with real imagination, and often one can find a winning combination of good writing and nice pictures. How, then, from amongst these gems does one select the one or two books that

will be particularly enchanting and leave a memorable impression? Perhaps *enchantment* is the key word, for the power of a book to cast a spell that releases a child's imagination and enraptures his soul is a rare and highly prized power indeed.

The Blue Rabbit, by Ingrid Buchinger-Starke, is the story of a school-age boy who has the wonderful gift of seeing what is not so easily visible to others around him and who has the courage to pursue his vision to the point where it is seen and recognized by all. At first glance the theme may appear to be almost esoteric, and yet the story is quite appealing in a universal way and can be appreciated on many levels.

In the most straightforward way it is the story of a boy, Ralph, who one day spots a rather big blue rabbit sitting in his garden. Day by day, through the week, Ralph sees him in different places, always in the early evening when the shadows grow long and the bright distractions of the day are becoming dim. Eventually his mother notices that something is occupying her son and the family, full of understanding, sit one evening with Ralph in the garden to watch for the blue rabbit. One by one Mother, Father and Sister see the rabbit, but each in a different place in the garden, although they are all sitting together on the bench of the picnic table.

In another way it is the story of awakening consciousness becoming aware of erstwhile hidden aspects of life which also have to be brought to the attention of those who have ceased to notice them. And, at the same time, it is the story of a meditative consciousness that helps to bring form and meaning to the obscure and unperceived secrets of existence. After helping the others to come to their own vision of the rabbit, Ralph says:

"You lucky people. You get to see him so soon."

But we are not left in the realm of the imagination, for Ralph is given a present by his father: a small, spotted rabbit for him to take care of.

"Father turned to Ralph. 'It is yours. You said that you like all rabbits. I hope you will like this one just as much as the blue rabbit.'"

And although the living, physical rabbit has not the magical quality of the blue rabbit, still it is a creature to be loved and cherished.

The book is decorated with water-color pictures by the author and is published in an unusual format: It is seven by eleven inches in size and the text appears in both English and German. It can be read aloud in about 15 minutes. The publisher is Heimdall-Verlag and it is available through St. George Book Service.

On quite another plane is *FLOS AND BLANKFLOS*. Yet there are similarities between this book and *THE BLUE RABBIT* in their enchanting stories and appeal to the imagination.

Based on a legend of the Middle Ages it tells of two dear friends and later husband and wife who endure a very hard blow of fate, are separated and later re-united under perilous and adventuresome circumstances.

The two children are raised and schooled together; Blankflos is the daughter of a French countess and is born just after her mother was taken prisoner by an infidel king, while Flos is the son of the king himself. These two are inseparable until the day when Flos, now a youth, is sent away to receive his higher education and is told that Blankflos is dead. In reality, she has been sold by the king, Flos' own father, to two merchants who in turn sell her to the Admiral of Babylon. The story is the search by Flos for his friend, for he learns the true story of her fate. If one interprets this medieval romance as a fairy tale, one sees the union of the spirit and the soul torn asunder and the struggle of the ego to unite itself again with the soul. All the charm and beauty of the fairy-tale world pervades this book which is decorated with water-color illustrations by Lilly Gross-Anderegg.

FLOS AND BLANKFLOS is published by Zbinden-Verlag Basel, and is available through the St. George Book Service in German, with a separate English translation. Although it is a small book, the text is long enough for a fairly good reader of ten years of age or so to take several sessions to read. It can probably be read aloud to children from six years up.

—Mel Belenson



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CHILD AND MAN — EXTRACTS

*Published by the Steiner Schools Fellowship, Sussex, England,
1975*

CHILD AND MAN — EXTRACTS is a collection of articles written for the English periodical "Child and Man" during the period 1947-1960. During those years "Child and Man" evolved, from the magazine of a single school, Michael Hall, to a publication for all English Waldorf schools, and finally into its present role as a twice-yearly magazine for education in England as a whole.

The book contains 74 articles, all written by teachers out of their experiences in the classroom, and arranged roughly in order of age group taught. The reader will find essays on virtually every subject of the Waldorf curriculum: Nursery Class Conversations; Learning To Write; From Sowing To Baking; First Lessons About Plants; Grammar and Grammarye; Geometry in Relation to Infinity; History in the Twelfth Class — to cite a random sampling.

Taken all together, these articles provide a remarkable summary of what might be taught in a Waldorf school. I emphasize "might", because the individuality, the freshness of discovery and invention passing from teacher to students and back again, is what I found most striking. Clearly, nothing would be the same twice. Yet the foundation would underlie the work of individual teachers. Each class, as it came along, would be ready for certain subjects at certain ages and would take its place within the framework of the whole. Modern psychologists are not at one on this question, but many do indeed recognize that children of each age group correspond inwardly while they may differ outwardly. The introduction to this book of essays contains the following comment by R. A. Jarman about the inner stages of childhood:

"The education of children is concerned with awakening dormant powers within them and helping children plant seeds in themselves for the future. Above all, it seeks to help them to experience and contribute to their environment in the widest senses of that word — human, physical, spiritual. That there are special chronological periods of childhood when particular subjects, activities and social experiences are best introduced, that the child's whole life of feeling and thinking says "Yes" to these times, that his organism and inner being respond most positively at these moments, is one of the most significant discoveries of Rudolf Steiner education."

These articles testify that, somewhat as the human form unites all men while allowing for their infinite diversity, so the curriculum for each age group in a Waldorf school provides the foundation upon which a teacher can build as an individual artist.

—Cornelia Schwartz

EDUCATION TOWARDS FREEDOM. Rudolf Steiner Education. A Survey of the Work of Waldorf Schools throughout the World. Text: Frans Carlgren. Layout: Arne Klingborg. Lanthorn Press, East Grinstead, England, in collaboration with Verlag Freies Geistesleben, Stuttgart. 208 pages, with 250 photographs. \$19.50 at St. George Book Service.

Of all the books on Waldorf education, this one has probably been the longest in the making, requiring the cooperation from many schools and individual teachers. It is a documentary book of indescribable beauty, with numerous colored photographs of students' work, from preschool through high school. An exhibition of this caliber cannot be seen at one single school. With only few exceptions, it represents outstanding work by gifted children under the guidance of inspiring teachers. The detailed accompanying text takes the reader through many aspects of Waldorf education, including its history and glimpses of the early years under the guidance of Rudolf Steiner.

The book was originally published in the Danish language, then translated into German. Highly acclaimed for its uniqueness, it has now become available in English.

This book is invaluable to anyone who wants to "see" Waldorf education or to "show" it to others, for it is far more convincing than words. It conveys the wonders of childhood, youth's creativity, and the awe-inspiring power and richness of the education. It can be a guide to parents and teachers, a source of happy memories to former Waldorf students, a perfect gift book for many.

EDUCATION TOWARDS FREEDOM can help to make Waldorf education wider known and better understood in this country.

—Gisela O'Neil

* * *

"The ostrich is a giraffe-bird."

* * *

"Mother, who was born first, you or I?"

* * *

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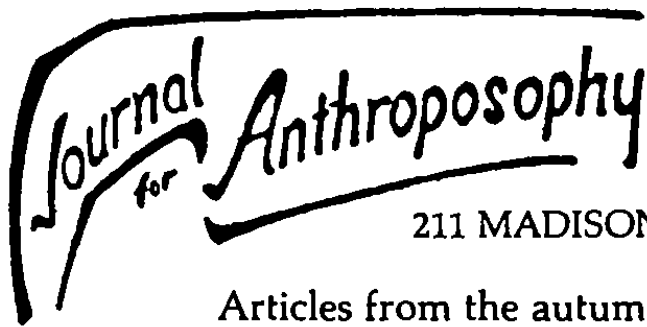
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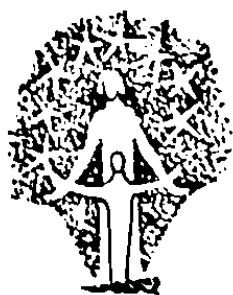
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