

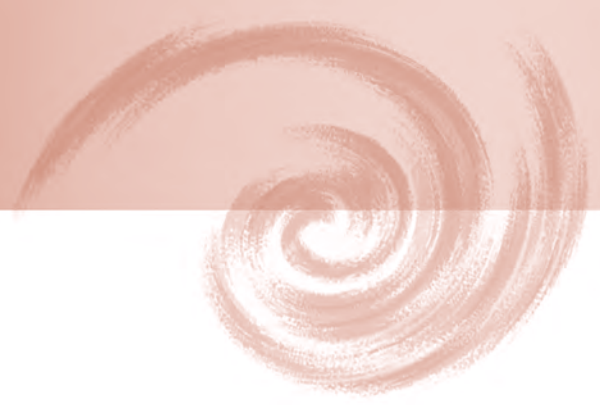


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Elan Leibner

Dear Readers:

For teachers, summer gives time to dream, plan, ponder, and create. Then, with autumn, one's will has to engage anew; what lived in the spiritual spheres must find its echo in the classroom. In this transition from one realm to the other, from the children of our summer plans to the children in front of us, the teacher has to mediate by applying his or her best "teacherly sense," as Rudolf Steiner called it. When the pathway between the heavenly and the earthly remains active and dynamic, the reality of the classroom is filled with vitality. From the world of the *Research Bulletin's* editorial team, we send the teachers among you warm wishes for a year of vitality and pedagogical enthusiasm.

This issue of the *Research Bulletin* brings you a number of surprising and delightful gems. Frederick Amrine continues his engaging series on the philosophical roots of Waldorf education with a discussion of Schiller and the influence that his letters, "On the Aesthetic Education of Man," had on Steiner. Anyone who has read the previous installments of Amrine's disquisition will know what a remarkable job he does of "translating" dense philosophical texts into stories that even the lay among us can follow. We already look forward to the final installment, which will deal with Steiner himself, in the next (Spring/Summer) issue.

Peter Lutzker, a teacher educator from Stuttgart, gave an inspiring keynote lecture at a gathering of adult educators in Vienna earlier this year. At the urging of Douglas Gerwin, Executive Director of the Research Institute for Waldorf Education, Lutzker has transformed his lecture notes into a jewel of an article on attunement as a pedagogical practice. His perspective is fresh, original, and

insightful. He compares the visual and auditory fields, both in terms of the language we use when discussing them and in terms of the pedagogical implications of working in one or the other mode.

Polly Saltet and Susanne Zipperlen sent us a fascinating article on curative eurythmy for the orthodontic treatment of teeth. With stunning pictures of the effects of the work, they describe both a case study and the conceptual underpinnings of the treatment. This is a relatively new field of work in North America and seems very promising for those who wish to avoid or augment traditional orthodontic protocols.

Roberto Trostli offers the first of two articles on the teaching of science in Waldorf schools. Based on keynote lectures he gave earlier this year in Hungary, Trostli connects the practical realities of the classroom with the most profound spiritual challenges of our time, showing how science teaching can play a crucial role in helping our students meet those challenges. This is the kind of article that class teachers and science teachers alike would do well to revisit regularly.

Two of the articles in this issue are slightly modified chapters from new books. Van James, an art teacher in Hawaii who will be known to many readers from his adult education courses, has finally written a book on learning to draw and teaching children how to do it. The chapter published here is from an early part of the book, but it sets the tone and should whet the appetite for reading the book in its entirety. Toward the end of this issue, Eugene Schwartz offers an enthusiastic review of James' book.

The second is by Craig Holdrege, Director of The Nature Institute. His new book, entitled *Thinking Like Plant: A Living Science for Life*,

describes plant life and the phenomenological process by which he tries to engage his adult students in acquiring observational skills and the conceptual flexibility needed to comprehend the mystery of plant existence. His many years of research and teaching in this area are evident in both the clarity of his insights and the humble yet confident tone he sets for the journey of discovery.

The second part of Liz Beaven's important research on the experiences of teachers who have moved between independent and charter Waldorf schools follows. Beaven is not out to judge and keep score, but rather to collect data (as opposed to opinion), to probe, and to raise questions. Some of the revelations offered by teachers she interviewed are predictable, some surprising, but all of them relevant. Those who have interest in the twin questions of cultural freedom and economic access to quality education should acquaint themselves with this paper, which is, as far as we are aware, the first of its kind.

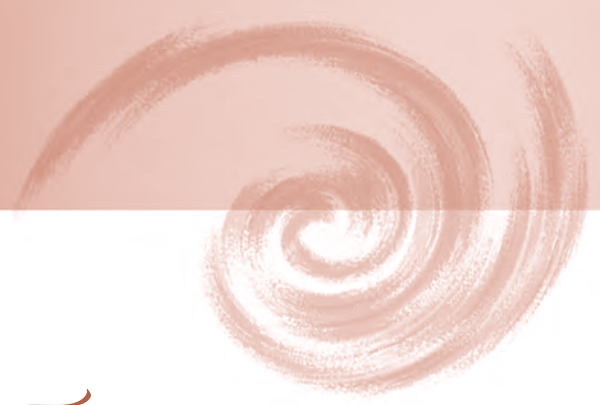
On behalf of her early childhood colleagues who met in Spring Valley, NY, this summer, Holly Koteen-Soulé sends us a snapshot of the state of early childhood work in North America. More than any specific detail in the report, one is impressed by the candor and forthrightness of these discussions. We urge you to acquaint yourselves with their work, especially if you toil elsewhere in the pedagogical universe.

Jill Taplin, an early childhood educator from the UK, reviews *Under the Stars*, a new book by Renate Long-Breipohl. The book is a series of essays on themes related to the young child, and Taplin finds it insightful and deserving of wide readership.

A report from Marianne Alsop, the long-serving Librarian of the Online Waldorf Library, completes this issue. Those interested in research should know the RIWE website has a link to a paper recently published in *Current Issues in Education* that tracks the test scores of Waldorf-inspired charter school students over twenty years. Though not groundbreaking in

its conclusions, the paper demonstrates that the slow beginning of academic instruction in Waldorf settings—and hence the pupils' predictably lower scores during the early grades—is more than overcome by the time of middle school, when student test scores in Waldorf charters consistently exceed those of comparable schools. Ripeness is everything.

Happy reading!



From the Executive Director

Douglas Gerwin

Two major developments this year mark the expanded organization and activities of the Research Institute for Waldorf Education (RIWE):

1. As of August 1st, the Research Institute took on the responsibility for publishing books and pamphlets previously carried by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). They will now appear under the new imprimatur of “Waldorf Publications.” Patrice Maynard, who for the past nine years served as AWSNA’s Leader of Outreach and Development, was appointed to a new position at the Research Institute with the title Director of Publications and Development.

In addition, the Institute created a new publications committee, drawn from its circle of trustees, to assist Patrice in selecting and publishing new titles as well as managing the existing inventory. Elan Leibner, well known to readers of this journal as its editor and regular contributor, joined trustees Frederick Amrine (whose serialized article on the philosophical roots of Waldorf education continues in this issue) and Natalie Adams to form this committee.

Patrice and her staff will manage daily operations concerning publications, including online sales of science kits and other materials, out of her office in Chatham, NY, while administrative tasks will be handled as before by the Research Institute’s headquarters in Wilton, NH.

Patrice takes over many of the tasks previously held by David Mitchell, who as founding Chair of AWSNA Publications pioneered the production of Waldorf books, pamphlets, flyers, and teaching kits for nearly three decades. The transition of Waldorf publications to the Research Institute makes

real a dream that David cherished for many years.

2. Until his death over a year ago, David was also Co-Director of the Research Institute. In light of its expanding activities and organization, the trustees of the Research Institute appointed Douglas Gerwin, who previously shared the leadership of the Institute with David, to a new position of Executive Director.

While completing these organizational changes, the Research Institute has continued to release further titles as eBooks on its Online Waldorf Library (OWL). Thanks to a generous ongoing grant from the Waldorf Curriculum Fund, more than 150 titles—including some books freshly translated into Spanish—have been converted to eBooks. All are freely available on the OWL and at the Research Institute’s own website. Further Spanish translations and English-language eBooks are in production. Marianne Alsop, as the OWL’s veteran librarian, continues to enhance the collection while answering countless enquiries from around the world. (See her separate report in this issue of the *Research Bulletin*.)

As in previous years, the Research Institute continues to sponsor its popular course “Teaching Sensible Science” led by Michael D’Aleo, a Waldorf high school science teacher familiar to regular readers of the *Research Bulletin*. Starting back in February, a new cycle of this course was inaugurated at the Waldorf School of Baltimore; a second cycle started up in March at the Seattle Waldorf School. Those interested in registering for these courses—which meet for three weeks over the course of a year—can contact the Research Institute for details. Further cycles of this course are planned.

On other fronts, the Research Institute is supporting several research projects already announced in previous issues of the *Research Bulletin* as well as preparing further ones in collaboration with our colleagues in Europe, including a new English-language edition of the beloved collection of poems, songs, and readings known to German-speaking readers as *Der Sonne Licht*. With the help of a grant from the *Waldorf Stiftung* in Germany, a special edition of this timeless classic is being readied for publication in this country. In addition to the foundations already mentioned, the Research Institute is grateful to other funders—including the Waldorf Educational Foundation, the Foundation for Rudolf Steiner Books, and an anonymous donor assisting with the transition of Waldorf Publications—who make possible our work.

Other research projects are underway in collaboration with our European and Australian partners, some of whom we met in May during a week-long international conference in Vienna of Waldorf researchers and adult educators. (One of the keynote addresses of that conference appears in this issue of the *Bulletin*.) During a meeting of researchers attending the Vienna conference, Douglas was voted onto the Advisory Group of *Research on Steiner Education (RoSE)*, a budding European online journal.

Finally, to those who responded to our annual giving campaign, we extend heartfelt thanks for your generosity. Those wishing to contribute to this year's appeal are invited to forward donations to Patrice's office in Chatham, NY, or give online by using the secure button of our refurbished website: www.waldorfresearchinstitute.org.



The Philosophical Roots of Waldorf Education

Part Three: From Schiller to Steiner¹

Frederick Amrine

We play only when we are in the fullest sense of the word a human being, and we are fully a human being only when we play.

Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805) is best known in the German-speaking world as a dramatist. As a young man, he was the *enfant terrible* of the German stage, the leader of a movement called *Sturm und Drang*—“Storm and Stress.” To call the young Schiller politically and culturally “radical” is an understatement: the epigraph to his first drama was “*In tyrannos*”—“tyrants up against the wall!” The leaders of the Revolution named him the first honorary citizen of the new French republic. Schiller started out as a combination of Elvis Presley and Malcolm X, but you then have to imagine that pair morphing into a professor of history, next into a first-rate philosopher, and finally into Arthur Miller: then you’ve got Schiller.² A fascinating man who is sadly neglected in the English-speaking world.

Even in the German-speaking world, Schiller is not well known as a philosopher, but that may be his greatest claim to fame in the long run. He wrote only a few philosophical essays, and only one of any length,³ but right from the moment it was published in 1794, Schiller’s treatise “On the Aesthetic Education of Man” was recognized by his contemporaries as a masterpiece. Hegel pronounced it the greatest philosophical work of the German nation, which is saying a lot considering what Kant had just accomplished. And yet when Rudolf Steiner took up Schiller’s essay at the end of the 19th century and used it as one of the main foundations for anthroposophy, he

Schiller wanted to rewrite the letter of Kant in the spirit of Kant.

was like an archaeologist who had unearthed a treasure long buried and forgotten. Over the course of those few decades, intellectual life in Central Europe had descended so deeply into materialism and positivism that it could no longer recognize the value of Schiller’s treatise. And it is really only since the publication of Wilkinson and Willoughby’s edition and English translation by Oxford University Press in 1967⁴ that Schiller’s essay has again entered the mainstream of intellectual history.

Schiller’s Essay in Its Historical Context

Let’s begin by situating Schiller’s essay within the larger context we established in the first two installments of this series. Schiller was an enthusiastic Kantian, but he was also disappointed and dissatisfied by the profound dualism embodied in Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* or *First Critique* (1781, revised in 1787) and his major works on ethics, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785) and the *Critique of Practical Reason* or *Second Critique* (1788).

Schiller’s essay is part and parcel of that “inner revolution” described in the first installment: like Goethe and Fichte, Schiller wanted to rewrite the letter of Kant in the spirit of Kant. Curiously, Kant himself arrived at the same place late in his life when he wrote the all-important *Critique of Judgment* or *Third Critique* (1790).

I say “curiously” because Kant’s discovery of key aspects of his revolutionary philosophy often seems to have been inadvertent. Kant planned his intellectual journeys meticulously, but he kept arriving at unexpected destinations. So it was with the *Third Critique*, which is devoted half to art and half to biology. What

these seemingly incongruous realms share is the faculty of teleological judgment: in both art and biology the whole somehow precedes and determines each individual part. This is a great riddle for rational thinking, which necessarily proceeds from the part to the whole. It would seem that there is no way humans can know this wholeness immediately, and indeed Kant gives up on biology—a resignation captured in his witty prediction that “there never will be a Newton of a blade of grass.”⁵ But Kant doesn’t give up on art, and the result is thrilling.

Kant’s philosophy is nothing if not systematic, and a great deal of its power flows from the latent energies of a rich and dense set of interlocking structures. Scholars tend to follow Kant himself in referring to this as the “architectonic” of his philosophy as a whole. Staying with this metaphor, one might say that Kant imagined his *Third Critique* as the final wing of a grand edifice that was nearly complete, but in the process of building it, he discovered a new and greatly superior architectural principle, as it were. Kant’s intellectual honesty was so profound that he was willing to throw away what had made him famous and start over. But Kant was too old and tired to do it himself. Schiller and the other Young Turks, the younger generation of Kantians whose hair was on fire, all saw immediately what Kant had accomplished in his *Third Critique*, and they were more than glad to help out by rebuilding Kantianism in accordance with that new principle. So it is that—among many other things—Schiller attempts to rewrite and extend Kant’s ethics in the spirit of Kant’s aesthetics. In order to understand Schiller’s accomplishment, we need to recapitulate Kant’s ethics and aesthetics as succinctly as we can.

Kant’s Ethics

As he had in epistemology, Kant effected a great revolution in the field of ethics. Kant

overturned both of the prevailing ethical paradigms. Against the Empiricists he argued persuasively that ethics must have its source in a mental activity that is non-empirical, self-sustaining, self-referential, and transparent. For Kant, this meant that its ultimate foundation must be rational. But the traditional rationalist account also proves inadequate. The arch-rationalist Socrates had asserted that “no man does evil knowingly,” but Kant sees evil as having a real, positive source within human nature, outside of reason. We aren’t tempted to make mistakes in math, but we are tempted to cheat on our tax returns. The source of temptation is desire or, as Kant calls it, “inclination” [*Neigung*], which sits in the will. For Kant, inclination is the sworn enemy of rationality, and ethics is about making a radical choice between inclination and reason.

Kant argues that inclination and reason strive toward different ends. Inclination strives for happiness in the form of satisfied desire, but in the realm of action, “practical” reason strives for autonomy and self-consistency, which Kant calls “duty” [*Pflicht*]. Both of these tendencies are real and present in all of us; hence, as ethical agents, we live in a state of constant tension between duty and desire. Inclination is the thing we must fear the most, and all the more so because it is so cunning: inclination lurks everywhere.

Again, practical reason strives for autonomy and self-consistency; nothing external should affect it. Which is to say, practical reason has no motives. If we have a motive—any motive—then the good ceases to be an end in itself, and it becomes the means to some other end. So, Kant asks, what are our motives in doing the good? We might say: it is good to give to the poor. But what if our motive for being charitable is to impress our friends? To feel good about ourselves? Or even to merit salvation? Then Kant sees reason as losing its autonomy and becoming

Schiller attempts to rewrite and extend Kant’s ethics in the spirit of Kant’s aesthetics.

“heteronymous”—taking its law [*nomos*] from another [*heteros*] rather than itself [*autos*]. Then even giving to the poor is not ethical because we have lost our autonomy; we have allowed an alien motive to intrude upon the inner sanctuary of our freedom.

So how can we be sure that our deeds are good? Kant asserts that we can be sure only if they are performed against inclination. And Kant gives examples of moral actions that are appallingly unattractive: a charitable misanthrope, someone inclined towards suicide who soldiers on out of duty, and so forth. But that’s Kant’s point; such dreary deeds are guaranteed moral precisely because they are unattractive. So if motives are suspect as such, what can guarantee morality? Only a purely formal principle that generates self-consistency. And Kant puts forward as that principle his famous “categorical imperative”: “Act in such a way that the maxim of your deed could become, through you, a universal moral law.” The categorical imperative is a kind of machine that generates disinterestedness: for something to be moral, you have to be able to imagine and accept a world in which everyone else is acting according to the same principle you have prescribed to yourself. Kant imagines that all rational beings who follow the categorical imperative will make the same choices, and thereby become members of an ideal community, a kind of rationalist heaven that he calls “the kingdom of ends.”

Whether the maxims that we prescribe to ourselves bear any relationship to reality is unknowable. Indeed, it is supremely important that we not know, because if we could demonstrate theoretically the truth of the ideas underlying our maxim (ideas such as “God,” “Freedom,” and “Immortality”), if reason could “touch” them and hence know them, they would immediately become determinate. They would

become unfree, and hence useless for ethics. For Kant, ethics is about what “ought,” and never about what “is,” because a known “is” would determine us, and we would lose our freedom as ethical agents. Of course, Kant recognizes that we have a “natural” being, but that is not our ethical self. Kant’s solution to the dilemmas of ethics is, like his epistemology, resolutely dualistic. We live in two worlds simultaneously: a world of causality that can be known but cannot be changed, and a world of freedom where we enjoy an autonomy that cannot be known. Kant calls this “dual citizenship,” and he declares this dualism to be “a fortunate perplexity,” since it solves—or seems to solve—profound philosophical problems. There’s nothing perverse about Kant’s intention: he’s trying to protect moral freedom and religious faith from the encroachments of a nascent mechanistic paradigm by insulating them from causal necessity.

As I argued in the first installment of this series, it is difficult for us to appreciate how exciting and liberating Kant’s philosophy

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felt, even to a profoundly revolutionary generation, because we live in the liberated world that Kant made, and we take it for granted. It’s the air we breathe. For many people today, orthodox religious commandments, customs, traditions, and a thousand other passively received, unexamined values have lost their hold on our lives. But this is not something that just happened on its own: it happened in large part because Kant was

so successful in undermining their authority, and because he put in their place the ideal of the autonomous individual who gives the moral law to herself. The price of this liberation was that we live divided against ourselves, but Kant was willing to accept that stark dualism as the price of freedom.

Kant's Aesthetics

The thrilling discovery that emerged in the writing of the *Third Critique*, the new “architectural principle,” is the existence of a different kind of autonomy that is free without being one-sidedly rational, and that transforms our natural being rather than merely suppressing it. It is an autonomy that need not be purchased at the price of dualistic self-division. Kant and the immediate post-Kantians realized that this new kind of autonomy had been implicit in his earlier philosophy, but its full power and promise was revealed to them all only when Kant began to write about art.

This new kind of freedom is most evident in two different aspects of aesthetic experience. The first is the spontaneous creative activity of the imagination. Here Kant goes so far as to claim that the genius enjoys the ultimate freedom of obeying her own set of laws. Kant's earlier epistemology in the *Critique of Pure Reason* had pointed to the spontaneity of the imagination as central to every act of cognition—even scientific—but it still invoked logic as the ultimate foundation of human knowledge; he saw the categories of logical judgments as an ultimate, eternal, and unchanging framework outside us to which all of our cognition is referred. But now in the *Third Critique*, creative imagination takes center stage. It plays the starring role in the drama of our inner life, and that makes it possible to imagine a fundamentally new kind of ethics: doing the good will depend not on conforming to a law, but rather on receiving a unique moral intuition and then embodying it in a specific, new form. Ethics will not be about conforming to some pre-existing norm, but about imagining the good and then creating it. The roots of philosophical Romanticism in all its forms

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(including much of the philosophical side of anthroposophy) can be traced back to this first insight into the fundamental nature of aesthetic experience, and the pervasiveness of that influence is surely what Hans-Georg Gadamer meant when he declared all subsequent philosophy to be “a succession of footnotes to Kant's *Third Critique*.”

The second insight was equally profound, and it's no exaggeration to call it a great gift to the whole of humanity. It's the main reason why Kant is universally regarded as the founder

of aesthetics in its modern form. Kant was the first to understand fully and argue persuasively that all genuinely aesthetic experience is a mode of disinterested contemplation. Art is not a means to some other end, not an instrument to produce edification and delight (as the hoary Horatian maxim had asserted). Art is precisely the opposite: an end unto itself, a state of pure freedom. The moment that insight into aesthetic experience arrives, we can see the promise of the new principle for ethics: it satisfies

the requirements of autonomy, but it does so by transforming our sensuous and affective nature rather than just suppressing it. In his *Third Critique*, Kant plants the seeds of the genuine philosophy of freedom he had tried to cultivate in his first and second critiques, and he accomplishes it in a way that he himself had not imagined beforehand. Schiller will draw out all the exciting implications of Kant's discovery for ethics, but he will also extend the argument into a realm where Kant hadn't dared to go: politics.

The Argument of Schiller's Essay

True to the spirit of its content, Schiller delivers a philosophical treatise with a unique and powerfully aesthetic form: he presents it

as a series of letters to his sophisticated and enlightened patron, the Duke of Augustenburg.⁶ Schiller's essay has been well described as not so much a treatise on aesthetics as an aesthetic treatise; it is the thing that it describes and prescribes. Schiller consciously strove for—and achieved—tremendous density. His argument is compact, almost algebraic in its rigor, but the formal relationships are not logically analytic. Rather, they are organic; the argument is a beautiful tapestry in which every part reflects the whole.⁷ The plot of the argument unfolds in rhythms, foreshadowings, climaxes, and dénouements. The style is everywhere suffused with figures of classical rhetoric embodying the meaning in aesthetic forms that speak to our feeling first and foremost.⁸ And indeed, the epigraph to the essay, quoted from Rousseau's *Julie*, already anticipates the whole argument in a single ironic figure: "*Si c'est la raison qui fait l'homme, c'est le sentiment, qui le conduit*" [It may be reason that makes us human, but it is feeling that is our guide]. It moves us to ask: How can feeling be a guide to our conduct? Aren't we all Kantians now, and didn't Kant argue that inclination was duty's greatest enemy?

If anything, the title of the essay must have seemed even more ironic in 1794, so Schiller begins by posing the obvious question himself. The Reign of Terror has just unfolded; why write an essay on aesthetics when political events force themselves upon us so urgently? What does art have to do with politics? Schiller answers his own question with a bold and surprising thesis at the end of the second letter: "If man is ever to solve the problem of politics in practice, he will have to approach it through the problem of the aesthetic, because it is only through Beauty that man makes his way to Freedom."

And now Schiller homes in on deep problems in Kant's dualistic ethics that stem from his neglect of the developmental aspect of morality. Our physical, affective nature—inclination—is powerful. Can

someone who has yet to conquer inclination just overcome it from one minute to the next by making a rational choice? Clearly not. And how will we learn to overcome our selfish interests and become disinterested? How can we opt for the moral law apart from—indeed in opposition to—all interest? Kant provides no answer to these questions, but Schiller argues that there is a solution: we need to call forth some new faculty, a new drive that will be the "champion" of reason within the realm of phenomena.⁹

Even worse, the Reign of Terror exposed yet another shortcoming in Kant's rationalist program. It's not just our sensuous nature, our "inclination" in Kantian terms, that threatens morality. The Jacobins have shown that untempered, cold, calculating reason is as much a threat to the good as our untransformed lower nature. The theorists of the French Revolution appealed to abstract ideals, but the result was, as Schiller puts it, that they "pulled away the ladder" of our natural affections too quickly. The Jacobins signed death warrants by the thousands in the name of a set of rational ideals, without the slightest moral compunction. Kant had understood well one kind of tyranny: the tyranny of inclination over duty. But Kant had failed to understand the tyranny of reason over feeling and sense. He tried to suppress them, and now they were in open rebellion! The mobs may have been "savages," but the Jacobins were "barbarians"—they were just a different kind of tyrant.

Why do we remain unfree in our politics, subject to these tyrannies on both sides? It's because we haven't transformed ourselves sufficiently, because we haven't fashioned ourselves into vessels capable of embodying the State as an ideal. The State must remain outside us, alien to us, and hence it can only tyrannize us, in one way or another. Until human nature itself is transformed, Schiller argues, the pendulum will just swing back and forth, ever more wildly, between these two

pathologies.¹⁰ Where balance between these two poles hasn't been established, events can only careen out of control, as they had already begun to do in the French Revolution. Schiller ends the seventh letter with a stunning prophecy that sadly was fulfilled by Napoleon:

Fearful of freedom, which in its first tentative ventures always comes in the guise of an enemy, we shall either cast ourselves into the arms of an easy servitude or, driven to despair by a pedantic tutelage, escape into the wild libertinism of the natural state. Usurpation will invoke the weakness of human nature, insurrection its dignity; until finally blind force, that great imperatrice of human affairs, steps in and decides this pretended conflict of principles as though it were a common brawl.

What we need is “a third character” that is able to mediate reason and affect, that is able to transform and ennoble inclination, rather than merely suppress it. Human nature itself needs to be transformed, so that our natural being can be brought into harmony with, and become the vessel of, our rational being. Where can we learn to find the universal within the particular? We can learn this from artists, who have solved this riddle through the self-transformation, the systematic self-ennoblement, of artistic practice. Art can teach us how to embody the ideal within the real. Art must become the bridge between inclination and duty.

Now Schiller's argument takes another surprising, and surprisingly modern turn—into psychology. Kant had strenuously avoided this because, for Kant, psychology is merely empirical, mere “anthropology,” the realm of the particular, the biographical, the sub-rational. Like Steiner, Schiller sees our human constitution as threefold; he postulates three

drives [*Triebe*—the same word that Freud will use] as part of universal human nature, beginning with a drive for matter [*Stofftrieb*, which Schiller also calls *der sinnliche Trieb*, or “sense drive”] and an antithetical drive for form [*Formtrieb*]. So far so good: we're still on the familiar terrain of inclination and duty. But—working in the spirit of the later Kant against the letter of the earlier Kant—Schiller now goes further and postulates a third drive mediating these two, the “play-drive” [*Spieltrieb*]:

The sense-drive excludes from its subject all autonomy and freedom; the form-drive excludes from its subject all dependence, all passivity. Exclusion of freedom, however, implies physical necessity, exclusion of passivity moral necessity. Both drives, therefore, exert constraint upon the psyche, the former through the laws of nature, the latter through the laws of reason. The play-drive, in consequence, as the one by which both the others act in concert, will exert

upon the psyche at once a moral and a physical constraint; it will, therefore, since it annuls all contingency, annul all constraint too, and set man free both physically and morally.¹¹

Spielen in German has the same range of meanings as “to play” in English: it's what children

do by engaging their imaginations, but it's also what adults do when they act a role in a drama. Art is just childhood play at a higher level, and both are fundamental to our human nature. Psychologically, “play” i.e., art, has an all-important function. Oscillating between the antithetical poles, the play-drive gives form to inclination, and it warms up cold rationality so that it can take on particular forms and both speak to and be guided by our feelings.

In the sixteenth letter, Schiller argues that Beauty equals the highest equilibrium of reality

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and form. But this is only an ideal: in reality, Beauty continually oscillates between the two poles of our nature. Through aesthetic play, Beauty intervenes to heal us in two very specific ways: it “melts” us or “energizes” us as the need may be, in order to restore our full humanity through active balancing. Indeed, Schiller goes so far as to assert that “man plays only when he is in the fullest sense of the word a human being, and he is fully a human being only when he plays.”¹²

The “inclination” that Kant had feared has been balanced out by Beauty in aesthetic experience; our feeling has been ennobled into a vessel that can receive moral intuitions directly. Inclination becomes selfless through art, and selfless inclination is just another name for love. Schiller embraces what Kant had feared because he could not imagine transforming it. Schiller has theorized, rigorously, ethical love as aesthetic experience. The ideal moral agent will be the ethical artist who has developed “moral imagination” and “moral technique.”¹³

The fifteenth letter reveals the grandest triad: “The object of the play-drive, represented in the general schema, may therefore be called living form: a concept serving to designate all the aesthetic qualities of phenomena and, in a word, what in the widest sense of the term we call beauty.” Art mediates the transition from inclination to duty, and thereby proves the wisdom of Rousseau quoted in the epigraph: feeling—art—truly is the guide of our moral conduct and what makes us most fully human. Art proves integral to both ethics and politics: indeed, it is the guide in all forms of life because in its highest manifestation, Beauty is “living form.”

The Threefold Social Organism

If the ethical ideals of “moral imagination” and “moral technique” in Steiner’s *Philosophy*

of Freedom seem sketchy compared to Schiller’s treatment of the same topics in the *Aesthetic Letters*, Steiner’s characterization of a “threefold social organism,” of which Waldorf education is an integral part, develops fully ideas of which there are still only bare hints in Schiller. Had Steiner not worked them out, doubtless we would fail to see them in Schiller’s treatise.

Nevertheless, Schiller’s essay clearly provided Steiner with important anticipatory hints that helped him greatly in developing his own ideas.

The aspect of Steiner’s threefold social organism that Schiller theorizes and justifies most fully is the call for the establishment of an autonomous “spiritual-cultural sphere,” separate from the

State. Schiller begins the ninth letter, for example, by arguing that we must “seek out some instrument not provided by the State” and “open up living springs which, whatever the political corruption, would remain clear and pure.” He then proceeds immediately to conjoin art and science, realms that are conventionally viewed as antithetical, because both are “absolved from all positive constraint and from all conventions introduced by man; both rejoice in absolute immunity from human arbitrariness”—because, in a word, both art and science are free. The creation of this third realm of pure creativity is the note—the resounding triad—on which Schiller concludes the entire treatise:

In the midst of the fearful kingdom of forces, and in the midst of the sacred kingdom of laws, the aesthetic impulse to form is at work, unnoticed, on the building of a third joyous kingdom of play and of semblance, in which man is relieved of the shackles of circumstance and released from all that might be called constraint, unlike in the physical and in the moral sphere.

Much of the twenty-seventh letter is devoted to an elaboration of this idea in terms that are, as in Steiner's threefold social organism, simultaneously psychological and political:

If in the dynamic State of rights it is as force that one man encounters another, and imposes limits upon his activities; if in the ethical State of duties Man sets himself over against man with all the majesty of the law and puts a curb on his desires; in those circles where conduct is governed by beauty, in the aesthetic State, none may appear to the other except as form, or confronting except as an object of free play. To bestow freedom by means of freedom is the fundamental law of this kingdom.

Here we catch the first glimpse, albeit only a glimpse, of an economic sphere that had been governed by competitiveness, now sublated into altruism. Not just in the realm of ethics and the law, but here also aesthetic experience has the capacity to annul the compulsion of "the fearful kingdom of forces," to temper brute economic competition and begin sublating it into Steiner's high economic ideal of altruism.

For Schiller, as later for Steiner, the only way to resist the tyranny of the State and the alienation that inevitably results from the division of labor is to raise oneself up to the fully-developed Idea of human nature through self-transformation:

One can, however, imagine two different ways in which man existing in time can coincide with man as Idea, and, in consequence, just as many ways in which the State can assert itself in individuals: either by the ideal man suppressing empirical man, and the State annulling individuals; or else by the individual himself becoming the State, and man in time being ennobled to the stature of man as Idea.¹⁴

The former is the way of tyranny and alienation; our only hope is to pursue the latter. Once human nature has been so ennobled, it will be possible to fashion the social order in the image of the human, because nature itself will have expanded and perfected itself sufficiently to embody the State within the realized Idea of human nature.

The precondition for social renewal is the balancing, healing, and transformation of faculties that can be accomplished only through art:

If, therefore, the principles I have laid down are correct, and if experience confirms my portrayal of the present age, we must continue to regard every attempt at political reform as untimely, and every hope based upon it as chimerical, as long as the split within man is not healed, and his nature so restored to wholeness that it can itself become the artificer of the State and guarantee the reality of this political creation of Reason.¹⁵

Political and social reforms await educational reform. Steiner also saw this clearly, and that is why one of the earliest steps Steiner took in launching his social program was the establishment of the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart.

Waldorf Education

By now it should be clear that Waldorf pedagogy strives to realize Schiller's vision of an education that is fully humane because it is first and foremost an aesthetic education. When asked to describe Waldorf education, one way I sometimes start is to say: these are schools in which art is not a subject. The ideal is to teach everything artistically, and to turn the students into artists of their own future calling, whatever it may be. Steiner calls on Waldorf teachers to "release their students in freedom," and Schiller helps us to understand more fully what that ideal might mean in

practice. In the spirit of Schiller's treatise, Waldorf students must become free in at least two different senses, both of which are "aesthetic" virtues.

Like art, education should be "disinterested" in the Kantian sense: never a means, but always an end in itself. The other spheres of society must not be allowed to intrude on the curriculum; neither politicians nor businessmen should be allowed to dictate its contents. The ideal is the free development of all the students' latent faculties and talents, whatever they may be. In order for that to happen, the school itself must be autonomous, and it must actively cultivate and practice, and constantly work to strengthen, its own autonomy as an institution.

But Waldorf education also seeks not just to allow latent talents to manifest; it also seeks to cultivate a new faculty in the students. It seeks to cultivate a talent for imagining what doesn't yet exist but could, which is the foundation of all genuine idealism. It seeks to develop an actively achieved talent for playing in the higher sense that is eminently aesthetic. In the twenty-first letter, Schiller describes the ability to sustain this aesthetic state as "the highest of all bounties" and "the gift of humanity itself." We are most fully human when we are balanced, when we are open to higher promptings, when we play, because play is the achieved indetermination that wrested itself actively from prior determination. It is a state of soul in which we are inwardly able and ready to move in any direction:

If, by contrast, we have surrendered to the enjoyment of genuine beauty, we are at such a moment master in equal degree of our passive and of our active powers, and we shall with equal ease turn to seriousness

or to play, to repose or to movement, to compliance or to resistance, to the discursions of abstract thought or to the direct contemplation of phenomena. This lofty equanimity and freedom of the spirit, combined with power and vigor, is the mood

in which a genuine work of art should release us, and there is no more certain touchstone of true aesthetic excellence.¹⁶

Active indetermination is pure creativity, a talent for being poised and ready to move in any direction, to meet what the world brings and to bring novelty to the world.

Although he seldom mentions it by name, Schiller's long essay "On the Aesthetic Education of Man"

is omnipresent in Rudolf Steiner's life and work. Indeed, it is arguably the hinge on which no less than three major turns in Steiner's career pivoted: the turn from more conventional academic studies to overtly esoteric teaching at the turn of the 20th century; the turn from esoteric lectures to artistic activities around 1910; and the turn towards practical initiatives in the aftermath of World War I. As we have seen, in this final phase Schiller's essay played a central, if often unspoken role in the development of Waldorf education. Truly, Schiller's essay is one of the deepest roots not just of Waldorf education, but of anthroposophy as a whole. We'll return to this theme in the final installment of this essay.

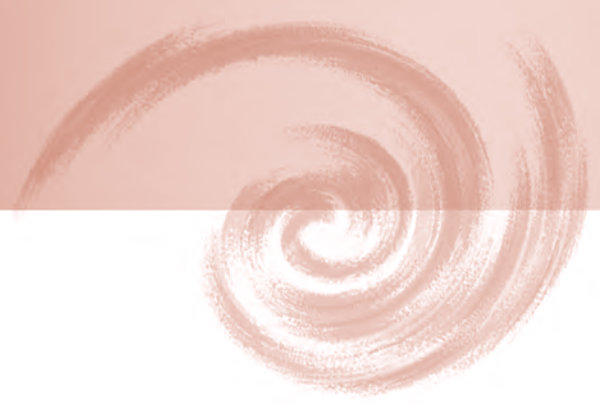
to be continued

Endnotes

1. This essay is the third installment in a series of four on "The Philosophical Roots of Waldorf Education." See the previous installments on Kant, Goethe, Hegel, and Fichte in the two previous issues of the *Research Bulletin* (Vol. XVII n2 and XVIII n1).

2. Some people consider him an outstanding lyric poet as well, and it is worth noting that everyone knows and loves at least one of Schiller's poems, "Ode to Joy," that Beethoven abbreviated and set to music in the last movement of his Ninth Symphony.
3. I consider his long essay "On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry" to be literary criticism rather than philosophy.
4. Gendered language aside, this is a magnificent translation, really the only English edition to consider. And the scholarly apparatus is magnificent as well: indeed, the 150-page introduction is so good that it was translated into German and published as a freestanding book. Another edition published originally by Yale University Press and now reprinted by Dover as an inexpensive paperback is much inferior as a translation, lacks the German original facing the English, and is prefaced by an interpretation that is less than penetrating. With great regret but for the sake of consistency and other practical reasons, I have retained Wilkinson and Willoughby's gendered language in most places.
5. Goethe takes great issue with this conclusion in his essay "Judgment through Intuitive Perception," where he asserts that, unlike "the Old Man of Königsberg," he need not give up on this "adventure of reason" because he has learned through scientific investigations how to intuit archetypes within experience. See Goethe, *Scientific Studies* (Suhrkamp and Princeton UP, 1988 ff.), pp.31–32. Note that even here Goethe's criticism is not that Kant is fundamentally wrong: it's that he has given up on "the adventure of reason" (Kant's own term) too quickly. Even Goethe wants to rewrite the letter of Kant in the spirit of Kant.
6. The treatise actually began as a series of letters sent to the Duke, but the published version is the only "epistolary" philosophical essay of which I am aware.
7. An excellent example of the formal "algebra" I mean would be the rhythm of "triads" that Wilkinson and Willoughby have discovered in the text. The concept appears and then reappears in ever more complex form in letters III, VI, IX, XII, XV, XVIII, XXI, XXIV and XXVII, 3 x 3 times altogether.
8. Consider for example the difference between the prosaic sentiment "Everyone should contribute to the welfare of the nation as a whole" and the rhetorical chiasmus that made John F. Kennedy's inauguration address so memorable: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." Every paragraph of Schiller's essay contains such resonant lines.
9. Eighth letter.
10. Here we see hints of a key esoteric idea within anthroposophy: the duality of evil.
11. Fourteenth letter. The German verb that is translated as "annul" here, *aufheben*, will be taken up by Hegel as a key component of his dialectic. Both Schiller and Hegel play with the inherent ambiguity of the word, which means both "annul" in the sense of "remove" and "sublate" in the sense of "overcoming by raising up to a higher level."
12. Fifteenth letter.
13. "Moral imagination" and "moral technique" are, of course, key concepts in Steiner's *Philosophy of Freedom*, which will be discussed at length in the next installment.
14. Fourth letter.
15. Seventh letter.
16. Twenty-second letter.

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Attunement and Teaching¹

Peter Lutzker

Attunement is a particular mode of the perceptive openness of our existence. The prevailing attunement is at any given time the condition of our openness for perceiving and dealing with what we encounter, the pitch at which our existence, as a set of relationships to objects, ourselves and other people, is vibrating. (Medard Boss, 1979, p.110)

Introduction: The Concept of Attunement

The concept of attunement exists in a broad spectrum of fields ranging from philosophy to education, from psychology to psycholinguistics. Its origins are clearly musical: to bring something into tune, more commonly to bring something into harmony or accord.

The term appears prominently among the 19th century English Romantic poets: Keats writes, “BYRON! how sweetly sad thy melody!/Attuning still the soul to tenderness.” In 20th century philosophy it is a concept that Martin Heidegger and his student Medard Boss refer to, most notably when speaking of *das Horchen* [hearkening]. In the study of childhood, it is a term used with respect to the attunement of the caregiver to the child; in psycholinguistics it refers to the attunement of the child to her mother tongue. In considering the theme of this conference—“The Educator’s View of the Human Being”—I would like to explore what this concept could mean in the fields of teaching and teacher education.

I – From Seeing to Listening

I would like to begin by considering the consequences of a concept based on listening, as opposed to seeing. It is typical that both the English and German titles of this conference

are based on a visual representation of this theme—“The Educator’s View of the Human Being” or “*Das Menschenbild in der Pädagogik*.” This ocular-centric perspective has deep roots: its philosophical origins can be traced to Ancient Greece, and the images and metaphors that one finds in different languages to express recognition, understanding, and knowledge are almost invariably visual—if you see what I mean.

This ocular perspective is often closely tied to what vision enables us to do with our hands; the visible world is also a *graspable* world. The fact that this image is then synonymous with understanding—we “grasp” something, just as in German *wir begreifen etwas*—illuminates, so to speak, this connection further. This also appears to correspond to the fact that those areas of the brain devoted primarily to vision and the use of our hands are extraordinarily large in comparison to those areas chiefly responsible for

any other sensory and motoric modalities. It is the unquestioned dominance of an ocular-centric perspective that has led philosophers such as Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Hannah Arendt, and D.M. Levin to reflect critically on the “hegemony of vision.” (Levin, 1993) Each of them has also in different ways explored the consequences of what it would mean for our relation to the world if hearing became our primary mode of perception and consequently recognition and understanding were based more on what we learn to hear, rather than on what we learn to see.

An obvious starting point for such deliberations is that it is much easier for us to

This ocular perspective is often closely tied to what vision enables us to do with our hands; the visible world is also a graspable world.

shut our eyes than to close our ears. Even when we keep our eyes open, it generally remains easier for us to remain untouched by what we see as opposed to what we hear: what we see is kept at a distance; what we hear penetrates our body. The color we see is a part of a thing and that thing stays outside. Sounds do not stop at boundaries: the tone or voice that we hear traveling through space enters into us. Thus Dewey writes, "Vision is a spectator, hearing is a participation." (Dewey, 1927, pp.218–219)

In considering the dominance of the visual mode over the aural, it is striking that with respect to ontogenetical development the reverse is the case. The ear is the first sense organ and hearing the first sense which develop in the womb. The ear begins to be formed from the third week after conception. The cochlea is fully functional from the twenty-second week. Undoubtedly, the fetus in the womb *listens*. There has been research demonstrating that the newborn has highly developed aural capabilities of recognizing those sounds she previously heard in the womb. (Tomatis, 1987) The newborn's vision, in comparison, develops much later.²

Regarding their language-specific capabilities of listening, infants and small children can be considered universal geniuses responding to, later distinguishing between, and then articulating any speech sounds that any human language has ever produced. In the course of the first year, these universal capabilities become gradually attuned to the specific language or languages which the infant is actually hearing. By the time a child is nine months old, even if she can't speak, she already moves and babbles to the specific speech sounds and melody of that particular language. (Birdwhistell, 1970, p.9) Both neurologically and physiologically, she has in fundamental respects been formed by the language/s she

has been hearing. If experts watch a film of an 18-month-old child who hasn't yet begun to talk, they will, nevertheless, be able to tell from the distinctive linguistic-kinesic movements of the child, not only which language she has been hearing, but her region and economic class. (Birdwhistell, 1970, p.49) A child has thus attuned to and embodied the sounds, melodies, and movements of a language long before she begins to speak. This is perhaps attunement in its purest form.

II – Paradigms of Listening

Before we discuss teaching and teacher education, I think it can be very fruitful first to

A child has thus attuned to and embodied the sounds, melodies, and movements of a language long before she begins to speak. This is perhaps attunement in its purest form.

consider examples in which hearing, as opposed to seeing, appears to have become the primary sensory modality. There is that mysterious thought of Novalis' that every disease is a musical problem and its solution a musical solution (Novalis, 1798/1962, p.487), and perhaps this thought can be connected to the fact that in

the fields of medicine and psychology one can find remarkable examples of the therapeutic qualities of listening.

In the various case studies reported by Oliver Sacks, the role which hearing plays is striking. (Sacks, 1990, 1995, 2007, 2010) This may be connected to his musical background and deep interest in music, but it also goes to the very core of his understanding of healing, which he describes as being based on "an act of deep listening, attending to the subtle harmonies and disharmonies in his patients' behavior." (Sacks, 2004, p.9) Sacks also describes this interaction between doctor and patient as "an ever-changing, melodic and living play of forces." (ibid.) He writes that it is through such listening and the "intuitive kinetic sympathy" of the therapist/doctor that the possibility is created to help "recall living beings

into their own living being.” (ibid.) When one reads his moving studies of patients suffering from neurological impairments, the presence of Sacks as a highly attentive listener can be sensed continually. It is this form of listening that also seems to me to be connected to the intensity and extent of his commitment to his patients. These same qualities of attentive listening, coupled with lifelong personal engagement, also emerge clearly in the case studies by Sacks’ model and mentor, the Russian neurologist A.R. Luria. (Luria, 1987)

In attempting to further understand the therapeutic value of such processes, it is illuminating to look at the work of the psychologist Carl Rogers, who based his approach to psychoanalysis on a concept of deep listening as the basis for healing. For Rogers, deep listening means a form of listening that becomes attuned to the inner world of the person and perceives what can also lie below the conscious intent of the speaker. He describes what happens when this occurs:

When I do truly hear a person and the meanings that are important to him at that moment, hearing not simply his words, but *him*, and when I let him know that I have heard his own private meanings, many things happen. There is first of all a grateful look. He feels released. He wants to tell me more about his world. He surges forth in a new sense of freedom. ... (T)he more deeply I can hear the meanings of this person, the more there is that happens. One thing I have come to look upon as almost universal is that when a person realizes he has been deeply heard ... in some real sense he is weeping for joy. It is as though he were saying “Thank God, somebody has heard me. Someone knows what it’s like to be me.” In such moments I have had the fantasy of a prisoner in a dungeon, tapping out day after day a Morse code message, “Does anybody hear me?” And finally one day, he hears some faint tapplings which spell out “Yes.”

By that one simple response, he is released from his loneliness; he has become a human being again. (Rogers, 1969, pp.222–227)

At the same time, Rogers also hears something else. This kind of deep listening opens up another dimension of human existence for him, and I think this aspect is also significant in the context of our work as teachers. He writes:

There is also another peculiar satisfaction in it. When I really hear someone, it is like listening to the music of the spheres, because, beyond the immediate message of the person, no matter what that might be, there is the universal, the general ... aspects of the awesome order which we find in the universe as a whole. (Rogers, 1969)

What he writes here echoes an aspect connected to listening and attunement that becomes apparent when we look closer at—or I should say, listen closer to—the relation between spirituality and listening.

III – Attunement and Spirituality

The ear has often been described as the most spiritual of organs. Among the Ancient Greeks the greatest prophet was Teiresias, a prophet whose predictions were always true—he couldn’t make a mistake—and who reached this stage only after becoming blind. He was literally a blind seer, and it is thus evident that it was the quality of his listening which was considered decisive. Once again, language is deceptive: we talk in such cases about a seer, a visionary, in German *ein Hellseher*, in French *un clairvoyant*, but when one reads reports of encounters with leading spiritual figures it is their manner of listening which is often most prominent. This is certainly the case when one reads the reports of people who met and worked with Rudolf Steiner, and it is also the case when one reads reports of people who have worked together with the Dalai Lama.

There is a wonderful book I read a while back, called *The Jew in the Lotus*, which describes how, after years of very complicated planning and negotiations, a group of leading rabbis in the world came to have an inter-religious conference with the Dalai Lama in his residence in Dharmasala, India. (Kamenetz, 1994) The Dalai Lama wanted to hear from the rabbis how to keep a folk together in exile and the rabbis wanted to hear from the Dalai Lama how to let go of pain and sadness and achieve more inner peace.

The book is written by a Jewish journalist who attended these meetings, and I would like to read you a passage of what he wrote about the very first meeting in which twelve prominent rabbis, coming from all over the world, sat together for the first time with the Dalai Lama and a large group of Buddhist monks:

In the course of three and a half hours the Dalai Lama was introduced to topics as challenging and various as kabbalistic angelology, contemporary politics in Israel, the response of the rabbinic tradition to the destruction of Jerusalem and evidence of early historical encounters between Judaism and Buddhism. Yet he followed them all. His normal attention was extraordinary, but it was clear when a subject wholly absorbed him. He would lean forward in his chair and seemed to magnetically draw from the speaker what he needed for his nourishment. Zalman Schachter [the rabbi who led the delegation] told me: "There were times I was close to tears just from the intensity of his listening."...

For those moments Dharmasala was Yavneh [Dharmasala is the capital of the exiled Tibetan government where the Dalai Lama lives and Yavneh in northern Israel was an important center of Jewish study for thousands of years] and I was powerfully moved that Jewish history could be so relevant to another people. All the

suffering, the martyrdom that had always been so bitter and difficult for me to accept, now appeared a lesson hard earned and a precious knowledge. (Kamenetz, 1994, pp.106–107)

It is striking in this account, and in reports of other encounters with spiritual leaders, that the profound effects they have on people are often less connected to what they say than to their entire presence, a presence imbued with extraordinary capabilities of listening. Exploring the broader relation between these capabilities and spiritual development would take us too far from the theme of this conference, but it is a connection worthy of consideration.

IV – Attunement and Teaching

In the above-mentioned examples from medicine, psychology, and religion, it seems to me to be appropriate to speak of attunement: attunement to individuals and to different aspects and dimensions of human existence.

What is attunement in teaching? What does it mean when a teacher is attuned to her pupils?

There is an obvious difference in comparison to healing a patient, or gaining cultural or spiritual insights; it is not simply an attunement to one, but to many. In what respects can this concept be realized in the framework of teaching a class of thirty to forty pupils? That is one question I would like you to consider. And then I would have you consider what the prerequisite capabilities of achieving attunement in teaching could be and whether they can be learned in the context of teacher education. [At this point in the speech, participants discussed these questions in small groups.]

There is clearly much that can be said here. In the remaining time, I would like to focus on two aspects.

V – Attunement and Silence

Whereas to see invariably requires light, listening in the deeper sense of attunement often requires an absence of sound—silence.

There are naturally very different types of silence; in some Buddhist teachings one refers to twenty-one different types of silence, ranging from the silence of darkness to the silence in which the body becomes filled with luminous light. The significance of silence often goes

unrecognized. We forget that the most powerful forces in the world are, in fact, all silent: light, gravity, organic growth, magnetism, the forces of the moon moving the tides, the unseen and unheard spinning of the earth and cosmos, the forces of natural selection.

In the broader context of exploring attunement in teaching, different aspects of silence—particularly with respect to creativity, language, and empathy—deserve closer consideration.

V.1 – Silence, Attunement, and Creation

In an act of creation, the presence of silence is often essential. It is a most obvious precondition in the composing of music. Since we are here in Vienna, it seems appropriate to consider how the composers of the *Wiener Klassik* chose to compose: Beethoven liked to walk in the woods; Mozart preferred to be riding alone in a coach; Schubert woke up in the night to write down what he had just heard. What they all shared was their common need for silence in order to be able to listen to what they were hearing within.

This need for silence is similar to what poets describe as well. The Irish poet Seamus Heaney has compared the poet to a diviner using a forked stick to discover well water,

trying to make contact with what he senses moving silently beneath the surface of the earth. (Parker, 1993, pp.73–74) The Argentinian poet Octavio Paz writes:

**Whereas to see
invariably requires
light, listening in
the deeper sense of
attunement often
requires an absence
of sound – silence.**

By a path...the poet comes to the brink of language. And that brink is called silence, blank page. A silence that is like a lake, a smooth and compact surface. Down below, submerged, the words are waiting. And now one must descend, go to the bottom, be silent, wait. (Paz, 1956, p.131)

V.2 – Das Schweigen

The philosopher Max Picard wrote a wonderful book about *das Schweigen*. A word that doesn't really translate into English, it is the silence or hush created by not speaking; it is also sometimes used in a poetic manner to describe an unexpected stillness in nature. Goethe writes in one of his last poems:

*Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
Warte nur, balde ruhest Du auch.*
[The birds are silent in the woods.
Just wait, soon you will rest, too.]

**[Picard] maintains
that words and
silence belong
together, that the
word “knows”
about silence just
as silence “knows”
about the word.**

Picard writes that although we normally only become aware of *das Schweigen* at those moments when speech ceases and a particular form of hushed silence begins, this dimension of silence doesn't actually begin because the words stop at this point—it only becomes apparent then. For him, silence is part of the very structure of language and of existence, and he argues that

language suffers and decays when it loses its primordial connection with this underlying silence. He maintains that words and silence belong together, that the word “knows” about silence just as silence “knows” about the word. In a culture which he characterized as

being overwhelmed by continual noise and words, it is thus not only *das Schweigen* that is endangered, but language itself:

Wenn das Wort nicht mehr mit dem Schweigen verbunden ist, kann es sich nicht mehr regenerieren, es verliert von seiner Substanz. Wie von selber redend ist die Sprache heute, und, sich ausstreuend und sich entleerend, scheint sie auf ein Ende zuzueilen.... Man hat die Sprache verwaisen lassen, in dem man sie vom Schweigen wegnahm. Sie ist keine Muttersprache mehr, nur noch eine Waisensprache.... Nur in der Sprache des Dichters erscheint manchmal noch das wirkliche, mit dem Schweigen zusammenhängende Wort. (Picard, 1959, pp.37–38)

[When the word is no longer connected to this silence, it can no longer regenerate itself; it loses its substance. Language today is on its own, spreading itself out, emptying itself hurriedly to get to an end. ...Language became an orphan when it was taken away from silence. It is no longer a mother tongue, but only an “orphaned tongue.” ...It is only in the language of the poets that the word that is real, that is still connected to this silence, sometimes appears.] (Article author’s translation)

This dimension of silence evidences existential qualities:

Es gibt keinen Anfang vom Schweigen und auch kein Ende. ...Wenn das Schweigen da ist, dann ist es, als habe es nie etwas anderes gegeben: immer nur es. Wo das Schweigen ist, da wird der Mensch vom Schweigen angeschaut; es schaut den Menschen an, mehr als der Mensch das Schweigen. Er prüft das Schweigen nicht, aber das Schweigen prüft ihn. (ibid., p.11)

I am convinced that the creation of times and spaces of silence has become an essential pedagogical task.

[There is no beginning of this silence and also no ending. ...When the silence is there, it is as if there were never anything else, only that. This silence perceives human beings. It looks at us, far more than we look at it. We do not examine the silence, but this silence examines us.] (Article author’s translation)

V. 3 – Silence in Our Times

It is undoubtedly the case that the experience of silence has become a rare occurrence in our times, far more so than Picard writing in 1948 could have imagined. It is also apparent that the constant presence of sound, whether from the iPod or in the supermarket, has diminished our capabilities of being able to listen. Our senses are dulled because they are bombarded.³ This raises essential pedagogical questions and challenges. How can we as educators create situations in which the presence and implications of silence can be experienced?

Although this may seem, at first glance, to be a quixotic task, it is important to note how a little can go a long way. Think of Enja Riegel’s work at the Helene Lang Schule in Wiesbaden, a school that has won numerous awards as being the most successful and innovative school in Germany. (Riegel, 2006) Perhaps the two most radical changes she introduced were the intensive theater projects, in which students worked exclusively on drama with

professionals, and the creation of a “room of silence,” to which students were introduced in their first year at the school (fifth grade). Learning to use and respect this space became an essential part of their entire school lives, and for those

educators from all over the world who came to observe the Helene Lang Schule, this room was often what impressed them the most.

I am convinced that the creation of such times and spaces of silence has become an essential pedagogical task. This will inevitably

require that in teacher education, teachers themselves experience the qualities and possibilities of such moments and are also given opportunities to develop those qualities of presence which will help them create such moments in their classrooms.

VI – Grasping and Touching

The last aspect I would like to touch on is the difference between grasping and touching. I spoke at the beginning of this lecture of an intrinsic connection between seeing and the hand; what we can see, we can also grasp. It is this fundamental connection which has created the basis for most of human technology and much of our technological progress.

In developing a culture of listening based on attunement, grasping is not the gesture that naturally results, but rather *touching*. That is a significant difference. This is clearly evident in music: How do you tune an instrument? Following the ear, one touches the instrument, delicately adjusting the length of a string, or with a wind instrument the length of a slide or a tube. While playing, there is the constant and immediate adjustment of the fingers' placement on the strings or, with a wind instrument, of the speed and the volume of air. The singer, always wholly dependent on her ear, will also make fine adjustments to the velocity of air passing through the vocal cords. Musical attunement invariably requires the most attentive listening and the appropriate movements; it is never a grasping, but rather a sensitive touch.

In exploring this relation between seeing and grasping, on the one hand, and attunement and touching, on the other, it is illuminating to look at the experiences of the blind. Jacques Lusseyran, whose books many of you surely know, tried to explain how as a blind person he knew to stop a few inches before he was about to bump into something,

or how, when he walked by a building, he knew when there was suddenly a space or a gap. He said that blind people will say they heard something—a movement of the air like the very slow approach of an object or resulting from a sudden gap. However, he said that this is because a blind person is trying to explain something in a way that others can understand him. In the end it was not hearing in the normal sense that occurred at such moments, but something more subtle:

He did not hear. He touched. Perhaps hearing and touch are the same sense perception. His ability to indicate the gap in the wall means that the area free of cement or stones had already taken possession of his whole body; with the whole surface of his body he had experienced its shape and power of resistance. It even means that he had already passed through the gap.

All our senses, I believe, join into one.

They are the successive stages of a single perception, and that

perception is always one of touch. (Lusseyran, 1973, p.30)

When we also consider in this context what Helen Keller wrote about what she was able to perceive of the world through her sense of touch,

it becomes clear that there exist innumerable possibilities of developing attentiveness and attunement in realms that we generally don't even begin to consider. (Keller, 2004)

VII – Attunement and Education

When we compare different views of the human being in education, we can see a clear contrast between those approaches in which seeing and grasping become the primary manner of encountering the world, reflected in the goals of effectiveness and efficiency and ultimately leading to standardization and measurability, and a way of being in the world,

There exist innumerable possibilities of developing attentiveness and attunement in realms that we generally don't even begin to consider.

characterized by the forms of attentiveness, listening, and attunement that Oliver Sacks, Carl Rogers, the Dalai Lama, Jacques Lusseyran, and Helen Keller embody, revealing a fundamentally different view of the human being and of education.

The Canadian educator Ted Aoki has written eloquently about this contrast between effectiveness and attunement in teaching:

In the first flush of thought, the notion of effectiveness has a seductive appeal of essential simplicity that suggests the possibility of a focus that can be grasped. It suggests, too, that effectiveness is mainly a matter of skill and technique, and that if I can but identify the components of effective teaching and if, with some concentrated effort, I can but identify the skills, maybe in a three- or four-day workshop, my teaching can become readily effective.

All of these scientific and technical understandings of teaching emerge from our interest in intellectual and manipulative grasp and control. But in so understanding we must be attuned to the fact that although those understandings that can be grasped are uncannily correct, the essence of teaching still eludes our grasp. What we need to do is to break away from the attitude of grasping and seek to be more properly oriented to what teaching is, so we can attune ourselves to the call of what teaching is.

...So placed, I may be allowed to hear better the voice of what teaching essentially is. The question understood in this way urges me to be attuned to a teacher's presence with children. This presence, if authentic, is being. I find that teaching so understood is attuned to the place where care dwells, a place of ingathering and belonging, where the indwelling of teachers and students is made possible by the presence of care that each has for the other. (Aoki, 2004, pp.190–191)

I would like to end with a report which seems to me to bring together many of the different thoughts about attunement that we have considered today. It is a report that shows how an act of deep listening became an act of teaching.

Rachel Remen describes an international conference on Jungian dream analysis that a psychologist friend of hers attended. During this conference, people were asked to write down their own dreams on cards that were then passed along to a panel of experts who were sitting in the front of the auditorium. Each member of the panel was then asked to give his or her own analysis of the dream. Among the experts sitting there was the grandson of C.G. Jung. She wrote:

One of these cards told the story of a horrific recurring dream, in which the dreamer was stripped of all human dignity and worth through Nazi atrocities. A member of the panel read the dream out loud. As she listened, my colleague began to formulate a dream interpretation in her head, in anticipation of the panel's response. It was really a "no-brainer," she thought as her mind busily offered her symbolic explanations for the torture and atrocities described in the dream. But this was not how the panel responded at all. When the reading of the dream was complete, Jung's grandson looked out over the large audience. "Would you all please rise?" he asked. "We will stand together in a moment of silence in response to this dream." The audience stood for a minute, my colleague impatiently waiting for the discussion she was certain would follow. But when they sat again, the panel went on to the next question. (Palmer, 2004, p.157)

Her friend at first didn't understand what happened; but later, through talking to one of her teachers, she had the chance to realize something very fundamental: namely that, in the words of her teacher, "there is in life a

suffering so unspeakable, a vulnerability so extreme that it goes far beyond words, beyond explanations and even beyond healing. In the face of such suffering, all we can do is bear witness so no one need suffer alone.” (ibid, p.158)

The lesson she was able to learn was based on listening and attunement, on those human qualities most fully revealed when everyone was asked to stand up and respond to a person’s suffering by entering into that shared hushed silence—*das Schweigen*. These are the capabilities of teaching and the possibilities of learning that I think we need to continually strive for in teacher education and teaching.

Endnotes

1. This article is adapted from a keynote speech given at the recent ENASTE [European Network of Academic Steiner Teacher Education] conference in Vienna, May 1–3, 2013. The theme of the conference was “The Educator’s View of the Human Being.” About two hundred participants attended from different Waldorf and non-Waldorf academic institutions.
2. Hearing is not only the first sense given to us; it is, curiously enough, often the last sense that leaves us. When one speaks with hospice nurses and with doctors, they will generally tell you that hearing appears to be the last sense that is intact in a dying person.
3. It is interesting in this context to realize that in the Middle Ages, Christian scholastics argued that the devil’s strategy was to bring human beings to a point where they are never alone with their God, nor ever attentively face to face with another human being. For those reasons, they were also convinced that the devil loved noise. (Maitland, 2009, p.133)

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Therapeutic Eurythmy for the Teeth

Polly Saltet and Susanne Zipperlen

Introduction: A Case Study

Mia (not her real name) was a shy second grader, so quiet that she seemed invisible in the classroom. Though enthusiastic about school, a good and eager student who especially loved art and movement, Mia tired easily and had difficulty sustaining periods of focused attention. She was academically able and an advanced reader, yet challenged in math at the beginning of the year. Socially she preferred to play with just a few friends from her class. At home she was considerate, responsible, and loving toward her parents and little sister.

Mia suffered from what her dentist described as crowding in the upper jaw, with a high palate—probably caused by thumb sucking—and a narrow arch. Her adult teeth were not finding their place because her jaw was too small—so small, in fact, that the dentist had to make a specially sized tray in order to make a plaster mold of her teeth. The lower jaw was crowded in the front as well, with a flattened frontal arch. Mia's upper incisors were not coming in straight—they were angled away from each other, leaving a wedge-shaped gap between them—and her lower molars leaned inward toward her tongue. X-rays revealed that her upper right six-year

molar, typically the first tooth to descend in a child's second dentition, had not erupted and could be seen tucked above and behind the tooth in front of it.

Mia had never had any orthodontic intervention. Instead, she was referred to Susanne Zipperlen, a therapeutic eurythmist working in Chicago, for a rare but surprisingly effective treatment of eurythmy exercises for the promotion of healthy dental formation. Mia had four seven-week blocks of once-weekly therapeutic eurythmy sessions from September 2011 (age 8 years 3 months) through June 2013 (age 9 years 10 months). The blocks were interspersed with several months of "rest," during which the exercises were not done at all. Mia's mother attended each weekly session and devotedly helped her daughter practice at home every day.

During the first block, Mia's movement was unfocused and dreamily unconscious. She tended to hunch forward with her shoulders, the left shoulder lower than the right. She often crossed her hands automatically in front of her chest in a protective gesture, and all of her movement was in front of her, even when a gesture was demonstrated on the sides, as in birdwings. Mia's right foot turned in slightly, sometimes covering the toes of her left foot when standing. She was often congested and had cool hands and poor stamina; she rarely responded verbally to Ms. Zipperlen's questions, simply smiling shyly at her instead.

Over time, Mia became an active participant in her therapy, able to articulate specifically where and how she could feel the exercises working. Within one-and-a-half years her teeth



had definitely shown improvement. The upper-jaw incisors had straightened, although the lateral incisors still needed to move forward more, and the lower jaw incisors now had room to stand upright and evenly spaced. The six-year molar had still not erupted.

In addition, Mia's stamina and focus had improved. She was at grade level in math, and she was now open and chatty, no longer invisible and shy. In fact, her teacher now sometimes had to ask her to be quiet in class! The therapeutic eurythmy had clearly had an effect, not only on Mia's teeth, but also on her overall health and her soul life.



As surprising as it may seem, therapeutic eurythmy has been demonstrated to be an effective treatment, either by itself or as a support to orthodontic intervention, for moving and straightening the growth of adult teeth in children. This branch of therapy has been developed over the past twenty years—inspired by a single indication given by Rudolf Steiner in a series of lectures in

1921–1922 on curative eurythmy—by Mareike Kaiser, a therapeutic eurythmist living in Graz, Austria. She has been working with Claus Haupt, an anthroposophically oriented dentist from Munich, and Herbert Vetter, a retired goldsmith living in the Black Forest of Southern Germany.

As the therapeutic eurythmist at the Graz Waldorf School, Kaiser began early in her career treating children for dental problems. Immediately she received positive responses from local dentists who saw improvements in their young patients. But, as a relative beginner, she couldn't readily explain how therapeutic eurythmy could have such a strong effect on the hardest substance in the body. She began a search for an anthroposophically oriented dentist familiar with therapeutic eurythmy to help her understand why she was having such success. Her search ended when she met Dr. Haupt, who visited Graz in 1993 to give a lecture on teeth and the background of dental anomalies as seen from an anthroposophic viewpoint. Haupt and Kaiser then examined the teeth of all the second graders in the school and began a decades-long collaboration in diagnosis and treatment. Since that time, they have made yearly examinations of classes in the school, followed by seven-week blocks of one-on-one eurythmy with Kaiser. They also began documenting their results with photographs, x-rays, and plaster casts of the teeth, before and after treatment. They were joined in their research and development of the exercises by the goldsmith Herbert Vetter, who introduced the study of indications from a patient's star charts to better understand the soul conditions underlying dental anomalies.

At the first international therapeutic eurythmy conference in Dornach in 2008, Kaiser offered a week of classes in her specialization, which were so popular that she had to offer two parallel sessions. A number of American therapeutic eurythmists who took her classes invited her to come to the United States to offer a course of training. The board

of the Association for Therapeutic Eurythmy in North America (ATHENA) worked hard to make this wish come true, and in the summers of 2011 and 2012 Kaiser offered the training for therapeutic eurythmists in two courses at Camphill Village in Kimberton, PA. For the second course she was joined by her colleague, Claus Haupt.

The Nature of Teeth

We know how important teeth are for allowing us to live on the earth, by making the food we eat available for digestion and nourishment. But why does every person have a dentition that is as unique as fingerprints? Why do some people have teeth that are very white, or very small, or crowded, or missing? Why do we get two sets of them? What can the teeth tell us about the human being?

When we look at a tooth from a purely physical viewpoint, we see that it has a very strong form and is the hardest, densest part of our physical body—as hard, in fact, as quartz. We can compare a tooth to a polished jewel: it has planes, is pointed and shimmery, and it lets the light through. The tooth has a relationship to light! The minerals that make up the tooth are silica, magnesium, calcium, and fluoride.

Every substance in the body has a task, an effect, and a source in nature. Magnesium, from green plants, has a relationship with our etheric forces. It makes the tooth expand into form in the inner, sponge-like dentine. Calcium makes the tooth white, which is the soul-image of spirit, the creative element. People with really white teeth live strongly in the soul realm. Fluoride makes the tooth hard. It seals and hardens the upward kidney radiation of substance. Silica, a six-sided crystal, provides the basis for the form-carrying light to enter our bodies, giving the

tooth elasticity and transparency. It is found in the enamel of the tooth, forming millions of tiny columns, like basalt, and corresponding to our human uprightness. Silica is more strongly present in the adult teeth than in milk teeth, and so we receive a little awakening shock when they emerge. With the change of teeth, the “I” is increasingly invited to shoot into the limbs, giving them the impulse to be creative in the world and allowing us to develop earthly thinking as compared to the young child’s more imaginative thinking.

The teeth can be seen as “spiritual sucking organs,” each one drawing specific forces into the growing child.

The teeth can be seen as “spiritual sucking organs,” each one drawing specific forces into the growing child. For this reason, Kaiser and Haupt strive to prevent the pulling of teeth too early. They feel that each tooth should be given at least four years in place and only then be extracted if absolutely necessary. After four

years with a tooth in place, the child retains the spiritual gift, even if the tooth goes.

Babies enter this world with no teeth, so to speak. They are still very heavenly and have no need of teeth until they become more earthly by taking in solid food. Likewise, in old age, as the connection to the earth loosens, we begin to lose our teeth. The baby, or milk, teeth are inherited and do not yet show so much about the individuality of the child. It is with the eruption of the adult teeth that one can begin to see a picture of the way the individual is taking in and making her way through the world around her.

Every substance in the body has a task, an effect, and a source in nature.

For instance, the first adult tooth to make an appearance at age six is the first molar (the sixth tooth when counting backward from the midline at the front), which has no corresponding baby tooth. The number six has to do with light, as we noted above with six-sided silica, and light makes space visible. With the eruption of this tooth comes a new sense in the child for three-dimensional space and the

ability to develop the concepts of length, size, and so on, giving a foundation for the study of mathematics. For this reason, the emergence of this tooth gives us a first indication about school readiness.

Soul Forces and the Teeth

In considering the head as a sphere, one can denote the three planes of space: the “thinking plane,” which divides us into right and left sides; the horizontal “feeling plane,” which divides upper from lower; and the “will plane,” which divides us into front and back. The upper jaw, which is fixed and immovable, has a relationship to our nerve-sense organization and our thinking. The lower jaw, which is a small limb within the head, is related to the metabolic-limb system and to the will. In between, where the upper and lower teeth meet and where the tongue gives vent to speech and song from our rhythmic middle, the home of heart and lung, is the realm of feeling. We thus see in the teeth a progression of concentration of soul forces from thinking through feeling to willing in the direction from the upper incisors to the lower molars. Those who are familiar with eurythmy may begin to sense how this art of movement, arising from the soul and striving to make it outwardly manifest, may have an affinity with the forces behind the formation of the teeth, which taken together give a miniature picture of the whole human being.

Herbert Vetter brought his understanding of the strengths and challenges of an individual's incarnation as revealed through a child's birth chart to help Kaiser and Haupt deepen their work. Without even seeing a child, Vetter could describe the exact configuration of her teeth simply from looking at her birth chart. With the parents' permission, a child's birth chart is now included in Haupt's initial examination.

Although a deeper consideration of this subject is beyond the scope of this article, a study of the zodiac and the planets is a rewarding complement to this area of therapy.

The soul we have in common with the animal kingdom, and when we examine the teeth individually, we notice similarities with different types of animals. For instance, rodents have very large first incisors compared with their other teeth. Rodents are strongly oriented to the nerve-sense pole, with their quick, nervous movements and alertness. We human beings are also quickest and most alert in our nerve-sense activity, our thinking. Thus, one can see that the first incisors, which emerge around age seven, when the child is becoming ready for formal schooling, have a relationship especially to nerve-sense activity.

The second incisors, the #2s, are found in exaggerated form in the elephant's tusks. The elephant is a creature of immense etheric forces, with its huge, round form, rhythmic walk, phenomenal memory, and great strength. The child's #2s emerge around age eight,

showing the forces of the etheric body, rhythm, and inner movement. A child with small #2s may tire easily and will benefit from rhythms in the day, the week, and so on.

Until these teeth have emerged, the child should not be asked to do any conscious memorizing or abstract learning, since the etheric foundation for thinking is not yet available

for this purpose. Nor is the sense for time yet awakened. “Come home in an hour” means nothing to such a child.

The next to appear, at around age ten, is the fourth tooth. This one we find exaggerated in beasts of prey—the lion, the wolf, and their domesticated kin. This tooth draws in the forces that enable us to feel self-certainty, security, and independence. The #4s are the ones most frequently extracted to make room

Those who are familiar with eurythmy may begin to sense how this art of movement may have an affinity with the forces behind the formation of the teeth.

for other teeth. If they are pulled too early, these children may have a hard time self-directing.

The third tooth, the so-called canine, does not appear until age twelve. It is found in its most enlarged form in the wild boar, which thrives on acorns and hard-pitted fruits. Along with this tooth comes the gateway to a new world of feelings, ideals, desires, and drives for the child, who may sometimes seem to his parents like that rampaging, snorting beast (and who also may be temporarily calmed by a good supply of crunchy food). Whereas the first two teeth are related to the nerve-sense pole, the third, fourth, and fifth—the latter emerging around age eleven with no correspondence in the animal kingdom—can be seen in relation to the realm of feeling.

The first molar, #6, as noted above, has no corresponding milk tooth and is the first adult tooth to appear. Its most archetypal form is found in the cow, which embodies great metabolic forces. Thus we can see that the molars, #6, 7, and 8, plus the wisdom tooth, are related to the realm of the metabolic-limb system and the will, though each in its particular way.

Dental Anomalies

Having considered the relationship of the upper jaw to the nerve-sense pole, the lower jaw to the metabolic-will pole, and the space between them to the rhythmic middle, we can now look at dental anomalies in the light of the interplay of soul qualities. When we see a child with over-bite, in which the upper jaw dominates, the front teeth protrude, and the lower jaw is held back, we get a picture of a person whose head forces are overbearing, and whose will forces need to be strengthened. This child may be very sensitive to outer impressions, and her legs and feet may be weak and floppy, even if she is active in sports.

The opposite qualities may be seen in a child with under-bite, in which the lower jaw protrudes too far forward. This child will barge noisily into the room, crashing into furniture and other children, without having the slightest idea that he's bothering anyone. His will forces are running ahead of his thinking, like a herd of wild ponies. This child needs help in awakening his thinking forces to rein in the unhindered will in the limbs.

Crowding and gaps, which can be seen as divergences from the curved natural arch of the teeth, are found in the horizontal feeling plane. A person with a beautifully formed curve, in which there is a place for each tooth to stand upright, feels himself at home in this arch and can, on a soul level, "fill" this inner space. When the arch is too small, and the teeth no longer find their comfortable places, one speaks of overcrowding, which can occur in different areas of the mouth. Once again, the threefold perspective can be helpful. For instance, if the lower incisors are crowded, one could ask this person if he often feels pressured to get things done. If the middle teeth (numbers 3, 4, 5) are crowded, this person may be overly impressionable or anxious and need help to

Dental anomalies all give a picture of particular imbalances in the soul forces, which can be met through the harmonizing intervention of eurythmy.

express herself, to widen her soul, and to deepen her breathing. When we see gaps, which usually appear in the front, this person may have questions about connecting thinking with feelings or balancing feminine and masculine qualities.

Other anomalies, such as cross-bite, open-bite and deep-bite, all give a picture of particular imbalances in the soul forces, which can be met through the harmonizing intervention of eurythmy.

In all of these examples, therapeutic eurythmy works through repeated, ensouled, physical movement to "remind" the archetypal formative forces of their own particular tasks in forming and maintaining health and balance

in our bodies. Because one engages one's own forces in the healing process from within, the resulting changes in the teeth are more lasting than changes that are forced upon the teeth by an applied apparatus. It is not so widely known that the rate of recidivism with braces is quite high, somewhere over 90%, whereas the rate with therapeutic eurythmy is close to 0%. As the whole person is addressed in eurythmy, the soul configuration lying behind the particular anomaly is also met, helping the child to find a more balanced stance toward the world and within himself. The outward picture given to us by the teeth is thus helped to change in a way that respects the whole individual before us. In some cases, traditional orthodontic intervention may be called for, of course, but if therapeutic eurythmy is done alongside braces, the time required may be shortened considerably and the effects may be more effective and lasting.

The Future of Dental Eurythmy

The practice of dental eurythmy is still in its early stages on this continent. There are currently about twenty-one therapeutic eurythmists in the U.S. and Canada who have completed the dental training, including the author. As far as we know, there are no dentists trained as yet in this approach. However, in Europe, more and more dentists and orthodontists recommend that patients embark on a course of some sort of movement therapy or body work before beginning with classic orthodonture. Many parents are also interested in finding for their children an alternative form of treatment that takes the whole child into consideration, rather than using an apparatus to force an "ideal" dental formation onto the child.

For more information regarding therapeutic eurythmy in general, the reader is invited to visit the website of the Association for Therapeutic Eurythmy in North America (ATHENA): www.therapeuticeurythmy.org.

Polly Saltet teaches eurythmy at The Hartsbrook School in Hadley, MA, where she also has a private practice in therapeutic eurythmy. Her latest endeavor is to help build up a local collaborative of therapists of many disciplines, including Extra Lesson, cranial-sacral, homeopathy, nutritional counseling, and music, art, and play therapies. She can be reached at psaltet@hartsbrook.org.

Susanne Zipperlen has been a pedagogical and therapeutic eurythmist at the Chicago Waldorf School for 8.5 years. She has been working with orthodontic cases through eurythmy since 2011 and can be reached at zippster@earthlink.net.

In Matter, the Spirit

Science Education in the Waldorf School

Roberto Trostli

This paper is based on a lecture given at the Hungarian Teachers Conference in June, 2013

How do we teach science in the Waldorf school? How does the science curriculum meet the students' needs? What are the special tasks of the teacher? These are questions that bear special examination in light of current concerns about science education in America.

Whenever I consider a topic, I find it useful to begin by examining words because they often point out hidden or unexpected aspects of the topic. The word "science" comes from the Latin word *scientia*, which means "knowledge." It is derived from the Latin verb *scire*, which means "to know." Originally it meant "to know" in the sense of separating one thing from another, "distinguishing it" because *scire* is related to the verb *scindere*, which means "to cut, divide."

It is interesting to note that even the word "science" itself already poses some questions: What is the relationship between subject and object? What is the relationship between the knower and the known? What is the meaning of the division between self and world?

These questions lie at the heart of the reality of what science truly is, and they lead us to some of the goals of science teaching. Science helps students to bridge these divides. It helps students connect with themselves and other people, with the natural world, and with the world of technology.

Although science teaching helps students connect to all that they will meet during their lives on earth, it also has a deeper, more esoteric purpose.

Why Do We Teach Science?

In my opinion, every subject taught in the Waldorf school is a means by which we develop the students' soul capacities—their thinking, feeling, and willing. In addition, each subject has a special task. I believe that one of the major tasks of science education is to help students connect to the world.

Perhaps one should say re-connect, because students have experienced the world before but under different circumstances. We might consider this sense of connection in light of the

word "religion," which comes from the Latin prefix *re-*, which means "again" or "back"; and *ligare*, which means "to bind" or "to connect." "Religion" literally means "to reconnect," and that is what we are aiming for in science teaching: reconnecting children with the world and all life upon it. Although science teaching helps students connect to all that they will meet during

their lives on earth, it also has a deeper, more esoteric purpose.

The Esoteric Purpose of Science Teaching

In 1918 Rudolf Steiner gave a lecture called "The Work of the Angels in Man's Astral Body." This lecture is of utmost importance for Waldorf teachers, so I shall quote from its central sections at length. In this lecture Steiner describes how the Angels, at the behest of the Spirits of Form, are continually forming pictures in our astral bodies, pictures that will call forth ideals for the future of our life on earth. According to Steiner, the Angels have three major objectives.

The first is to occur within the social sphere: “In the future no human being is to find peace in the enjoyment of happiness if others beside him are unhappy. An impulse of brotherhood in the absolute sense, unification of the human race in brotherhood rightly understood—this is to be the governing principle of the social conditions in physical existence.”

The second objective is to occur within the human soul: “In future times every human being shall see in each and all of his fellow men a hidden divinity. ...To conceive man as a picture revealed from the spiritual world, to conceive this with all earnestness, all strength and all the insight at our command—this is the impulse laid by the Angels into the pictures.”

The third objective is to occur within the human spirit: “To make it possible for men to reach the Spirit through thinking, to cross the abyss and through thinking experience the reality of the Spirit.”

The Angels are preparing humanity for the future by forming these pictures. This process prepares human beings for a threefold truth, which will be revealed by the Angels.

Firstly, it will be shown how his own genuine interest will enable man to understand the deeper side of human nature. A time will come—and it must not pass unnoticed—when out of the spiritual world men will receive an impulse through their Angel that will kindle a far deeper interest in every individual human being than we are inclined to have today. This enhanced interest in our fellow men will not unfold in the subjective leisurely way that people would prefer, but by a sudden impetus, a certain secret will be inspired into man from the spiritual side, namely, what the other man really is. By this I mean something quite concrete—not any kind of theoretical

consideration. Men will learn something whereby their interest in every individual can be kindled. That is one point—and that is what will particularly affect the social life.

Secondly, from the spiritual world the Angel will reveal to man that, in addition to everything else, the Christ Impulse postulates complete freedom in matters of religious life, that the only true Christianity is the Christianity which makes absolute freedom in the religious life possible.

And thirdly, unquestionable insight into the spiritual nature of the world.

As Waldorf teachers we can also work towards these goals. By addressing the whole human being in body, soul, and spirit, by developing the soul faculties of thinking, feeling, and willing, and by using a curriculum

that encompasses the world and plumbs the depth of the human being, we prepare our students to receive the threefold truth that the Angels will reveal.

The curriculum of the Waldorf school builds a basis for the pictures and the truths of the Angels. Which subjects help students develop the impulse of brotherhood?

Geography and the world

languages. By learning about the earth and its different peoples, by entering into the folk soul of another culture through its language and customs, our students are helped to realize their place within the human community.

Which subjects help students develop a sense for the hidden divinity within each human being? History and literature. By learning about the lives of significant individuals, by experiencing the loftiest expressions of the human spirit, our students are helped to view each person from a more spiritual perspective.

Which subjects help students develop the ability to reach the Spirit through thinking?

We are actually working on behalf of the Angels, helping our students remain receptive to the loftiest human ideals. We are preparing them for the future evolution of humanity!

Which subjects give insight into the spiritual nature of the world? Mathematics and science. By developing a rich conceptual life arising from observing and by coming to understand the mysteries of matter, our students are helped to view the material world as a manifestation of the spirit.

Our work in the sciences, therefore, has a lofty task. Not only are we introducing the students to nature study, the life sciences, and the physical sciences, we are actually working on behalf of the Angels, helping our students remain receptive to the loftiest human ideals, helping them to prepare for the future evolution of humanity.

We may not be conscious of this immense responsibility, and once conscious of it, we may well feel ourselves inadequate to the task. In our worst moments, when we feel incompetent and unworthy, we may even reject this responsibility, but it is always there, waiting to be recognized, waiting to be accepted.

The Gesture of the Science Curriculum through the Grades

By working with Rudolf Steiner's Foundation Stone Meditation over the years, I have been inspired to think of my work with the students and the curriculum in new ways. One connection I have begun to sense is between the first three parts of the Foundation Stone Meditation and the first three stages of child development. I believe that the youngest children have a special connection to the Father Spirit, the elementary school children to the Christ Will, and the high school students to the Spirit.

In the Foundation Stone Meditation, the first gesture is downwards from the heights to the depths:

*For the Father-Spirit of the heights holds sway,
In depths of worlds begetting life.*

The gesture of the Father Spirit is expressed through the first hierarchy down towards earth:

*Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones,
Let ring forth from the heights
What in the depths is echoed,
Speaking:
Out of the Godhead we are born.*

I interpret this downward gesture to be the gesture of early childhood and the early grades—the school of the body in which the spiritual world has implanted and expresses itself, where spirit echoes in the material world.

The second gesture of the Foundation Stone Meditation is the encircling gesture:

*For the Christ-Will encircling us holds sway,
In world rhythms, bestowing grace upon souls.*

The gesture of the Christ is expressed through the second hierarchy:

*Kyriotetes, Dynamis, Exusiai,
Let from the east be enkindled
What through the west takes on form,
Speaking:
In Christ death becomes life.*

I interpret this encircling gesture to correspond to the work of the elementary school—the school of the soul in which the spiritual impulses find form and expression in the world rhythms, in the cycles of the seasons, and in the celebrations of all cultures.

The third gesture of the Foundation Stone Meditation is the upward gesture. This is the gesture of the Holy Spirit whose world thoughts reign in world being:

*For the Spirit's world-thoughts hold sway,
In cosmic being, imploring light.*

The gesture of the Spirit is expressed through the third hierarchy, the hierarchy closest to the human being:

*Archai, Archangeloi, Angeloi,
Let from the depths be entreated
What in the heights will be heard,*

*Speaking:
In the Spirit's cosmic thoughts the soul
awakens.*

I interpret this gesture to correspond to the time of the high school and beyond, where thinking is raised to the spiritual heights, where human aims and human problems are worked with in conjunction with spiritual beings.

The Science Curriculum

Even as the Foundation Stone leads us from body to soul to spirit, the science curriculum through the grades works with the principle that children first look at the world with eyes of the spirit, then with eyes of the soul, and finally, inexorably, with eyes of the body. William Wordsworth expressed this beautifully in his ode "Intimations of Immortality" when he said:

There was a time when meadow, grove,
and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparell'd in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see
no more.

Then he describes the stages of early life:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,

But he beholds the light, and whence it
flows,

He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away
And fade into the light of common day.

This transition—from being surrounded by the glories of God, to beholding the light and whence it flows, to being Nature's priest, attended by the vision splendid, to having that vision fade into the light of common day—traces the steps that children take, and it corresponds to what we need to do on our journey with the children.

Let me try to put it into more practical terms, beginning with a summary and then developing each part further.

1. In the preschool, children experience the world of science through rituals and traditions that celebrate the natural world.

2. In the early grades, children are affirmed in their experience of the spirit in their home surroundings by the stories and parables of nature that the teacher tells them.

3. In the middle grades, students hear lively descriptions of the natural world and begin to explore it and study it directly.

4. In the upper elementary school, students begin to observe the natural world and its forces more objectively through their introduction to physics and chemistry.

5. In the high school, students discipline their observations of the natural world, and they methodically begin to penetrate the details of the forces and substances in the world. At this time they also learn about the applications and implications of the forces, processes, and substances that they have studied.

Let us look how science is taught at the various grade levels so that we can understand

the development of the curriculum and how it works throughout the child's life even into adulthood and old age.

In the preschool, children experience the world of science through rituals and traditions that celebrate the natural world. During these years, when children are still surrounded by the celestial light, no teaching is necessary, for experience is the teacher. The child's experiences from these years become the bedrock of the child's sense of herself, of others, and of the world. The experiences of rituals, traditions, and celebrations give the child the sense that the world is good. This sense of the goodness of the world builds a sense of security for life.

At the other end of one's life, when one experiences a second childhood—when the thoughts and cares of adulthood begin to fade away and one is stripped down to one's essence—the experiences of childhood remain, blessing and consoling, affirming the goodness of the world and of life. The sense that “God is our home” allows an old person to look forward to that homecoming which is death.

In the early grades, children are affirmed in their experience of the spirit living in their home surroundings by the stories and parables of nature that the teacher tells them. As the child begins to awaken to his senses, the teacher affirms the spiritual nature of the world through her words and images.

Rudolf Steiner stressed the importance of sharing the parables of nature. On more than a dozen occasions he spoke about the parable of the butterfly emerging from the chrysalis as a picture of the emergence of the soul after death. He said that this picture is put into the world by the wise spirits who care for human beings. Steiner suggested that teachers look into the world to find these

parables of existence and that they then share these parables with the children during the early years of elementary school. These stories—along with the moral tales such as fables and legends—are the science curriculum for the first school years.

Giving children parables that explore, explain, and affirm the world around them bestows on them a sense of security and confidence in the person standing before them.

It helps them to know that they are taught by a person who sees with more than physical eyes, a person who hears with more than physical ears. It gives them a sense that the world is beautiful.

In our late middle age—when we search for the flowers of wisdom that may be hidden among the weeds of our intellect—these pictures begin to have a new truth. The eyes that were once open to the mysteries of existence can be re-opened later in life through diligence, through pain and hard-won

experience. If one has had the privilege of being taught and raised by adults who were open to the parables of existence, one will not need to look so hard for the meaning behind the challenges of one's life.

In the middle grades of elementary school, students hear lively descriptions of the natural world, and they begin to explore and study it directly. As the child's eyes open further, she begins to see the world as distinct from herself. The child has already experienced the great physical separation from the mother's body at birth. She has experienced further physical separations: from the ground when she first stands upright; from her parents when she starts sleeping in her own room; from her family when she leaves home to go to school. Each of these separations is accompanied by a soul experience that is largely unconscious but still deeply felt.

The study of the animals, the plants, and the world of the minerals and of the heavenly bodies expands the child's horizons, giving the child a sense of belonging, affirming the beauty of the world.

At the ninth year, the child experiences a sense of separation from the world. He is, as it were, cast out from Paradise where he had lived in community with the plants and creatures under the loving gaze of God. Although, in Wordsworth's words, he still "beholds the light, and whence it flows, He sees it in his joy," the child has the need to connect with the world in his own right through his own senses, with his own feelings. The child of this age needs a communion with nature, an affirmation that he is of the world and the world is in him. The child of this age needs pictures of connection to counteract the sense of separateness, to subdue the fears that dawn in each of us as we recognize that we are truly alone in this world. The study of the animals, the plants, and the world of the minerals and of the heavenly bodies expands the child's horizons, giving the child a sense of belonging, affirming the beauty of the world.

Topics that are brought in a living way during these elementary school years—topics that are brought in a way that affirms the human being's connection to the world—will stand the child in good stead during the middle of his adulthood. Middle age is the culmination of the sense of separation that we felt so strongly at age nine. These are the years when we are likely to feel most alone in the world, most alienated from ourselves and from others. If we have been given living pictures of the world and its creatures during our school years, we may have a reserve of a sense of belonging that counteracts the isolation of adulthood.

In the upper elementary school, students begin to observe the natural world and its forces more objectively through their introduction to physics and chemistry. Wordsworth's poem says "The Youth, who daily farther from the east / Must travel, still is Nature's priest, / And by the vision splendid / Is on his way attended." During these years

when children still are nature's priests, we have the opportunity to present the invisible world of the forces of nature and the mysteries of substance. We have the privilege to celebrate with them the sacraments of the physical world so that they can be blessed by the phenomena they experience. As students are asked to make sense of their sense impressions, they learn new respect for their powers of observation and for the power of their thinking. They learn

to respect and value the soul capacities that allow them to make sense of the world. This is the beginning of experiencing the important lesson that the world is true.

In our work in the sciences with the students, the ordinary can become special, the commonplace can become

sacred. During the flowering of adulthood, when the world may seem mechanical and sterile, these kinds of experiences can help a person trust that there is meaning in existence.

With the advent of puberty and adolescence, something new is born in the human being, and, at the same time, something old dies. With the onset of adolescence, the gates of knowledge of our pre-birth existence clang shut. As these gates close, the young person can no longer look back with reverence at a world that was so beautiful, so meaningful, so worthy of imitation. Now the young person looks out into the world, seeking to find beauty, meaning, and something worth emulating. The science of the high school years and beyond leads the student into the world. Now students are required to be rigorous and disciplined in their observations, to record them accurately so that they can analyze them. Students are expected to observe or conduct science activities methodically so that they will be able to penetrate the details of the forces and substances in the world.

And as students develop true thoughts about the forces and substances that they

In our work in the sciences with the students, the ordinary can become special, the commonplace can become sacred.

have worked with, they are called on to learn how these forces and substances are applied in the world. In several of his education courses, Rudolf Steiner exhorted teachers to help their students learn about the inventions and products that people have created. He did so not only to help ground students in the world they were entering but also because understanding the creations of human beings cultivates a sense of connection to those human beings. In *A Modern Art of Education* Rudolf Steiner stated:

Just think how many people nowadays get into a tram without having the faintest idea of the principles governing its motion and mechanism. Or they see a railway every day and have absolutely no notion of the machinery of a locomotive! This means that they are surrounded on all hands by inventions and creations of the human mind with which they have no contact at all. It is the beginning of unsocial life simply to accept these creations and inventions of the mind of man without understanding them, in a general way, at any rate.

It is the beginning of unsocial life not to understand the creations of other human beings. How well we know this to be true! It is not hard to see how the rise of inhumanity correlates to our reliance on technology about which we have not the faintest understanding.

High school and college give students a foundation of thoughts that allows them to understand the ideas that manifest in the world. It should also give them the foundation for transforming those ideas into ideals. In the early years of our adulthood, when we are first able to align ourselves with our ideals, we need a firm foundation concerning the

We need a firm foundation concerning the way the world works so that our ideas are sound and our ideals meet the needs of the world.

way the world works so that our ideas are sound and our ideals meet the needs of the world. As the celestial light fades to the light of common day for our students, we want them

to have the ability to recognize the inner light and to seek it in themselves, in others, and in the world. When, as adults, they perceive this light and whence it flows, they are fully affirmed in their decision to come to earth to work and learn.

The Waldorf curriculum is a magnificent tapestry, a tapestry woven with the warp of the child's growth through the year and the weft of the themes that reappear in ever new forms. But more important than the curriculum of the science main lesson blocks is the way we work with and relate to matter. Not only do our students watch us as we handle the equipment, as we demonstrate a process; they internalize our approach and are influenced by our attitude.

The Task of the Teacher

Teaching science, especially the physical sciences, can be delightful and rewarding, interesting and fun. Teachers who overcome their inexperience and trepidation will begin to feel more at home in a new world. They will relish being able to begin to reveal the mysteries of this world and to control the forces of nature. With this increasing sense of comfort and competence come temptations and dangers.

The first temptation is the Luciferic temptation to become a magician. As we become more and more comfortable in the sciences, we can begin to feel that we have a magic wand with which the mysteries of the universe can be revealed. See how we amaze the students! Look how we mesmerize and enchant them! How lovely to bask in the glow of their admiration, their wonder, their awe!

How easy it is to succumb to this temptation, for all of us yearn for our lessons

to take wing, for our words and deeds to illuminate and inspire. Yet if we succumb, we begin to turn our students into mystics, into dreamers with their heads in the clouds. Lucifer would like to transform the human being into a completely spiritual being. He works to divorce humans from the earth and make them into spiritual automatons. By giving in to his temptation, we aid him in his task.

The second temptation is the Ahrimanic temptation to become the proverbial power-hungry, mad scientist. As we become more proficient in the sciences, as we begin to know and anticipate the processes and outcomes, we begin to feel that we have the means of controlling the forces of nature. Look how nature does our bidding! See how we can manipulate and regulate the phenomena! How satisfying to feel the students' increased respect for our power!

How easy it is to succumb to this temptation, for all of us strive to be competent, to master our task and our material, to do things well. Yet if we succumb, we begin to turn our students into materialists with their feet rooted in the earth, their gaze focused downward. Ahriman would like to turn human beings into completely physical beings. He works to wed humans to the earth and reduce them to creatures of instinct. By giving in to his temptation, we aid him in his task.

We are neither magicians nor scientists, mad or otherwise. We are teachers, teachers who are being called to serve, to serve as priests of Nature, working in her service and on her behalf. We do not need to pull back the veil of the temple; we can allow Nature to reveal her mysteries to the students when they are ready. We do not manipulate the phenomena on the altar of the demonstration table; we perform our service and let the phenomena speak for themselves. When students observe a demonstration, they should be observing the

demonstration, they should not be observing us. We have to learn to stand aside, literally and figuratively, so that Nature may speak directly to the students' hearts and minds.

We have to learn to stand aside, literally and figuratively, so that Nature may speak directly to the students' hearts and minds.

This is the middle way between the Luciferic and Ahrimanic temptations, this is the way of the Christ Being. By striving to let the Christ work in us and through us, we are helped to find the means of relating to the material world in a human and moral way.

This is the central task of the science teacher; the rest will follow.

To educate youth
Means to foster and tend
In matter the spirit,
In today the tomorrow,
In earthly life
The spirit's existence.

Roberto Trostli has been active in Waldorf education as a class teacher, high school teacher, adult educator, and lecturer for over thirty years. He is the author of *Physics Is Fun: A Sourcebook for Teachers*, numerous articles on Waldorf education, and many plays for children. He edited and introduced *Rhythms of Learning* and compiled *Teaching Language Arts in the Waldorf School*. Roberto is currently a class teacher at the Richmond Waldorf School.

Every Child Is an Artist¹

The Beginnings of Drawing

Van James

The real study of an art student is more a development of that sensitive nature and appreciative imagination with which he was so fully endowed when a child, and which, unfortunately in almost all cases, the contact with the grown-ups shames out of him before he has passed into what is understood as real life.

— Robert Henri (1865–1929)

Every child is an artist; the challenge is to remain an artist even as an adult.

— Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

If you want to be creative, stay in part a child with the creativity and invention that characterizes children before they are deformed by adult society.

— Jean Piaget (1896–1980)

Who is man, the artist? He is the unspoiled core of everyman, before he is choked by schooling, training, conditioning until the artist within shrivels up and is forgotten. And yet, that core is never destroyed completely. At times it responds to nature, to beauty, to life, suddenly aware again of being in the presence of a Mystery that baffles understanding. — Frederick Franck (1910–2006)

The 20th century artist Pablo Picasso was fascinated with children's drawings and believed that every child is a creative artist. It doesn't take much convincing to understand why this is so; just observe any young child. The child lives in a rich, imaginative inner world that comes to expression in the state of being we call play. Everything at the child's fingertips becomes the raw material for free artistic expression, a storyboard and dramatic production, spontaneously designed and orchestrated by the wondrous faculty of

childhood imagination. For the child it is not important what this creation ends up looking like; it is only important to be engaged in the activity of the moment.

Robert Fulghum, in his best selling book, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*,² pointed out that when one asks any group of kindergarten children if they can draw, paint, sing, or dance, they will unanimously answer yes to all of these questions. Without self-consciousness, even the shyest of healthy children feels at home in the creative process, the playful condition of artistic creation.

Every child is an artist, for creativity is one of the most characteristic traits that define us as being human. Everything we learn as an infant is essentially the result of creative processes: the drinking in of sense impressions shapes and forms our organs and faculties of understanding. We play with these sense impressions—color, sound, texture, taste, aroma—and they teach us what the world is about. As children, we imitate all that we see and hear, and playfully, creatively we give it back to the world.

Ernst Beuhler, in an essay *From Play to Work*, says: "Learning must never be limited to an outwardly reflective, merely rational activity. It must become a formative process that works out of the same center that provides the creative forces in play. We do not here refer to the questionable 'playful learning.' Learning must not be allowed to turn into playing; rather, the energies active in the full earnestness of children's play should become the basis for learning."³ Clearly play and the creative process are the foundation and first stages in the learning process. They are key to becoming artistic, and being artistic is key to developing one's full cognitive capacities.

What's more, creativity has been shown to contribute to our staying young, healthy, and playful even as we grow older.

Scribbles: Initial Drawing Experiments

In the case of the visual arts, young individuals participate in drawing activities, as creators and perceivers, from an early age, manifesting the intuitive first-order symbolic forms of knowing. That is, they begin with sensori-motor activities by looking at and creating pictures, and they soon become able to "read" pictures in terms of their representational meanings and to create pictorial works that symbolize the referents and experiences of their world. — Howard Gardner⁴

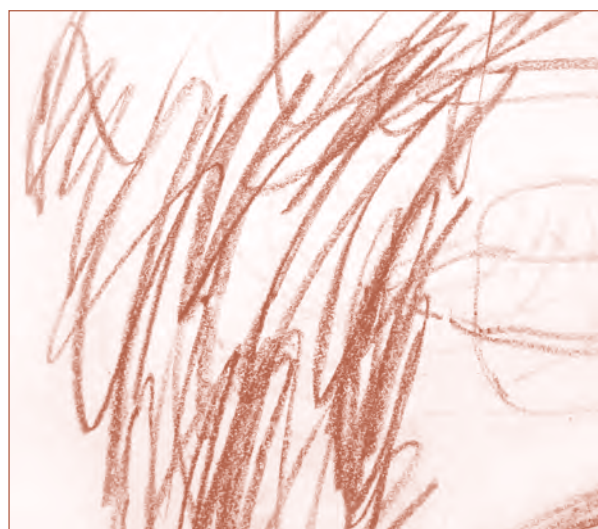


Fig. 1a/b. Two types of scribbles become apparent around age one-and-a-half or two: curved, circular lines and straight, back-and-forth lines. These often appear together in the same drawing.

When children first realize that a crayon, a piece of chalk, or a colored pencil is not just something to stick in their mouths and try to eat but can be used to make marks on the surface of a piece of paper, a floor, or a wall, their careers begins as visual artists, as creators of drawn images. This momentous occasion usually starts around the age of one-and-a-half or two years and is characterized by the rendering of loosely controlled looping and back-and-forth scribbles (Fig. 1a/b). These first drawings are the initial display of the child's will impulses, instinctual drives and urges, projected out into three-dimensional space but oriented on to the two-dimensional plane of the paper. The rounded, circular scribble is combined and contrasted with the straight-line scribble. In her classic study, *Understanding Children's Drawings*, Michaela Strauss observes with regard to the first type of scribble: "Is it misleading if, in considering these first loops drawn by children, associations with the rhythmic movements in the cosmos force themselves upon us? Do not these curves remind us of the looping orbits of the planets, and don't we find a form relationship with the flowing rhythms of fluids?"⁵ Indeed, the curved and looping linear lines in the drawings of young children may be seen as an expression of the streaming life forces coursing through their organism.

Within a short time the child begins to contract and concentrate the circular scribbled movements into a central focal point, while the straight-line scribbles form into distinctly vertical and horizontal pendulum strokes. This phase eventually gives way to the discovery and challenge of completing the single, curved, closed line, creating a circle; and the straight, intersecting star or cross form; as well as both impulses brought together in the same image (Fig. 2). This occurs around the time the child begins to refer to herself as "I." "Around a child's third birthday," observes Ingun Schneider, "a physiological change is taking place in the bones of the skull, as



Fig. 2. Circular scribbles are contracted to a gathered center and pendulum strokes find a more regular vertical and horizontal orientation (middle). These forms lead on to the circle, the star or cross figures, and the combination of the two (bottom).

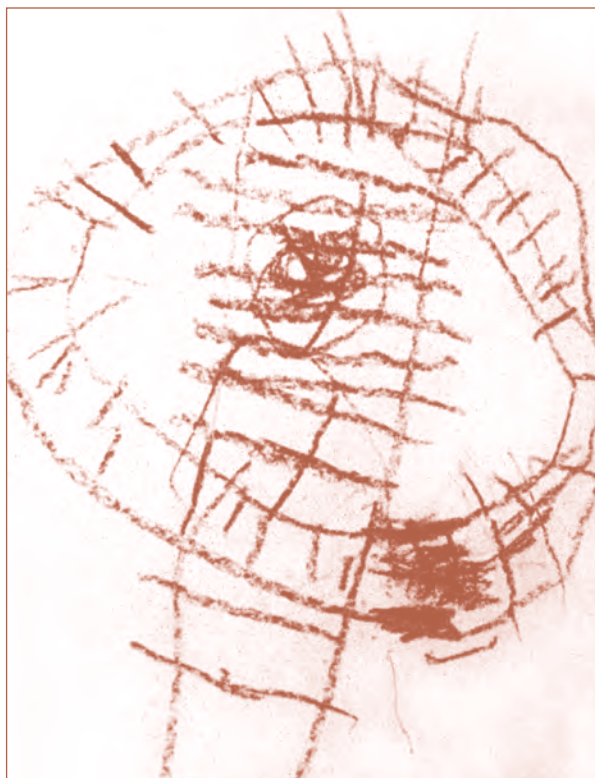


Fig. 3. Children's drawings, around the age of three, bring together the straight line and curve, the cross or ladder and the circle before human figures become recognizable.

the frontal or forehead bones become firmly fused. It is as if the three-year-old closes the circle to show that she is experiencing her separateness.⁶ The intersecting cross form, or sometimes a dot drawn in the center of the circle, further underlines this expression of early independence and confirmation of self development (Fig. 3).

Clearly, the entire language of form explored by the child arises out of the archetypes of curved and straight lines—the twofold alphabet of all forms. Even if the child begins to draw at a later age, these same phases of scribbling will take place to some extent.⁷ Ultimately the exploration of these basic form gestures, expressions of formative impulses in the child, culminates in the varied and numerous figurative images of plants, animals, people, landscapes, and buildings, the most prominent of which is the human

figure. From the simple Head and Limb Man to the Ladder Man and Tree Person (Fig. 4), these elementary drawings are pictorial expressions of the natural growth-forces and developmental processes taking place in the child but now related to outer experiences of the external, visible world. Formation of the cerebral spinal column and the central nervous system (Ladder Person), and the driving will impulses streaming through the metabolic organization and limb activities (Tree Man) are clearly articulated in the child's drawings of people at this stage. Drawing is essentially a pictorial demonstration of the child's living, physical maturation, a visual picture or snapshot of the incarnation and growth process. As Rebecca Burrill points out, "Prior to the age of seven, given the chance, children are still immersed in natural, intuitive, contextual, and implicit learning. This can be seen in children's art. Until around the

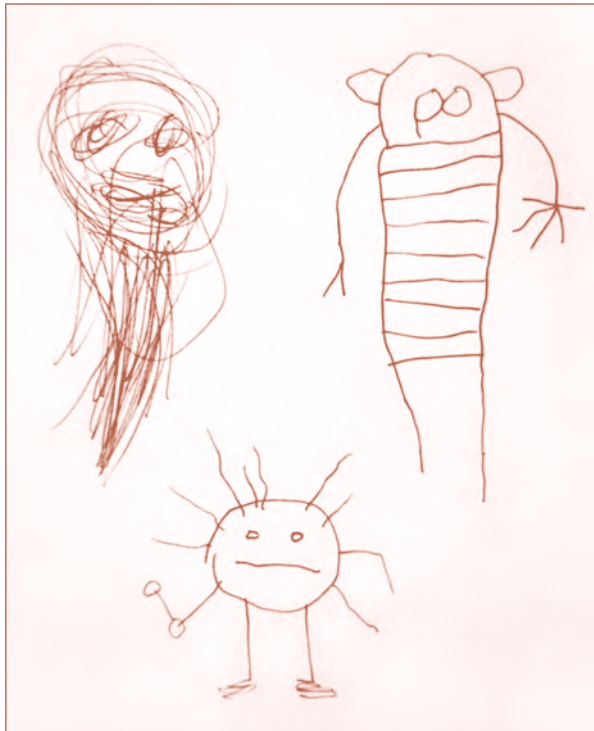


Fig. 4. Children's drawings often present the archetypal shape of the Tree Man, the Head and Limb Man, and/or the Ladder Person.

age of seven, the art of children universally has the same developmental expressions and patterns of scribbling, shape, form, color, and design. After the age of seven, specific cultural influences begin to take form, displacing the universality of their expression.”⁸

Once the circle drawings occur, face, arms, and legs follow, radiating out from the circle. Simple hands and feet are then added. Around age four the trunk appears—round, oval, triangular, or rectangular in shape. Then, the school-ready child, about six or seven years old, begins to include the neck and waist, as well as other details such as hands that can grasp things. Every stage of the child's drawing indicates how the young “artist” experiences her own bodily development. As the child is created, so she creates.

Before Instruction

Intuitive and first-order ways of knowing will operate without the need for anything except rich opportunities. — Howard Gardner⁹

It is important to let very young children draw freely, with no systematic program of instruction, no teaching of style or technique in the early years. The healthiest approach for pre-nursery through kindergarten age children, who live almost entirely out of their own world of imagination and imitation, is to let them render freely what they experience in the world around them—that is, what is within them. No instruction beyond the practical matters of how to grip the crayon, how to draw on the paper (not on the floor or wall), how to put materials neatly away, and so forth, are enough for the young child. In fact, to interrupt this natural expression of the creative faculties and the formative, life processes active at this time by directing them toward outwardly imposed techniques can thwart a healthy, self-learning process that may not be entirely recovered later on in life. If parents draw alongside their children, this is “instruction” enough, for youngsters will pick up themes, imagery, and techniques by way of imitation. This indirect approach to drawing is the most appropriate for young children. Accelerated learning programs at this early age generally have only short-term results and can actually derail a natural learning process and become a disadvantage to later skills development.

What is most important at this stage of the child's development is the process. Once the process of a drawing is complete, the picture is no longer important to the child. Although the appearance of a finished picture is of the utmost importance to an adult, the final product is of minimal significance to the child. “It is also true that children's view of their works is, on the whole, more accepting and less critical than that of adults,” says Gardner, “that often they are interested chiefly in the processes of production and not in the final products. . . .”¹⁰ This relationship to process is clearly a key to successful, creative artistry in both children and adult drawing. The final product one simply accepts, and appreciates as much as one can.

Coloring Books

Coloring books are a very strong instructional tool and are therefore often used not just at home but also in many school settings. They provide a ready-made, prefabricated image in strong black outline, which the child is invited to fill in with color. Coloring books present the world as a fixed phenomenon, finished and unable to be adjusted apart from how one colors (feels) it in. The fixity and stability of the image can provide a certain security and reassurance, and children often spend many hours quietly working in coloring books.

However, what do coloring books teach children? They dictate that one must stay within the lines and not go “outside the box.” In this way, coloring books are instructional in

the sense that they limit a child’s imagination and promote, too soon, the conceptualizing and intellectualizing of experience (Fig. 5). The educational message of coloring books is to accept the authority of the given form and follow the provided picture of reality without exploring one’s own inner picture-forming options. The coloring book can even be seen as an early childhood textbook and indoctrination manual for accepting someone else’s picture of the world before discovering it for oneself. Isn’t it a first generation preparation for television, movies, and computer games, all scripted and designed by an unknown someone else, resulting in the distraction from building up one’s own powerful capacities of imagination for picture-making? (Fig. 6a-d)¹¹ Doesn’t the coloring book become “fast food” instruction



Fig. 5. A coloring book presents a finished form, a fixed concept, and only offers the child the possibility of coloring it out, filling it in. Creating one’s own forms and figures is not possible in a coloring book, unless one is the illustrator. This coloring book picture was drawn by an eleventh grade student interested in cartooning.



Fig. 6a-d. Consider the negative effects of frequent television viewing, which has been well documented in case studies with over two thousand preschool children, ages five and six. (a) Drawings by children who watch little or no television have been compared with (b) drawings by children who watch more than three hours of television a day, (c) drawings by children who watch more than three hours of TV per day and are in a “passive smoking” environment, and (d) drawings by children (not a part of this study) who suffer from severe psychological disturbances, traumatic experiences, family conflict, and abuse. Note the progressive inability to picture reality.

for on-the-go parents and teachers looking for a substitute babysitter and the beginning stages of a fill-in-the-blank education? Certainly this wasn't the intended purpose of coloring books, but they have become a part of the quantifying and categorizing process in contemporary education. They promote the same kind of thinking that is behind multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank teaching in which there is only one correct answer to a problem. Real-life problems do not have one right answer. Coloring books do not inspire innovative problem solving, creativity, or imagination, those faculties that go beyond data collection to genuine learning and original thinking. Coloring books are undeniably, in the minds of many adults, standard fare as the 21st-century primer in a schooling of young children. But to what end?

Such visual textbooks rob children of free, imaginative play in the development of their own pictorial thinking, their own visual intelligence. They train children to accept the formulations of "clip art" concepts and the visual opinions of others as fact before they have developed their own capacity to discriminate for themselves. Isn't it better to give children blank sheets of paper so they can develop their own visual worldview? The child needs time simply to practice its own facility for expressive line and color, creating its own vocabulary of meaningful form and imagery, its own visual understanding. Visual content is a powerful factor in the education of the child, in the work of the teacher, and in the transformation of the adult learner. Visual meaning is essential for all later learning.

Materials

Crayons are a good medium for this age, better than colored pencils that have a sharp point (unnecessarily awakening a too-early awareness of precise attention to detail) or felt markers (that can't blend or mix colors well and often have an unpleasant odor). Beeswax crayons, by contrast, have a smooth texture, a pleasing aroma, and are entirely natural. An assortment of up to a dozen colors is perfectly

adequate for this early age; 1001 varieties of color are not necessary. The principle of "less is more" holds true for this age. Limit the palette of colors to what is essential. Don't give too much choice at first. This age group needs to feel that there are certain "givens," certain established essentials and not endless possibilities. As the findings of modern resilience research have shown, people perform with greater confidence and ability later in life, particularly in the face of adversity, if as children they were given fewer choices with regard to basic life needs (for instance, when to get up or go to sleep, what to eat, what to wear, which behaviors are allowed, and so forth.)¹²

Make sure the seven spectrum colors or the three primary and three secondary colors (red, yellow, blue, orange, green, and violet) are available. Include brown and even black (see below a discussion of black). Avoid day-glow, "electric," dissonant colors. Use your own sense for natural colors in your selection. If children repeatedly use one color for everything, let that color disappear for a while.

This being said, it is also possible simply to provide the three primary colors red, blue, and yellow. Often with great success, this may be done right through to third grade. Children discover in this way how to mix all of their secondary and tertiary colors by overlapping the primaries. Brown and a pseudo-black can also be achieved in this way. It depends on what the teacher wishes to accomplish by means of color and imagery whether one provides or restricts certain colors from the child's palette.

Every material possesses distinctive characteristics, and these characteristics affect the choices that children make in their drawings. Therefore, deliberate selection of materials is important in influencing the type of pictures that will be produced and the kind of thinking children are likely to engage in. Elliot Eisner, professor emeritus of art and education at Stanford University, notes: "A pointed pencil makes images possible that could not be easily

rendered in paint. Conversely, the spontaneous expressiveness possible in the act of painting is more difficult to achieve with a pointed pencil. The pencil invites delineation; a wide brush and thick paint foster expressiveness. Thus, materials matter because they influence what children can think about and how they are likely to engage the work.¹³ For this reason, avoid letting young children use sharp, graphite pencils that are more appropriate for older students. The pointed lines that pencils and related drawing tools create focus attention on narrow edges and acute incisions. They delineate a very precise, thin form: a sharp, wiry, caged figure. Remember the expression: “If the only tool you have is a hammer, everything begins to look like a nail.” If the only tool you have is a pencil, everything begins to look linear, thin, and contracted. The gray of graphite emphasizes a dull, colorless world, giving everything the same emotion-neutral value. This in turn influences the thinking and emotional life of the artist/child. With this age group try to stick to crayons for drawing and brushed watercolor for painting.

The Use of Black as a Color

Black represents the spiritual image of the lifeless.

— Rudolf Steiner¹⁴

The use of black has been a question of great interest and debate amongst Waldorf teachers and parents of young children, and a tradition has developed in many Waldorf kindergartens to exclude the color black from the array of crayons offered to this age group. Although there is no direct indication that Rudolf Steiner, founder of the Waldorf school, suggested such a policy, it is worthwhile considering the nature of this color.

Because black (considered by some theorists not to be a color at all but the very absence of light) is the most lifeless of the colors, it is one of the most powerful of hues. Together with red ochers it was the first color used in prehistoric visual art, and children often gravitate towards it because of its strong character. Some teachers feel black is too

strong for this early age group and exclude its use from drawing and painting. There is justification for this as the color specialist Faber Birren points out that children will be more inclined to draw inanimate objects—vehicles and buildings—when given black crayons. “When the same children were given colored crayons, their fancies were more inspired to attempt human beings, animals, and plants.”¹⁵

Steiner’s color research led him to state: “Black shows itself alien to life, hostile to life. ... But the spirit flourishes; the spirit can penetrate the blackness and assert itself within it.”¹⁶ In other words, although black is a quality devoid of life, it nevertheless allows the individuality to thrive. This is why adolescents often choose this color above all others. The “I” of the teenager experiences a sense of freedom within the lifelessness of black and therefore it is a natural color choice at this age of pre-egohood. In one of his notebooks, Steiner wrote, “Black = Freedom.”

As an “image of the lifeless,” black is related to the inanimate mineral kingdom and the carbon-based element in the human being. In us, the “dead” element is the solid, mineral nature of our physical body. If a child draws with black it may be an expression of the physical body’s hardening process. Joep Eikenboom notes: “Black can indicate that the child perceives areas in his physical body that he needs to work on, which he has not yet penetrated sufficiently. ... A teacher can notice the use of this color and can observe whether the work she is doing with that child is bearing fruit. After a while the use of the black crayon will disappear. Children will then be able to apply black in the right proportions and in the right place (for instance, a black cat, crow, or chimney).”¹⁷

Black is important to the child’s color palette, just as the witch in the fairy tale is necessary to the further development of the other characters and the outcome of the entire story. The lessons that black can teach are too important to be excluded from even the young child. Although restricting black during

the first seven-year period of the child's life may be considered an appropriate choice by kindergarten teachers, teachers and parents of first-grade children should carefully consider whether to limit this and any other color after the onset of first grade, particularly from the standpoint of the needs of individual children.

The House, Tree, and Person Drawing

Our aim... is to see if the fundamental stages of the first seven years of development have been completed so that spatial orientation and body schema (body geography) have been attained.

— Audrey McAllen¹⁸

By the age of five or six, pictorial elements in the child's drawings are no longer arbitrarily strewn about the page but find an orientation within the context of skyline, ground, and other constricting features. "By this age," according to Gardner, "it seems not unreasonable to conclude that the young child has a 'first draft' understanding of how to make—and to compose—a picture."¹⁹ A freeform sense of composition is beginning to be established.

A favorite drawing exercise given by Waldorf teachers to children of this age (up to eight years old) is the house, tree, and person theme. After some warm-up movement exercises, necessary to get the children fully connected with their body, they are asked to draw a picture of a house, a tree, and a person. It can be any house, tree, and person, and the drawing is not limited to one person or one tree. In fact, anything the children feel should be in the picture may be drawn in, but at least these three elements should be included. The children are encouraged to put in everything they feel is important to make a complete picture including the use of as many colors as desired, the more colors and, to some extent, the more objects, the better. In such a picture children often reveal many of their characteristic strengths and weaknesses, simply by the size, shape, gesture, and color of the features they choose to include or not include in their drawing. Essentially, the house, tree, person picture provides an

illustration of where the child is in his or her development at that particular moment in time. Often developmental irregularities and potential learning differences can be discerned in such drawings. However, one needs to be very careful not to jump to conclusions or label children based on a single drawing, since it provides only a momentary snapshot glimpse

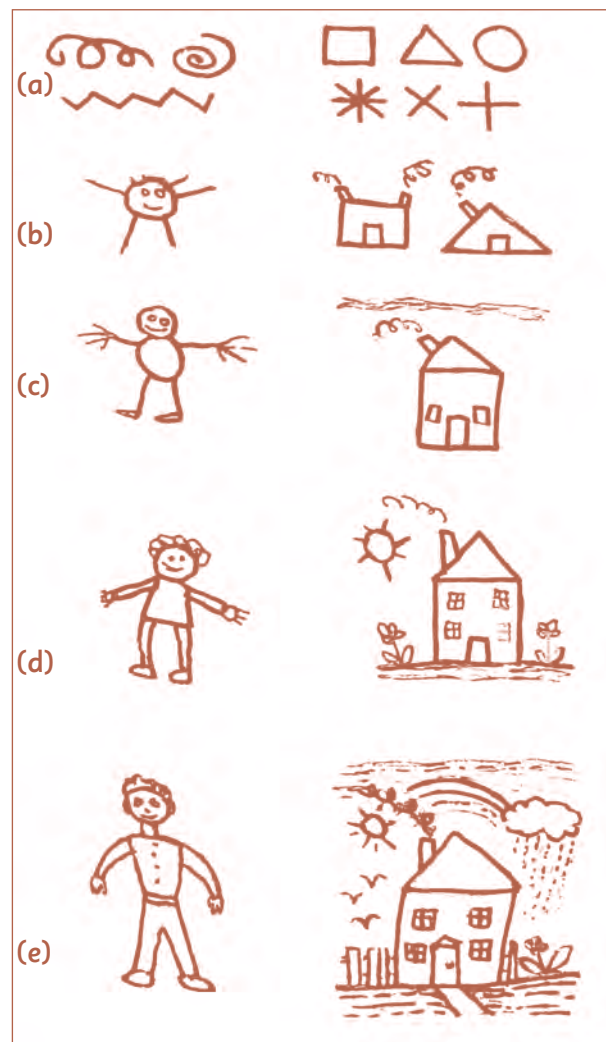


Fig. 7a-e. According to Audrey McAllen, the archetypal image of House, indicating structural (formative) changes, and Person, suggesting constitutional (functional) growth, are pictures of the child's own stages of physiological and psychological development. Structural development (a. left-hand column) of the child can be seen in drawings of basic geometric forms before the age of two years, while the constitutional development (a. right-hand column) is suggested in drawings of dynamic forms. At two years of age (b), three to four (c), five years old (d), and six to seven (e), drawings demonstrate a general maturation and development of the child.

of the child and must be seen within a larger profile or child study.

Ideally, through such a drawing exercise, one wants to see whether the life functions and organic processes of the child have reached a certain maturation and whether growth forces that have been shaping physiological development are now ready to be used for learning in a more directed and guided manner, toward more psychological, soul development. In her book, *Reading Children's Drawings: The Person, House and Tree Motif*, Audrey McAllen describes the healthy stages of this development and points to the relevance of the house, tree, and person as important archetypal images.

According to McAllen, the archetypal image of house, indicating structural (formative) changes, and person, suggesting constitutional (functional) growth, are pictures of the child's own stages of physiological and psychological development (Fig. 7a-e). Structural development can be seen in drawings of basic geometric forms of the early years, while the constitutional development is suggested in drawings of dynamic forms, expressive of movement. Drawings at older ages demonstrate a general maturation and development of the child. "Delicate observation suggests that when the triangle house is drawn, the soul and ether [or vital, formative] forces preponderate," states McAllen. "When the square house is drawn, the ego's physical forces are strongly engaged."²⁰ (Fig. 8a-b) One can in this way "read" something of the structural development of the child.

The person drawings, according to McAllen, indicate the capacity of the soul to deal with personal heredity and individual destiny, and in this way give a picture of the constitutional development of the child. The tree drawings are pictures of the breathing process, in the broadest sense, especially in terms of sense perception as a breathing-experience of the world. When all of these archetypes, plus additional elements spontaneously introduced

by the child, are brought together in a single composition a revealing portrait is disclosed (Fig. 9a-c).

One looks for things in the house, tree, and person picture like a full or limited range of colors. Is there a substantial experience of the earth under foot, indicated by ground drawn into the picture, rather than the bottom of the page serving as the ground line? Is the sky just at the top of the page or is it colored all the way down to the ground? Is there a sun? Is the tree devoid of foliage or full of leaves and even fruit? Is there one small person, a large person, or a group of people? Does the person appear happy? Does the house have a clear façade, a face, with windows (eyes) and a big or little door? Do the windows have crossbeams, indicating the ability to filter out unwanted sense impressions, to discriminate? Is there a pitched roof, a chimney (metabolic activity) and is there smoke coming out of the chimney? The combined features of the house, tree, person picture can offer insights into the child's vital signs and dawning soul landscape and help to indicate grade-level readiness.

Such a drawing exercise is good to try as the child begins to lose her milk teeth, replacing them with the second dentition. This is when a major change in consciousness (thinking, memory, feeling, regulation of will impulses and drives) occurs, and drawing can be a very helpful indicator of some of these developmental changes in the child.

Steiner described this time in the following way: "What does the child really do when, up to the change of teeth, up to the seventh or eighth year, he draws pictures in a playful way? He is actually developing something which, later on in his twenties, will mature into faculties of intelligence. ...These qualities are being developed through the ever-changing forms of his drawing activities. The child's drawing is a kind of play, but while engaged in it, he is also communicating. We shall gain a real understanding of the child's drawing if we look upon it as a means of his communicating



Fig. 8a-b. The drawing of a triangular (a) or a square house (b) can indicate the structural (physiological) development of a child. The formative life and soul forces (triangular) or the individualizing forces within the physical (square) come to expression by means of drawing them out.



Fig. 9a-b. The House, Tree, Person drawing provides an indication of where the child is in his or her development at any given time, between three and eight years of age. Often developmental irregularities and potential learning differences can be observed from such drawings, but also strengths and stages of healthy maturation.



Fig. 10a-b. Color and form find creative and unique formulations at this early stage in children's drawings. Both free form and color (a) and figurative drawing (b) are done at this age.

with the world. The child wants to tell us something about himself.”²¹ It is important for the teacher to learn to read children’s drawings in order to “see” what the child has to say in visual terms. This will aid the teacher in knowing how to better teach the individual child.

Provide Drawing Opportunities

Up to the age of seven or eight, themes may be casually suggested to the children, but they will find many of their own if simply given paper and crayons (Fig. 10a-b). No formal instruction needs to be given about how to draw. Children should have regular opportunities to sit down with teachers, parents, or caregivers and peers in order to see and imitate others’ drawings, but no instruction should be necessary until first grade. (Parents and teachers can provide good models for young children by drawing simple, colorful pictures.) Children at this age need to be freelance artists guided by their own imagination. Every child is indeed an artist.

I once heard the wonderful story of a little girl who was busily coloring a picture at her desk in school when her teacher came over and asked her what she was drawing. The girl replied, “I am drawing a picture of God.” Momentarily taken aback, the teacher said, “But no one knows what God looks like.” The girl promptly responded, “They will in a minute!”

Endnotes

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- 21 Steiner, R. *The Renewal of Education*, 2001, Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, p.76.

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Rooted in the World

Craig Holdrege

*Do you seek the highest, the greatest?
The plant can be your teacher:
what it is without volition
you can be willfully—that's it!*
— Friedrich Schiller

This article is an excerpt from a chapter of the book Thinking Like a Plant: A Living Science for Life (Lindisfarne Books, 2013). The book is written as a practical guide for learning how to think the way nature lives. While this excerpt can stand by itself, we hope it piques sufficient interest to read the whole book.

When an acorn falls onto the ground in the autumn, it comes to rest in a particular location. It may be eaten soon thereafter by a mouse. It may rot in the autumn rains. A squirrel might pick it up and carry it in its cheek to another part of the woods, dig a hole, and place it there. Even in this case the acorn's fate is still open—whether the squirrel digs it out and feeds on it in the winter, whether it decomposes, or whether it germinates and grows into an oak sapling.

Before germination, the life of the plant is encapsulated in the protective sheath of the seed (and in many cases, of the fruit as well). This stage is life held back—full of possibilities yet to be realized—until the seed gives up its encapsulated state and opens itself to the environment. The opening often has preconditions: there are seeds that need a period of dormancy before they will germinate; others need to germinate soon after separation from the mother plant, otherwise they die; some seeds need to go through a period of cold before germination, while others even need to experience extreme heat (fire) to allow

them to germinate. Whatever the specific and intriguing prerequisites may be for germination, the movement from the state of encapsulation to the actual unfolding and development of the seedling is a significant moment in the life of the plant. The plant's life can unfold only when it gives up being an object, when it grows out into and connects with the world in such a way that the world supports its further development. It cannot be a plant—which means to be a becoming being—unless it gives up its isolation and draws from the world.

Seeds are the most compact, solid, and, from an external perspective, the most self-enclosed, object-like stage in the life of the plant. Seeds are drier than other plant parts, and a key moment in the opening to the environment occurs when the seed casing allows water to penetrate into the seed, tissue swells, and the casing breaks open. The seed thereby forms a connection and continuity with the fluid environment. The water also allows its physiology to become active—what was solid as stored nutrients becomes fluid, and growth begins. Since water is the medium of active life processes, it is perhaps not surprising that the generative (meristematic) tissues of the plant consist of 80 to 90% water; even wood consists of about 50% water. (On average, only around 2% of the live weight of a plant consists of what was taken as dissolved minerals from the soil.)

Regardless of the position in which the seed finds itself in or on the soil, when it germinates the seedling begins to orient itself in the environment: the root grows downward into the soil and the shoot grows in the opposite direction, away from the earth into the light and air. In growing straight downward, a primary root orients toward the center of

the earth. We can imagine the taproots of all the plants on the planet as growing toward this center. So when the plant develops one pole in its roots that grow into the earth and another pole in its shoot that grows away from earth, it is placing itself into a huge planetary context. But it is also relating to its immediate, specific environment. Whether the seed germinates at all and how it develops depend on what it meets when growing out into the environment with its particular and ever-changing constellation of light, wind, moisture, animal life, soil consistency and chemistry, and so forth. As plant ecologist Walter Larcher remarks, “The process of emergence and the seedling stage represent a particularly sensitive period” in the life of the plant. (2003, p.312)

The foremost activity in early development is rooting—the plant connects with and anchors itself in the soil. The root of the bur oak seedling grows rapidly into the soil (see Figure 1).

Shoot growth follows. Root growth draws from the reserves of the past season that

have been stored as nutrients in the seed. It is important, when trying to picture growing roots, to realize that roots grow near their tips and that roots grow throughout the life of the plant. The primary downward growth of the primary root is initiated immediately behind a protective cap at the tip, and the same is the case for the lateral roots that develop over time. So, in imagining the development of the rooting body, we have to picture generative activity at the periphery, in all the root tips. Just behind the tips, roots develop fine root hairs that are the active interface with the environment. These increase the surface of the roots immensely and take in water and dissolved minerals. In this way the plant establishes intimate contact with its soil environment.

Most plants not only open themselves to interaction with the soil directly but also join together with fungi to form a symbiosis that extends the plant’s life even farther into the soil environment. Through these mycorrhizal fungi, the roots’ absorbing surface for water and minerals is increased significantly and in return the fungi receive organic nutrients from the plant.

The roots are not only active in growth and taking up moisture and minerals; they also secrete into the soil substances such as acids, an activity that chemically alters the soil and allows the plant to access minerals it would otherwise simply pass by.

In growing upward into the light and air, the shoot-pole of the plant opens itself in a different way to different qualities of the environment. In contrast to the dense medium into which a plant roots itself, the shoot grows upward into the more rarified environment of light and air. In so doing it forms leaves that spread out as surfaces into this environment. Through its leaves the plant bathes itself in the light and air. The leaves have tiny pores—usually on the underside—through which air enters and departs. The air circulates through air-filled spaces in the leaves and

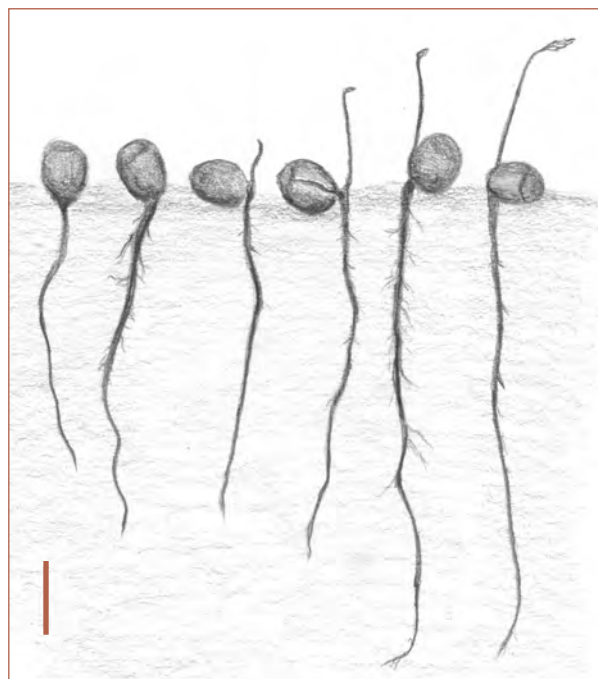


Figure 1. Bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) seedlings, showing development following germination; scale bar = 1 inch. (after Holch 1931, p.268)

becomes part of the plant's "food." In the presence of light, the stems and leaves become green, and in greening they can utilize the light of the sun for the plant's growth and development. Through light, carbon dioxide from the air, water, and a small amount of dissolved minerals from the soil, the plant builds up its own body.

We should take a moment to appreciate this remarkable capacity of the plant. The plant can make its own living substance on the basis of light, air, water, and small amounts of dissolved minerals. What a contrast to our animal way of life, which demands we live from already existing plant or animal substance. How different it would be if, to have a meal, we could go out and expose ourselves to the sun for a number of hours while drinking lightly salted water! But that is not how we are organized; we are more enclosed from the immediate environment, while plants have

"an open form through which the organism in all its manifestations of life is directly integrated into its environment." (Plessner, 1975, p.219) By taking root in the earth, plants become in a way more dependent on their environment and more vulnerable than a roaming, self-mobile animal. But this dependency is the flip side of openness to the environment and the plant's ability to engage with that environment and to do what animals cannot, namely create, essentially out of air and water, living substance.

Figure 2 shows three representative bur oak saplings that grew in three different environments within a quarter of a mile of one another in Eastern Nebraska.

The soil was removed from the roots and the plants were drawn at the end of the first growing season. In all cases the soil was similar—"a fine silt loam known as loess." (p.263) The plant on the left (A) was growing at the top of a hillside that had previously been cleared for cultivation and subsequently supported some prairie grasses; the acorn from which this seedling grew was planted in an area free of vegetation. It grew rapidly and deeply in this sunny environment with the rich, relatively dry prairie soil. At the end of the season the roots had penetrated the soil to a depth of five feet. Other bur oak acorns were planted nearby in a moister and shadier oak-hickory forest that spread out along a southwest-facing slope (B). Here the tap root grew little more than a foot into the soil and formed proportionately fewer side roots. Finally, when the bur oak acorns germinated and grew in a darker, still moister linden (basswood) forest on a north-facing slope, they grew even more slowly and branched little (C). In all cases the above-ground part of the plants remained shorter than the rooting body. But above-ground growth was clearly correlated with root growth: the large-rooted plant also formed a longer main stem (what would become the trunk) with more leaves than the seedlings growing in the shadier, moister conditions.

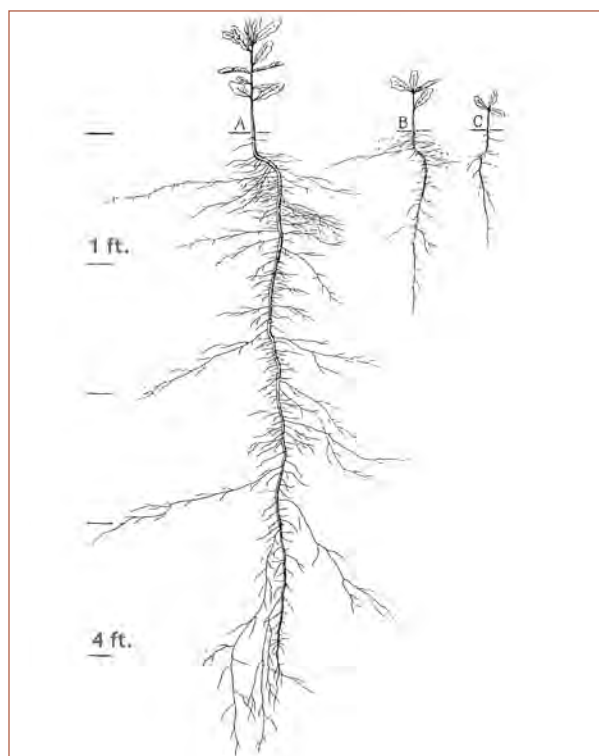


Figure 2. Three different bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) saplings growing in different environments, shown at the end of the first season of growth. (after Holch 1931, p.274)

What this example shows vividly is that by living its life through connecting with a specific place in the world, the plant opens itself to the conditions of that place and interacts with them. Because the plant is an open, interactive being, the world it interacts with also becomes embodied in the plant's form and function. In opening itself to what comes to it from the environment and expanding out into that environment, it takes up an active relation to its surroundings, which then become the plant's environment. Place is not only the "location" that can be precisely defined in terms of longitude and latitude. For a plant, place is a web of relations that becomes manifest through the plant's life, substance, and form. The place-as-environment is what allows the plant—in a dynamic sense—to live; it is what the plant interacts with, it provides the plant with what it needs to live, and at the same time it is changed by the life of the plant.

Already in this brief consideration of plant germination and seedling development we see essential and intertwined qualities of plant life: how it embeds itself in a place; how it opens itself to the environment in which it grows; how it transforms itself as it develops from one state to a next while maintaining overall coherence of the organism; how plasticity allows it to develop in relation to particular environmental conditions; how it embodies the environment in its forms and functions; how it extends beyond itself as a bounded body (think of the mycorrhizal symbiosis) and is a member of a larger living context. Here I want to focus on how we can learn from the plant as a creature of place and from its remarkable openness to its environment in relation to the question: how can we as human beings develop a more living relation to the world?

Becoming Rooted—Perception

It seems as if the day was not wholly profane, in which we have given heed to some natural object. The fall of snowflakes in a still air, preserving to each crystal its perfect form; the blowing of sleet over a wide sheet of water, and over plains, the waving rye-field, the mimic waving of acres of houstonia, whose innumerable florets whiten and ripple before the eye; the reflections of trees and flowers in glassy lakes; the musical steaming odorous south wind, which converts all trees to windharps; the crackling and spurting of hemlock in the flames; or of pine logs, which yield glory to the walls and faces in the sitting-room—these are the music and pictures of the most ancient religion. — Ralph Waldo Emerson, from his 1844 essay "Nature" (1990, p.312)

For a plant, place is a web of relations that becomes manifest through the plant's life, substance, and form.

In these descriptions Emerson shows us that he has "given heed" to the world around him. Actually, to say "around" him is not correct. In perceiving these occurrences he was out with them and took them in; he participated in them. Only then could he describe his experiences of nature so specifically as moving, unfolding processes. In such meetings with the sense world, Emerson experienced something deep—the day is not "wholly profane," and he intimates an "ancient religion," a reconnecting with the roots of existence.

Most of us have experienced immediate and deeply enlivening meetings with the world—the smile of a young child; the rainbow arching across the light-bathed sky; the glowing red and orange clouds of a sunset; the waves building, breaking, crashing, and running up onto the beach. Such experiences are powerful and yet fleeting; we know ourselves to be affected by them—we have met something and been nourished by something greater than

ourselves. The experiences I have mentioned are special ones; they are not necessarily day-to-day occurrences. And yet, most of the waking day we are in the process of perceiving in some way or another.

But everyday experience becomes “merely everyday” and loses vibrancy inasmuch as it shrinks into intellectual thoughts, interpretations, biases, and categorizations of experience. Often we notice something only insofar as we already know it. I see a “dandelion,” but how much of its radiant yellow do I really take in and acknowledge? I see the “pond,” but I don’t notice the undulating waves or the reflections of the trees and the sky quivering on its surface and extending into its depths. In one important way our experience is deadened because our perception has narrowed to what we already know. The world becomes prosaic, a world of things that is scarcely alive with the music of a resounding world.

A plant opens itself to its environment as a prerequisite for unfolding its life. It puts itself out into the environment. This openness to the environment does not end once it has germinated and established itself as a seedling. The roots continue to grow and near the tips remain in active interplay with the environment. The leaves spread out, new ones develop, and interactions with light and air do not cease. As vital organs the roots and leaves don’t stop being open and close off from the environment, saying, physiologically, “We’ve had enough interaction.” Instead, the plant’s openness to the environment entails initial receptivity, the activity of expanding out and ramifying into the environment, and the ability to remain

receptive as it continues to interact with the environment.

These are also the fundamental gestures of human perception. When I am immersed in thought and then a pileated woodpecker hammers into a tree in the nearby woods, my attention is drawn out. I live for a moment in the sound and in its reverberation through the trees. In being in the sound I am receptive. In fact, at that moment there is no “I am here” and “the bird is over there.” There is simply the sounding in which I am participating. I am changed and grow richer through this experience.

I suggest that a prerequisite for gaining a living relation to the world as human beings is the ability to open ourselves through attentive perception. This living relation begins when we go out, actively and yet in the mode of receptivity, take in, and then engage with what we discover. In the process we become beings of place, even if we are on the move. We are attending to and taking in some of what the world offers up. In contrast, we are placeless when we are caught up with or consumed by ourselves, when we notice only what we have known before. If we want to open ourselves and root ourselves in the world in a living way, we need to develop pathways to get out into experience, to become more conscious of immediate experience, and to learn to work with our ideas in such a way that they do not place barriers between ourselves and the richness of the world.

So a key issue is: How can we become more open and remain open to the richness of the world? Can we learn from the plant a way of being and, to paraphrase Schiller, do willfully

Everyday experience becomes “merely everyday” and loses vibrancy inasmuch as it shrinks into intellectual thoughts, interpretations, biases, and categorizations of experience.

A prerequisite for gaining a living relation to the world as human beings is the ability to open ourselves through attentive perception.

what it does organically? This demands a kind of active wakefulness on our part to “be there.” Or we could say, developing presence of mind as a kind of peripheral attentiveness, a readiness to take in. This is no simple matter and certainly, for me, not a given. It is a skill to be developed.

Into the Phenomena

Many weeklong summer courses at The Nature Institute include plant study. One of the first observational exercises we carry out is the following. We go outside and I ask everyone—twelve to twenty participants—to look at a particular species of plant. I have selected the plant beforehand, one that is flowering and can be found easily in fields or along roadside edges. We walk around and see where it is growing. I ask everyone to take a few minutes, look at the plant and its surroundings, and then pick one specimen to bring inside. Back inside, we sit in a circle, each person with his or her plant. I give some guidelines for our observational process: We will go around the circle and each person will describe an observation of the plant. I request that descriptions be kept fairly brief, so that everyone gets a chance to share observations with the others. I ask that we try not to repeat what others have said, a suggestion that encourages mutual listening. I also request that those participants who may know botanical terms use them only if everyone else can follow the description. Finally, I say that we are not concerned here with explanations, causes, or models. We are not asking “why” questions; we simply want to take in and describe what the plant has to offer.

So we describe, moving from the bottom to the top of the plant. I will not try to reconstruct the whole process, but just give a few examples.

A person is looking at the lower part of the stem and describes the clear transition between the whitish root stalk and the upright stem, which at its base is purplish and then turns green. Someone else describes the stoutness of the stem and the fine hairs that are mainly present along the slight vertical ridges running along it. Another person describes the oval shape of the lower leaves with their basically smooth margin, and notes the marked veins, especially visible on the leaf’s underside. You can imagine that with such detailed observations and descriptions, we are carefully attending to what can be seen, felt, and smelled on the plant. We might go around the circle

two or three times until we have a sense that we’ve attended to the different features of the plant. Such a process takes at least an hour if not more. Sometimes it will be continued the next day.

Although deceptively simple, this process yields many fruits. First, and perhaps foremost, it is a cathartic practice to step out of everyday

It is a cathartic practice to step out of everyday habits and simply give one’s full attention and time to something one would normally, at best, take in only at a glance.

habits and simply give one’s full attention and time to something one would normally, at best, take in only at a glance. It helps us realize that we almost never look at things in a careful and detailed way. How often we gloss over things! Moreover, we are impressed by the plant in all its detail, pattern, and variability. In one course we studied common milkweed, and one person wrote in her evaluation: “I always look at milkweed differently now. I had the profound experience that, even as a total novice in the life sciences, I could, through attentiveness to the natural world around me, come to know it better.” This can happen with the most inconspicuous weed. By looking carefully we take the plant seriously—we turn our unencumbered attention toward it. We see the plant as something in its own right and learn to value it for its own sake. As one course

participant remarked, “I will never walk past a daisy the same way!”

If we were to look at the plant from too narrow a perspective, this realization might well not occur. If we were interested, say, only in what medicinal properties a plant has, we could get a quick answer from an expert or a book. But we are not carrying out a question-and-answer session with the plant. Instead, we are taking the time to perceive, to dwell with the plant and its features.

In this exercise we also notice that there is no natural end to observing. There is—even if we don’t dissect, use microscopes, or perform biochemical analyses—always something more to see, smell, or touch. In this sense, the perceptual world has an endless richness of detail and pattern to disclose. It is only we who choose to stop perceiving at some point. For most people this discovery is a kind of “aha” experience. We get a glimpse of what the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty calls the “hidden and inexhaustible richness” of the sense world. (1969, p.139) Reflecting on a weeklong course, a participant wrote: “Now I understand that the course is really about us, *Homo pretentious*, and the plants are what we work with because they’re accessible, compliant, free and easy, and yet perfectly capable of revealing Nature in full glory to all who care to look. One of my chief impressions of the week is that almost any small bit of Nature will do the job.”

Something else is remarkable in the process of group observation. We notice how differently people perceive and describe. Everyone in the circle realizes that, alone, he or she would not have seen nearly as much. Our senses are opened and directed in new ways by what others perceive and comment on. Some people have an ability to see more and more within a detail others don’t attend to, like the participant who never left the root,

The plant is a natural corrective for flights of fantasy or mere opinions. All we need to say is, “Look again. How is it really?”

even after we had gone around the circle four times. Or the person who noticed the different shades of green, or how the plant felt when she waved it back and forth as if in the wind. The plant reveals more and more of itself as different people make different discoveries. Knowledge arises in a community. Through such a process a learning community develops, and, in Goethe’s words, “The interest of many focused on a single point can produce excellent results.” (1995, p.12) The unique perspective each person takes truly enriches the whole.

What allows different perspectives to show their best sides is the fact that everyone’s attention is on a phenomenon about which people don’t have a great deal of pre-knowledge (prejudices and assumptions). They can look in quite an open way. Even people who have studied botany have rarely looked at one plant for so long and in such detail. Also, it’s not about what we know from memory or our book learning, but about what we perceive *right now*.

Different people can have different perceptions, but these differences do not create separation; they enhance one another. We learn to appreciate the different ways people observe and describe. There may at times be need for clarification and more precise or accurate formulation, but that can all be achieved through recurring attentiveness to the thing itself and through mutual struggle to find ways to adequately express what we’ve perceived. The plant is a natural corrective for flights of fantasy or mere opinions. All we need to say is, “Look again. How is it really?”

This kind of observation exercise takes us into details and we attend to what is directly before us. A focus is chosen and is clearly circumscribed. As one course participant remarked, “Almost any bit of nature will do.” Although the chosen focus I’ve described is plants, we could (and sometimes do in our

courses) immerse ourselves in a rock, a section of a meadow, a cloud formation, or an insect. Everywhere we focus our attention on the natural world we will discover an “inexhaustible richness.”

In subsequent sections of the chapter I describe further ways “to get there from here,” most of which are based on adult education courses at The Nature Institute.

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Independent or Charter?

Study of Teacher Choice: Part Two

Liz Beaven

This is the concluding installment of a two-part article based on recent research that examined the movement of experienced Waldorf teachers between independent and charter school settings. The study sought to gain a deeper understanding of the similarities and differences between the two settings from the teachers' perspective and to gather lessons we can learn from the relatively recent expansion of Waldorf education beyond the independent school context. Through a process of open-ended interviews, ten teachers with significant years in both independent and charter schools were asked to reflect on their choices of setting and their experiences. In the previous issue of the *Research Bulletin* (Volume XVIII Number 1), I offered an overview of the project's context and design and reported on five of the seven major findings: determinants of teacher choice (reasons for moving between schools); choices made as parents and their impact on teaching setting; the effect of each setting on collegial and inner work; the impact of school structure and organization; and differences in working with students and parents. In this article, two final themes are reported and all findings discussed.

MAJOR FINDINGS (continued)

Essential Differences: Tangible and Intangible

Participants were asked to characterize the essential differences, tangible or intangible, between their experience in independent

and charter schools. The majority of these differences were described in the first part of this article, but two additional differences appear to be core to much of the debate around public and independent schools and merit separate consideration, namely: the impact of standardized testing and state regulations; and the question of freedom and accountability.

The topic of mandated assessment came up in almost every interview. Teachers agreed that it had a positive element; as one said, "Accountability is not a bad thing." Another believed that the demand of testing created more focus; teachers took their responsibilities for student learning more seriously knowing

that tests were coming at the end of the year. For most, though, testing as it is currently constructed was a cause for discomfort. Several shuddered at the thought of second graders taking standardized tests and felt that this practice was stressful and potentially traumatic for the children. One teacher emphasized that although her charter did not adapt the curriculum in any way to

accommodate testing, she had heard of this happening at other charters—the practice of "teaching to the test." Generally, the teachers believed that mandatory testing and other state regulations provide greater accountability but create a more bureaucratic and regulated environment, one in which there was less freedom because "you have to do it this way."

Teachers felt that testing had impact on their autonomy and ability to decide what was best for their children. Questions of freedom

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arose in each interview and proved to be quite complex. Most teachers reported that they had a greater measure of freedom in the classroom and with the curriculum in an independent school. Without the mandate of standardized tests, there was “more time for children to grow into who they are meant to be” with “space to trust the children as the human beings that they are and are becoming.” One teacher felt that it had been harder to maintain this space and trust in the charter environment, ultimately motivating her to move to an independent school.

Reflecting further, another teacher observed that the spiritual work the teachers do together provides a well from which the work can deepen and grow, yet felt that this was not as likely to happen in a charter setting. In an independent school this spiritual work finds expression in a rich festival life and in “the overarching aesthetic that is carried by the spiritual impulse.” Several described feeling greater freedom to work out of anthroposophical principles in an independent school. Direct grounding in anthroposophy in turn gave more freedom to be creative in teaching compared to applying methods or sticking with convention. One teacher summarized a general point of view, describing the essence of the work as building and holding an anthroposophically based picture of the human being.

Several teachers talked of the etheric or energy body of schools, concluding that, overall, the independent schools had a stronger “feel,” which one teacher described as a place of wisdom. It is possible, however, that we are seeing the impact of institutional biography rather than a charter/independent divide; on the whole charter schools are still young, both individually and collectively. They are in a building phase and lack the traditions, resources, and deep rhythms of older schools.

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Illustrating this, one teacher recalled her mixed and rather frustrating experience in a young independent school that was still rather unpredictable and chaotic in its operations. This biographical element may also be linked to

a question of generations. When asked to reflect on essential elements, one teacher noted a “trend of slippage in teachers’ commitment to communal leadership, inner work, et cetera. ... There is a reluctance to give up free time—they have other commitments.” This trend seems to cut across both public and

independent settings—part of the ethos of the older independent schools is carried by those “who give their lives to the school,” a gesture that younger colleagues seemed unwilling to make.

Finally, teachers spoke of the intangible element of intention: (1) the intention of parents who seek out and pay for independent education, are often well-informed about their choice and well-educated in child development, and understand that they will pay and work really hard in many ways to support the school; and (2) the intention of teachers who must have the desire to do this work if they are to deepen it, no matter what the setting. Pondering the impulses that start schools, one teacher said: “The desire to do this work needs to come from the teacher; it cannot be successfully imposed. ... You need to have the freedom to work out of anthroposophy. ... Otherwise you have methodology—which is not a bad thing, because the methodology is brilliant, but we need to be clear.” All teachers agreed that this deep commitment to work out of the wellspring of anthroposophical study could be found in both settings, but that it tended to be easier to draw from that well in the independent setting.

Hopes for the Future

Towards the end of the interview, each participant was asked to reflect on the current

status of the independent/charter debate and to offer thoughts and hopes for the future of the work. There was considerable uniformity of response, whether the teacher currently worked in a charter or independent setting. According to these teachers, the charter schools are here to stay, are likely to continue to grow, and are meeting an important need. They see differences between the two, yet believe both are essential to meet the needs of children and for the further development of the work. They would like to see collaboration, respect, and mutual support. They reinforced the need for clarity of goals and purpose. Every teacher emphasized the fundamental importance of teacher training and professional development for the current and future health of education.

Most participants identified broad, objective differences between the two types of schools. Differences were framed in terms of freedom to work openly with the spiritual impulse of anthroposophy and the absence of “the government finger in there.” The latter was most apparent in state or federal requirements of standardized student assessment. Recognizing these differences, they understood the stand taken by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) for the quality and integrity of the Waldorf “brand.” One observed: “AWSNA is moving in the right direction; it is important to continue being clear” on when the term “Waldorf” can be used and what it stands for. Several noted the key impact of trained and fully informed teachers; superseding a division between independent or charter school, appropriately trained teachers allow a school to deepen its mission and grow beyond “crayons, painting, and methods.” As they looked to the future, they believe for the work to flourish, teachers “have to be trained

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in a way that allows them to see if they really want to be Waldorf teachers—[and to know] there is a spiritual component to this.” From another: “[For] all kids to have a Waldorf education, so much depends on the teachers. They have to be people that want to deepen themselves and are inspired to teach in the

public system, are willing to weave the spiritual fabric and do the inner work.” Full disclosure at the outset is important.

The teachers emphasized that the charter movement is young and still finding its way; its story is still being written. They hope to work together to guide and support this fledgling impulse. They returned again and again to the social

mission of Waldorf education: “This work is not easy, but there is need everywhere.” One noted that compromises might be made in both settings, but that “ultimately, Waldorf education is such a gift to the child and human being—that is what unifies us.” Another emphasized the value of the charter movement, “bringing as much Waldorf education as possible in different settings for the sake of the children. . . . It is for the students, I saw how much they grew and changed. It made a difference in their lives.” Another summarized: “[Charters] make it possible, available, to so many more people.”

The desire for brotherhood extended into a yearning for a new relationship between the two groups. One stated: “Brotherhood is essential. They have things to offer each other.” Many had had first-hand experiences of negativity from colleagues: “There is a knee-jerk response to charters—I hear it all the time. I’d like to see more understanding and less defensiveness.” Another suggested that negativity, or even hostility, was perpetuated by a simple lack of knowledge that could

be overcome by interest. In the words of one teacher, “Go visit your neighbor. ... We have to have discussion, practice what we preach—inquiry, discussion, partnership.” Another hoped for a new relationship between the Alliance and AWSNA, expressing the opinion: “We [in the independent schools] can inspire the people at the charter schools to do deeper inner work, become more interested in anthroposophy, bring more basic terminology.” Most felt that the path to protecting and strengthening Waldorf education lies in closer relationships and collaboration, not in distance.

In addition to independent schools supporting charters, many felt that the charter movement has a lot to offer the independent schools. Charters have dramatically increased the public profile of Waldorf education; in several areas there has been “an explosion of interest in Waldorf.” Initially, this caused considerable anxiety and a feeling of competition and threat, but collaboration between schools has grown, with shared events, mentoring and evaluation activities between schools, and “lots of movement, like a chessboard,” of friends and colleagues that has built connections between schools. Looking a little deeper, one teacher noted the “amazing contributions of the charter school work.” She cited the PLANS lawsuit that clarified the status of anthroposophy for all schools—at a cost of over \$750,000 to the Sacramento Unified School District. She noted that this court ruling—which dismissed the complaint that anthroposophy is a religion—provided a new level of protection to all schools and lent credibility to Waldorf education.

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Other charter contributions include the start of peer-reviewed research. One participant spoke of a desire to test the validity of Waldorf in a wider forum: “Let’s put it to the test, see if it is a really valid framework [in a wider setting].” One suggested that, because of the imperative of testing, a different discussion about accountability and assessment might be possible.

For these teachers, the work of both charter and independent schools is valid and important. Several noted that the freedom of the independent schools allows for a deepening of our collective work, while the spread of charters allows for a growth of acceptance and interest. As one said:

“They have things to offer each other.” A charter school “does not have to look like [an independent school]”—several affirmed their belief that Waldorf education “can manifest in many different forms” and that the development of charter schools is supporting innovation and experimentation: “There are different ways of implementing but they all have truth.” One participant noted that all of the schools, independent and charter alike, are changing and adapting as they attempt to meet a modern age and a new generation of teachers, parents, and students. This group was united in a hope: “Let’s work together in a spirit of brotherhood.”

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This project centered on the perspectives of ten teachers who described the independent/public issue from their unique points of view. Once their stories were told, I took a step back and studied the patterns that had emerged. Five topics stood out: the tension between

freedom and access, the social mission of Waldorf education, the essentials of Waldorf education, developmental aspects of schools, and the core role of teacher training and support.

Freedom and Access

When Rudolf Steiner agreed in 1919 to develop the first Waldorf school, he stated several conditions for its operation. Two of these appear to be particularly relevant to the current debate on the role and form of Waldorf education in North America. “Steiner wholeheartedly agreed [to the development of a school] on condition that the new school should be open to all children regardless of social, economic, racial, or religious background...and that the school should be completely independent of all economic and political control. This latter condition was of crucial importance to Steiner, for he was convinced that there would be no permanent solutions for any of the pressing social problems unless the sphere of cultural and spiritual life was freed from state domination as well as from direct and indirect control by business.” (Barnes, 1980, p.2) In many ways, the current debate on independent and public schools can be characterized as a tension between these two directives: freedom from political or state control opposite open access for all children.

In this country, the educational impulse named Waldorf manifested first in the form of independent schools. This afforded it a significant degree of freedom from government regulations and allowed it to become firmly established, growing quietly and largely unnoticed for over sixty-five years and developing a strong body of practice and tradition. The American school movement thus met Steiner’s condition of independence from political control to a remarkable level

not enjoyed by other countries. However, the study participants’ stories suggest that this political freedom came at a price, represented by the economic sacrifice of its teachers and the ever-increasing cost of private-school tuition, with an accompanying “buyer’s mentality” and attitudes of entitlement from its “customers,” the parents and students. If we are to heed the stories of this group of teachers, economic pressures, materialistic thinking, and increasing emphasis on a return on investment have grown alongside increases in tuition, reducing freedom of operation.

The impulse of Waldorf education was able to move into the public sector largely through the advent of charter schools.

These schools, public schools of choice, were intended to allow innovation in education through a reduction in regulations and to provide choice and access to different types of schools for all who seek them. Thus, it could be argued that the charter schools meet Steiner’s requirement of “access to all” regardless of background far more successfully than the independent schools,

whose fees stand as an insurmountable hurdle to the vast majority of this nation’s children. However, as public institutions, charter schools are subject to political controls that restrict freedom of practice. Participants identified these controls as particularly evident in requirements for a type of student assessment that is incompatible with the Waldorf model of human development and that may impose restrictions on curriculum and teaching.

These two mandates—one for freedom of access, the other for freedom from political control—stand at odds in our schools. They are confronted with the need for compromise in one or the other mandate in order to exist. Independent schools enjoy a very significant level of freedom from political control, but their

Participants identified political controls as particularly evident in requirements for a type of student assessment that is incompatible with the Waldorf model of human development.

tuition-driven model creates stress and leads to its own compromises, which translate into a loss of freedom. Charter schools receive state funding, reducing (although not fully removing) economic pressures, but they must adapt their practices in order to meet government accountability requirements, which represents a different loss of freedom. By turning the current debate away from “independent and charter” to one of “freedom and access” we may be able to examine more clearly the impact of the compromises each school is asked to make and in this way seek new and creative solutions.

The Social Mission of Waldorf Education

Teachers’ stories have spoken again and again of the ideal of the social mission of Waldorf education. Emil Molt, father of the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart, saw that a fundamental change in people would be needed to create permanent healing and change in society. In his view this change “could come about only through a new impulse in education.” (Barnes, 1980, p.1) He turned to Steiner, who had just published his ideas of a new social order in *Towards Social Renewal*, and asked him to establish an adult education program for the workers of his factory, to be followed soon after by a school for children. From its inception, therefore, Waldorf education has cherished at its core a mission of social renewal and change. This was an important point for every participant in this study as they explored how best to serve this mission. In several cases, their answers sent them from independent schools to charters, seeking to widen the reach of Waldorf education.

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Waldorf education is sometimes described as a gift for all children. Is this borne out by current reality? An examination of the statistics is disquieting.

Tucked within their stories, however, lies a deeper question, one meriting serious consideration in the context of a social mission. At this time in history, who are we serving and who can we serve? Waldorf education is sometimes described as a gift for all children. Is this borne out by current reality? An examination of the statistics is disquieting. Charter schools were established as “public schools of choice.” (California Charter Schools Association)

They have been in existence for over twenty years, during which time the number of charter schools has increased rapidly. In California, approximately 10% of public schools are now charters, approximately twice the national percentage. Charter schools overall have tended to attract philanthropic support geared towards addressing poverty, resulting in a higher concentration of minority and poverty students. (Poverty and Race Research Action Committee) The percentage of charter students eligible for free or reduced lunches (an indicator of poverty) has increased overall. Across all charter schools, the percentage of White, African-American, and Native American/Alaskan Native students has decreased and the percentage of Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander students has increased. (National Center for Education Statistics)

How does the population in public charter schools inspired by Waldorf education reflect this trend? Participants described much greater economic diversity in the charters and, overall, very little difference in ethnic diversity. One charter high school was described as “a colorful place,” with many students receiving free or reduced meals. However, since it opened, its demographics have changed from an original

61% Title I students to a current 50%. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is a pattern that has been seen in other charters.

During the relatively short history of public schools inspired by Waldorf education, there have been at least two attempts to establish inner city schools designed to educate severely underserved children. The first, the Milwaukee Urban School, was also the first public venture. It was established after then Superintendent of Education in Milwaukee, Robert Peterkin, asked for help in designing a school that would give an enhanced education to the neediest of children. It flourished for some time, an apparent model for this socially conscious work. Over time, however, it lost its “Waldorf” identity until finally, in 2011, the “Waldorf shingle” was removed from the building and no trace of a Waldorf influence appears to remain (reported by Ida Oberman, Fair Oaks, January 2013). A second school, Harriet Tubman, was developed in the mid-1990s in San Diego with a similar mission. Its early days were part of the story of one of this study’s participants. She described its many challenges as it attempted to serve a highly Hispanic and very impoverished community. For a short time, according to this teacher, the school was able to implement a number of elements of Waldorf pedagogy. Children were excited by the new possibilities and activities available to them. However, the Waldorf impulse was not maintained. The school continued but “went in another direction,” and soon thereafter no trace of its Waldorf origins remained.

There may be important lessons to be learned here. If we accept that Waldorf education has a broad social mission, we must not only address the questions of who we currently serve and who we could serve, but also that we better understand the stories of the Milwaukee Urban School and the Harriet Tubman school from the perspective of those

who were directly involved in these ventures. Why did the Waldorf impulse not persevere over time? What does this tell us about our work?

What, Exactly, Is a Waldorf School?

All ten of the study participants had teaching experience in independent and charter schools. Together, they represented over twenty schools. Each one considered her- or himself to be a Waldorf teacher by training, choice, practice, and belief. However, as currently defined, five of them do not, in fact, work in schools that can call themselves “Waldorf.”

Since its founding in North America in 1928, the impulse of Waldorf education has manifested in a range of settings that have included independent schools of differing sizes and grade ranges, small home-based preschools, home-schooling situations, dependent and independent public charter schools, and public schools. These enterprises have had varying degrees of freedom from political control, a range of economic struggles, differences in the breadth of their curricula, and varied physical resources. Both independent and charter schools alike may have differing percentages of trained teachers; at least one of the participants’ charter schools has a history of an unwavering commitment to hiring trained teachers, a standard that many schools would envy.

From its inception, Waldorf education has required compromises large and small. This is perhaps inevitable when a spiritual impulse is brought into physical form. Betty Staley, a long-time Waldorf teacher and interim president of Rudolf Steiner College, has noted three main compromises at the outset of the founding school in post-World War I Germany: approval of the Board of Education; recognition of teachers’ credentials; and achievement of the learning goals of public school by a series

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of approved benchmarks—the school could be approved only if it did not lag behind in learning goals, facilities, and teacher training, even though pupils in the elementary grades were not required to sit state exams. (Staley, 1998, xvii) It is fascinating to note, ninety-four years later, that many of the participants' comparisons centered on very similar issues: the impact of mandatory student assessment, differences in facilities and resources, and the importance of fully qualified teachers.

As we confront a time of rapid change and seemingly new demands from students and parents, many of us have taken up the question of what it means to be a Waldorf school: What is essential? One participant reported that this had been a subject of a recent College of Teachers' study in her long-established, independent school. There are guidelines from AWSNA (Shared Principles) and the Pedagogical Section Council (Core Principles), yet answers to this question are far from clear when it comes to a specific school. Is an established charter school with a fully trained, experienced faculty and regular habits of study less of a Waldorf school than a developing independent initiative with limited resources and an organization still in formation? Participants described experiences of both. In the current spectrum of Waldorf education as manifested in schools, where is the line? Who draws it, and at what cost?

Questions of Development: Age and Time

As mentioned previously, the charter movement is both relatively young and growing rapidly. One participant likened this to the image of human development that stands at the heart of Waldorf education. She suggested that schools, like individual human beings, need time and space to develop. She saw her charter school as being in a process of transformation, slowly able to implement more and more aspects of Waldorf education—not yet to the extent she would like for the students, but much further along than it had been. She noted:

“It has taken five years to say that this could work, with glimpses of change, transformation happening, and a fragile implementation. ... It is okay to say a school is still developing.” Hans-Joachim Mattke, formerly a student and then a high school teacher at the original Waldorf school in Stuttgart, observed: “It often takes years of patient and hard work (in Germany usually 3–7 years) until an idea becomes a reality and a new school opens its doors.” (1994, 6) Charter schools have been attempting to do much of this foundational work even as they operate, learning and developing over time as they respond to the demands and needs of their communities. Several participants wished for space, warmth, protection, and support from the Waldorf community while they shepherded this growth.

As another aspect of development, both Oberman (2008) and Sagarin (2011) have characterized the overall development of Waldorf education in North America as occurring in generations. Both authors identify a new generation that commenced in the early 1990s, a new phase characterized by rapid growth, greater public exposure, and movement into the sphere of public education. Greater visibility brought challenges from various quarters. Sagarin depicts the current phase as “The Social Missionaries,” stating that this fourth generation “demonstrates an attempt to recover what might be called Steiner’s ‘social mission’ for Waldorf education.” (2011, p.7) This concept was central to the concerns and experience of all ten of the study participants as they made sense of their experience and their ideals. They firmly believe that we are indeed in a new phase, one that will continue to develop as Waldorf education attempts to respond to the needs of the 21st century.

The study has also raised the topic of the impact of human generations. In both independent and public settings, participants found a difference in the willingness among the younger generation of teachers to give the time traditionally expected for study, meetings, and

events. The pattern of distributed leadership that is a hallmark of self-administration—and generally the province of the independent schools—requires a high level of commitment to the school. Participants repeatedly mentioned that this has become an issue. They noted that the “director-led” format of the charter schools seemed more easily suited to the needs of this new generation. They acknowledged a downside to this form of governance—a lessening of collegial relations and, potentially, a lack of support for the inner work that is so essential to Waldorf education—but praised its clarity and the fact that it made it easier for the teacher to simply teach.

The Essential Role of Teacher Training and Support

As one participant concluded, whether the setting is public or independent, often the most important thing is “who is standing in front of the kids.” It is critical that teachers are adequately trained in a way that allows them to understand the spiritual basis of Waldorf education and to freely choose whether this is their path. The growth of charter schools presents a new set of questions to our institutions of teacher education. Do we adjust training to allow for considerations of the unique needs of the public setting? How do we work with already credentialed, experienced teachers who wish to become Waldorf educators? As the work in the public sector grows, are there possibilities of collaboration with “mainstream” teacher training institutions that would better prepare teachers and increase the

In both settings, participants found a difference in the willingness among the younger generation of teachers to give the time traditionally expected for study, meetings, and events.

The growth of charter schools presents a new set of questions to our institutions of teacher education. Do we adjust training to allow for considerations of the unique needs of the public setting?

interest in and profile of Waldorf education? Do we simply offer one path to Waldorf training that any individual can enter, with the choice of setting for practice left to the individual? Do we fully inform students of their options?

One participant noted that when she undertook her training, charters were never presented as a viable option; they were “underground.” If they were mentioned at all, it was only to denigrate them. Another suggested that, without providing or insisting on adequate training, we have created a moral problem. She recalled earlier years in which

teachers with as little as a one-week course for preparation were often placed in charters intended to be inspired by Waldorf education. Now, she believes, training in California is much more thorough, and she has become very supportive of the work of charters. However, other participants suggested that under-preparation remains an issue.

With two exceptions, this study’s group of teachers held both conventional California teaching credentials and Waldorf certification.

Although the requirement for dual qualification had been demanding, several saw its value. One referred to a body of knowledge that was not always available to colleagues who had earned Waldorf certification alone: “How you teach, manage a classroom, assess, teach reading.” Another, using the teaching of reading as an example, described the “Waldorf tendency to reinvent the

wheel,” with many teachers feeling uncertain of how to proceed. She appreciated having an approach that incorporated both a Waldorf

perspective of the developing human being and practices from modern research. She reflected that, based on this, “the public school teachers have the best of both worlds.”

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND FURTHER RESEARCH

How might we bring “having the best of both worlds” into a fuller reality? The teachers in this study have thought long and hard about the challenges and opportunities of both independent and charter settings and the difficulties of bringing them together. Yet their overwhelming hope is that we can find a way to do just that. The current study is far from the first to address Waldorf’s growing visibility and the issues and questions that have resulted from entering the sphere of public education; many of us are struggling to understand what this means, what we need to learn, where we need to practice vigilance, and how we may grow as a result. My participants told their individual stories—inevitably a subjective process, yet providing a unique window into the issue, delivered by those “on the ground.” These teachers, and many others like them, are Sagarin’s “social missionaries,” concerned with a “central attempt to bring Waldorf education to students who are not served by independent schools.” (2011, 12) They are adamant that Waldorf is “out of the bag” of the independent school movement and that the charter schools are here to stay. The growth of membership in the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education supports their conclusion.

Several points may help to guide further discussion and research. They are listed for ease of reference and in hopes that dialogue and discovery will continue.

1. It is apparent that there are many “degrees” of Waldorf; because of this, a fully developed charter school may be able to offer more of what we consider to be “Waldorf

education” than a struggling or young independent school. The age of a school—or of a school movement—has a significant impact on its resources.

2. It seems important that we come to agreement on the essentials of “Waldorf” and work together to protect and strengthen them, wherever they manifest. Not to do so may allow a dilution over time that could ultimately result in the loss of Waldorf education’s unique gifts—the motivation for AWSNA’s work to protect the “brand.” Study participants believe that protection coming from a warm, interested, and collaborative relationship will be most effective.

3. Adequate preparation and support of teachers is essential in strengthening and protecting Waldorf education. This may present new demands on how we prepare our teachers. Again, we are confronted with what is essential and non-essential. Are there, or should there be, fundamental differences in preparation for the two different school settings?

4. Although charters have extended the reach of Waldorf education to a much wider group of children, to date our attempts to meet the truly underserved have met with limited success. As part of our work, and in accord with our ideals, it seems crucial that we more fully understand why.

5. Both school streams are concerned with sustainability. Charter schools, by increasing the profile of Waldorf education, have attracted wider public interest, with the potential of an increase in the number of students and those interested in becoming Waldorf teachers. Could this heightened interest have impact on the significant sustainability concerns of independent schools and ease the current cycle of rising tuitions and shrinking access?

6. Charters are creating a larger pool of children for shared activities—a trend evident

Their overwhelming hope is that we can find a way to bring both independent and charter schools together.

in Northern California—including combined concerts, dances, Greek and Medieval Games, and keynote speakers or workshops. In some instances, these shared activities extend to evaluation and mentoring, as experienced teachers offer reciprocal services across schools.

7. A larger spectrum of schools also creates the possibility of a new level of research, potentially addressing a deficit marked by several authors. Pappano (2011) noted: “There is currently little independent research on Waldorf outcomes.” Current research findings are often limited by the historically select nature of our school populations. Growth in the public sector offers a wider range of students and the possibility for a more rigorous test of our pedagogy, as sought by at least one participant.

8. Requirements for student testing in the charter schools may force a different level of discussion of appropriate methods of assessment, accountability, and standards. Can we offer an alternative model that ensures accountability while honoring the needs of child development?

9. As the number of charters inspired by Waldorf education expands, their voice on behalf of the rights of children will grow louder. If a mood of brotherhood prevails, we can imagine joining together to be heard in the interests of all children.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

I began this study out of a desire to gain a new perspective on a debate that has been active in Waldorf education for a number of years. As the Waldorf-inspired charter movement exploded in Northern California and began to ripple across the country, I heard multiple opinions on its rightness, validity, impact, and threat—or benefit—to our collective work. I witnessed heated arguments and strongly-held points of view. I watched as the existence of several independent schools became less certain. I received reports of the

AWSNA leadership’s attempt to protect the unique character of Waldorf education. I listened as the Alliance explored questions of what it means to be a public school inspired by Waldorf education. Having experienced the very human nature of this debate, I chose to investigate it through the perspectives of practicing teachers, using the medium of story and biography—essential tools in our pedagogy. The resulting picture has been built through the words of ten teachers, quoted directly as often as possible. I trust that their words have been as illuminating for readers as they have been for me.

It has been an interesting experience to submit this research in two separate installments over several months. This research is a snapshot in time and the gap has illustrated how mobile the charter/independent situation is. In the months since I completed the study and reported the first part of its findings, two of the ten teachers have changed schools, moving from independent to charter and further demonstrating the active, “chessboard” nature of this field. Negotiations between AWSNA and the Alliance regarding use of terms, including the name “Waldorf,” have progressed in a mood of common concern and interest. The charter schools have begun to grapple with interpretation of the federally-mandated Common Core Standards and their implications for student achievement and progress.

Research addresses and, one hopes, answers questions, but in doing so, it usually manages to raise new ones. This study was no exception, as the points listed above illustrate. I concur with the participants: charter schools inspired by Waldorf education are here to stay, and there is much we can learn from their development. I hope to remain an active part of this learning process, and I extend my sincere thanks to the ten teachers who so generously and thoughtfully shared their stories.

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5. In the following areas, what differences have you experienced between the two settings?
 - a. Students
 - b. School structure and support
 - c. Collegial work
 - d. Your personal or inner work
 6. Does the workload vary between the two settings? If so, how? Are there unique stressors?
 7. Did you experience any differences in how you work with the students or in your relationships with students and parents?
 8. Reflecting on your own experience as a parent, did your child(ren) receive both public and independent education? Did they receive any of their education in a charter or Waldorf-inspired school? What led to your decisions about your child's education? How did these decisions influence your choice of teaching setting?
 9. From your perspective, what are the essential differences between an independent Waldorf school and a Waldorf methods school?
 10. Describe the "intangibles" of the two settings.
 11. What would you like to see in the future of the public/independent debate?
 12. Please add any additional reflections or thoughts.

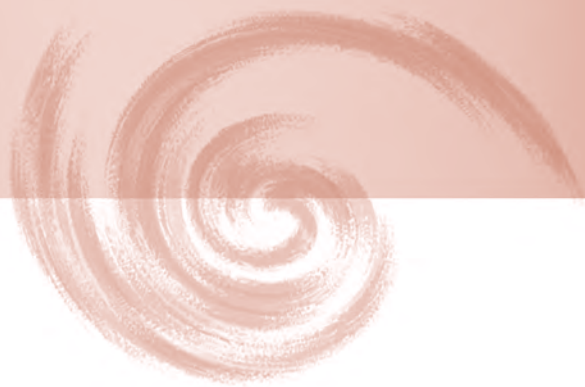
Appendix: Interview Questions

1. Background (profile): general education and teacher training. Why did you become a teacher?
2. Your path to Waldorf education—how did you discover it; what was your early introduction?
3. Training in Waldorf education: what, where, and when?
4. What caused you to switch from a public to an independent school or vice versa?

Liz Beaven, Dean of Academic Development at Rudolf Steiner College, has over twenty-five years' experience in Waldorf education as a class teacher, school administrator, and teacher educator. She has worked actively with questions of public and independent education for over ten years. The research reported in this article was conducted during a recent sabbatical period and reflects one of her major interests: the spread and form of Waldorf education in the modern world.

Taking the Pulse of Waldorf Early Childhood Education

Holly Koteen-Soulé



In August of 2013 representatives of the Waldorf early childhood movement in North America gathered in Spring Valley, NY, to look at the early childhood work on this continent. The participants included regional representatives of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN), teacher trainers, WECAN board members, and members of various WECAN task forces.

On the first day we focused on the children; then, on the second, our work with parents and colleagues; finally, on the third day, the work of WECAN and the movement as a whole. We parted with a renewed appreciation for the spiritual richness of the work with the young child, a fuller sense of the challenges to family life in these times, and ever bolder imaginations with which to meet the future of Waldorf early childhood education.

Although the accomplishments of the last decade remained in the background of our conversations, they are significant and include:

- A greater awareness among Waldorf parents and the culture as a whole of the particular needs of the young child and the importance of the first seven years as a foundation for later academic learning and social skills,

- The proliferation of programs for children younger than four years of age and the creation of parent/child programs to help new parents understand their young child's needs and to support the schools in introducing Waldorf education to prospective families,

- The recognition by early childhood educators of the need to understand, observe, assess, and learn how to work with the developmental challenges of young children

that appear to be the result of our modern lifestyles, and

- Increased professionalism of Waldorf early childhood educators and greater clarity about training needs and expectations for teachers and caregivers.

Home, family, and lifestyles changes have a big impact on our work, and many current challenges are related to these cultural changes.

- Changing definitions of the terms “family” and “home” require educators to meet diverse and individual pathways of incarnation with acceptance, empathy, and understanding.

- The task of Waldorf early childhood education has shifted from providing cultural enrichment to being a haven for the development of the foundational senses of touch, life, movement, and balance.

- There is an increasing need for early childhood educators to develop capacities for observation, without losing the whole child in the midst of measurable particulars, and to deepen the spiritual work in assessment rather than focusing only on the outer aspects.

- Increasingly, parents hunger for information and support, and we need to find new ways to partner with parents of young children.

- Parents of two-year-olds want to enroll their children, and, as a result, early childhood teachers are being asked to create programs for two-year-olds. Attempts to do so have made it clear that we need to better understand the particular needs of the child under three years of age and to create more home-like settings that can properly serve the child who still lives

within the sheath of the family and has not yet said “I.”

There are several new areas of research in early childhood being taken up by groups and individuals in the current year. These include:

- Providing resources for teachers of the very young child,
- Finding ways to support the movement and sensory development needs of children in kindergarten,
- Cultivating a deeper understanding and tools for the transition between kindergarten and first grade,
- Building healthy partnerships with parents, and
- Discovering bridges between mainstream research on child development and an anthroposophical understanding of pedagogical practices in early childhood.

Results of these projects and the work of individual classroom teachers will allow us to meet the current challenges with greater success.

No matter how the work changes or in what forms it will be found in the future, we want to reiterate that our essential purpose—which is to create life-filled environments where young children are free to develop in their own time and manner—will not be compromised, even as the world becomes increasingly complex and materialistic. Time, space, and simplicity are inscribed on the banner that we see flying above our work.

In sharing our stories, we are discovering that our work is more and more about relationships. Children today come to us with a greater sense of their individuality and a greater need to be acknowledged individually than used to be the case. Our work with parents and colleagues is becoming even more critical in providing the social atmosphere that is needed, not only for the children, but also for our own development and that of

our institutions. We can see a growing need for more collaboration within our faculties, communities, and institutions—studying together, sharing research, and supporting one another’s development of the capacity to sense and respond to what is being asked of us.

Holly Koteen-Soulé worked as a Waldorf early childhood teacher for 24 years. She was a co-founder of Sound Circle Center for Arts and Anthroposophy in Seattle, WA, and has served as its director of Early Childhood teacher education since 2000. She currently directs a SCC satellite program in Spokane, serves on the Board of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN), and is a member of the Pedagogical Section Council. She offers workshops, mentoring, and evaluation services in teaching training institutes and schools.

Book Review

Under the Stars by Renate Long-Breipohl

Jill Taplin

This is a very thoughtful series of essays that together provide a stimulating journey through the phenomena of early childhood development. The introduction includes an interesting historical overview of how Steiner Waldorf early childhood work developed purely through oral and experiential tutoring for twenty-five years before any publications on the subject or formal training courses appeared. At that point some of Rudolf Steiner's own words on the child under age seven were compiled for use by the growing number of kindergarten teachers, and guides to the practicalities of kindergarten work slowly began to appear. More recently there have been deeper works going beyond the practical, alongside the development of more formal trainings. This book is an important addition at a time when the tremendous international growth of Steiner/Waldorf early childhood education requires research and consideration of the quality offered here.

The author is not only an experienced early childhood practitioner and international adult educator, she is also an admirable researcher and thinker. The essay format has allowed her to develop and weave her thoughts across the principal themes of Waldorf early childhood education. Her method is to look in depth at the picture of child development behind each theme, describe what Rudolf Steiner had to say about it and how his ideas have been developed, and compare ideas and practices to the results of modern research. Bringing these together has been a considerable project and provides a valuable synthesis for anyone working in this area. Long-Breipohl is not afraid to explain the difference between spiritual scientific and natural scientific research, and she has endeavoured to bring

these together in this book. She presents "intuitional cognition" as her method of investigation and as the unique contribution of Rudolf Steiner, pointing out that by this method, an investigation is never complete.

The author's statement of purpose and aims for this book are an example of her clarity and of the importance of her themes not just for early childhood educators:

This book is written by an early childhood educator for teacher trainers, educators, and parents who are interested in the deeper aspects of Steiner early childhood education. It originated as much from my own experiences with young children as from Steiner's insights. It is about incarnation, the influences of spiritual forces in the child's development, and the appropriate steps the educator can take to support this process, be it through forming relationships, supporting the development of movement and thinking in the child, play, child observation, or working on one's inner development. In order to progress further in improving and refining early education, and thus contribute to the future evolution of humanity, a deeper understanding of human existence is needed. Studying the incarnation process of the child is a good way to gain a picture of the underlying spiritual reality of human existence.

Essay by essay, Long-Breipohl applies herself to this task with a thoroughness that can be challenging. But the topics of the first three essays—the life forces, thinking, and the will—are long going to be at the boundaries of intellectual comprehension, and one can benefit from the work of others without gaining

a complete understanding oneself. I particularly value the way the distinctive nature of the child under the age of three is discussed, and also the detailed exploration of the nature of the child in that transitional age between five and seven. I find it wonderful that towards the end of each essay, when it comes down to the practical outcomes that will best support the child, the author returns again and again to the twin powers of the self-education of the adult and the natural strength of imitation in the young child.

Attachment to the prime care giver is now acknowledged as deeply formative for the child under three years old, and the fourth essay, "Relationships in Early Childhood," looks at this theme in the light of Steiner's picture of human development. Long-Breipohl suggests that too early an awakening of the "I" is the danger when the young child and mother figure are separated too soon. The question of how we support children and parents who have already been pressured into a too-early separation, by economic, social, or other factors, is one that we have to explore further within Waldorf early childhood education.

The next essay also tackles a modern idea, that of the Indigo or Star Child. Has there been an evolutionary shift that has brought a new kind of child into the world now? Or is it just environmental pressures that have caused children to bring so many new challenges to those who try to care for and educate them? Whatever the answer, we are called on to find new responses to these new challenges and to recreate education so that it fits children, rather than trying to force children to fit traditional educational forms. Again, Long-Breipohl shows us how Steiner education, with its emphasis on relationships and its awareness that premature intellectual awakening is harmful to young children, has much to offer to this task.

In the essay on movement (Chapter 6), Rudolf Steiner's profound indications from a hundred years ago are brought together

with the recent and contrasting work of Sally Goddard Blythe and Wilma Ellersiek. Long-Breipohl explores the interweaving nature in the development of physical and soul movement alongside the much bigger picture of the spiritual evolution of humanity.

The self-initiated play of the young child is a subject that this author has written about before, and the essay on this theme is full of rich analysis. The statement that "becoming a play facilitator is a path of learning" provides a deep source of further study. Long-Breipohl presents her "six dimensions of play" and compares them with analyses by others, and the chapter ends with the extremely practical "five indications for play facilitators" that make for a meaty pedagogical discussion in a group of early childhood colleagues or in a kindergarten parent evening.

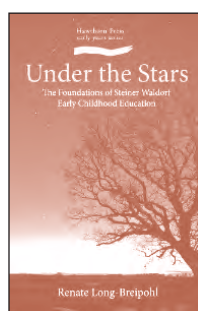
Essay eight looks at an art experience for the young child and its developmental significance. I enjoyed the exploration of the importance of practitioner's aesthetic sense and artistic practice. The quality of simplicity is emphasized as the best foundation for the young child's imitation, and this is sometimes a lesson that students and new practitioners struggle to learn. The essay ends with the thought that the artistic activities we provide in the kindergarten form the bridge from play to formal learning.

The short essay on child observation, or what one might call the "search for the hidden child," focuses our attention on learning to read the code of the messages that the child gives us or "letting the child speak." We are reminded that intellectual and sensory faculties alone will never be enough and that, again, the core is self-education. In this case it is the inner schooling that allows us not to jump to conclusions but to work through the qualities of wonder, reverence, and surrender in order to make space for the phenomena to speak for themselves.

In the final essay, Long-Breipohl shares with her readers a personal exploration of

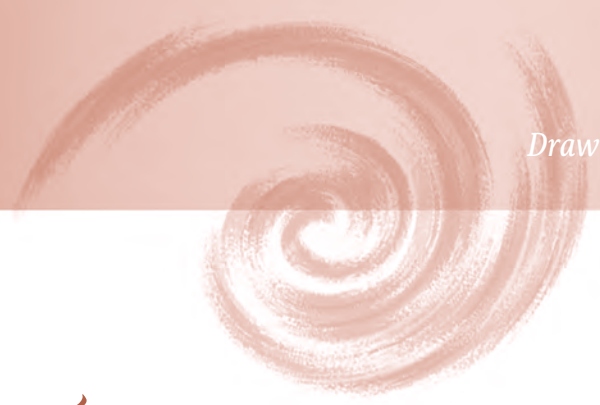
eight of the twelve virtues indicated by Rudolf Steiner through their connection with the circle of the zodiac. These are discussed in relation to both the child and the adult which, I believe, is an original contribution of the author's on this subject. The essential truth is found again, as it was so often in these essays: it is through our own self-development that we might come both to understand the incarnation of the child more deeply and to bring this knowledge into our work through the education of our own will so that the child can freely imitate this inner gesture.

These essays combine to provide a source of much future study for those already engaged in the practice of working with young children in Steiner/Waldorf settings. This is not an introductory book, but one written for those with the experience to acknowledge that there is so much more to be known. It benefits from fine research, including access to German texts not available yet in English. A good index and thorough referencing make this book valuable for those engaged in academic study in this area.



*Under the Stars: Foundations
of Steiner Early Childhood
Education: Collected Essays*
by Renate Long-Breipohl

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Book Review

Drawing with Hand, Head, and Heart by Van James

Eugene Schwartz

Teachers should love art so much that they do not want this experience to be lost to children,” Rudolf Steiner said in 1923, “When children engage in [art] they feel their inner nature uplifted to the ideal plane. They acquire a second level of humanity alongside the first.”

Those words are among the scores of inspiring quotes by Steiner and others to be found in the remarkable new book by Van James, *Drawing with Hand, Head, and Heart: A Natural Approach to Learning the Art of Drawing*. James has created a volume that (as its title would suggest) brings a wealth of technical advice concerning the Hand’s role in drawing, clarity and common sense about the “why” of drawing that speaks to the Head, and an abundance of work by children, student teachers, and accomplished artists that touches the “emotional intelligence” of the Heart.

In compiling such a book, James has set himself a daunting task. In only 300 pages, he has actually created two books: the first a drawing manual specifically for teachers, the second an instruction manual for anyone learning to draw.

It is a testament to James’ organizational skills that the volume never feels like two manuals cobbled together. The sections complement one another, and, in fact, the reader can begin with either Part One or Part Two; James’ creative cross-referencing will invariably draw you to want to read the other section as well.

Part One is at once an exemplary collection of Waldorf student art from the N/K through Grade Twelve, a clear description of the Waldorf curriculum in those grades, a concise overview of the child’s psychological and physiological development from birth to age eighteen, and a guide to teaching children to

draw. From the outset, James indicates that he will be showing student work that is mostly “middle range,” an approach that is meant to be un-intimidating for teachers and children alike. (Almost all of the work is well done, and all of it is impressive.) It would be easy enough to present these four streams in a formulaic manner, but James moves with grace from the scholarly to the artistic, from psychology to pedagogy.

Before we are drawn into the specifics of the grades, however, James takes up work with the young child in a chapter entitled “Growing the Picture,” which I would especially urge class teachers to read; indeed, this section alone is worth the price of the book. Under headings such as “Straight and Curved Lines,” “Blackboard Drawing,” “Visual Intelligence,” and so forth, James goes to the heart of any number of issues that have, over the years, grown stale, dogmatic, steeped in controversy, or ignored. Among the questions that James approaches in his straightforward way are: How often should new blackboard drawings appear? Block or stick crayons for younger children? What about black crayons? When are pencils appropriate? What about “slant drawing”? Should children draw only with the right hand?

James cites the many points of view that have attached themselves to all of these issues, acknowledges their virtues, and usually concludes with a surprising quote from Rudolf Steiner that is probably the opposite of what generations of mentors may have claimed that “Steiner said.”

Countless blackboard drawings by Van James himself lay out the simple and systematic “growing” of the picture that characterizes his approach. These, in turn,

lead to examples of teacher-drawn blackboard art and student work that emphasize the variety of children's responses elicited by the teacher's model. This threefold interplay of 1) the steps the teacher can take to create a drawing, 2) the steps taken by the children as they imitate their teacher, and 3) the actual results on the blackboard and main lesson book page makes James' book exceptionally helpful for the novice Waldorf instructor.

With each succeeding grade, James' text ranges more broadly over and deeply into the growing complexity of the subject matter. His discussion of Grade Four, for instance, leads James to an insightful and practical digression on geography and map-making that brings to light the artistic and cognitive value of this sometime neglected skill. As he leads the reader through the challenges of puberty in Grade Six, James takes the time and space necessary to reveal the important role played by geometry as it melds drawing and mathematics, balancing the subjective and objective forces of the twelve-year-old. "Euclid alone has looked on beauty. ..."

James is so at home in the Waldorf curriculum that he rarely touches upon any subject in any single grade without being able to cross-reference its recurrence or metamorphosis in a number of other grades. Like all Waldorf practitioners, James is emphatic about the primacy of process over product, but this is that rare book whose narrative flow and "theme and variations" structure actually allow the reader to experience a process-driven approach to education.

In "A New Perspective," James' survey of the Waldorf High School, many of the pages overflow with the vitality and complexity of high schoolers' work. Now we see how the deceptively simple exercises of "growing the picture" and the austere structures of form drawing have laid a foundation for self-expression and creativity, on the one hand, and dispassionate observation and objectivity,

on the other. In these sections on the high school, James' style changes as we are led into stimulating discussions of, among other things, color theory, the principle of metamorphosis, and the dynamic relationship of the ever-changing currents of modern art to the soul and spirit of the adolescent. Throughout this section we can sense that we are in the presence of a veteran teacher who leads his high school students through the example of his own openness to the world and his artistic sensibility.

In the second "book" within this book, "Drawing for Students/Artists of All Ages," James once again works with all of the elements he approached in Part One, e.g., "growing the picture," form drawing, portraiture, color and line, and so forth. In Part One, these elements served as vehicles through which the teacher could begin to awaken the artistic capacities of the child. In Part Two, James reveals that these elements are double-edged swords, capable of awakening very different capacities in the adult. An anecdote shared by the author illuminates the wisdom of this approach: James describes a portraiture workshop he once gave at an international arts conference:

...[A] German architect taking part in the class grew impatient with having to do the childlike drawing exercises that we started with on the first day. He complained that he was an adult professional and wanted to draw like an adult professional and so he dropped out of the class.

At the week's end, the architect is astonished at the quality of "advanced portraits" created by workshop participants. James comments:

...It is just this process of going through the developmental stages of portraiture that can provide the background and resources for entering into and unfolding the ability to capture something of the essence of the adult professional portrait. (p.265)

James' phrase—"this process of going through the developmental stages"—could serve as the motto of his book. The child goes forward through these stages; the adult must swim in a different current of time and replay the stages in reverse. In this respect, Part One concerns itself with artistic activity as a means of helping the child to incarnate, while Part Two presents the same activity as a path through which the adult can healthily exarnate, i.e., spiritualize her relationship to the sensory world. The effect of this book, in its entirety, is to help us breathe.

Anyone familiar with Van James' earlier books, particularly *The Secret Language of Form* and *Spirit and Art*, will know that he draws not only on a deep store of anthroposophical knowledge, but also on the insights gleaned from a wide range of hierophants, artists, philosophers, and contemporary scholars. The same eclectic spirit pervades this book, and it is one of its most salient features. This book appears at a time in which many anthroposophical writers are urging that we "de-historicize" Rudolf Steiner and stress the unique spiritual inspiration of his ideas, eliding their connection to the times in which he lived and taught. Although Steiner quotes play a central role in this book, as befits a volume so interwoven with Waldorf education, James' scholarly integrity necessitates an approach that is heterogeneous rather than hagiographic. The lapidary quotes that begin chapters and embellish sidebars are drawn from a rich store of perennial, and not exclusively anthroposophical, wisdom. Rarely is Rudolf Steiner quoted in a vacuum; the artists and psychologists, scholars and teachers whose words appear alongside those of Steiner allow for healthy contextualization and conversation—qualities that in no way diminish Steiner's insights but rather serve to strengthen our convictions about Waldorf methodology. Van James' ease in hosting this meeting of minds and hearts belies the courage it takes to bring anthroposophy

to the world—and to bring the world to anthroposophy.



Drawing with Hand, Head, and Heart: A Natural Approach to Learning the Art of Drawing by Van James

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Full color, illustrated

Rudolf Steiner Press, April 2013

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Report on the Online Waldorf Library

Marianne Alsop

This has been a very busy time for the Online Waldorf Library (OWL), with the addition of a new selection of eBooks, plays for class teachers, catalog of books currently in print, and free-to-download articles on Waldorf education.

With the help of an ongoing grant from the Waldorf Curriculum Fund, the OWL has created a number of titles by Jakob Streit as eBooks, with a few more in the works. Recently added eBooks also include the classic *Math Lessons for the Elementary Grades* by Dorothy Harrer as well as *First Steps in Proven Geometry* and *Math Lessons for the Sixth Grade*, both by Ernst Schuberth.

Douglas Gabriel, a longtime Waldorf teacher, has graciously contributed his book, *The Spirit of Childhood: The Waldorf Curriculum Grade One*, as an eBook as well as articles on Emerson, Novalis, and Rudolf Steiner's thoughts on history. Peter Batzell, a class teacher from the Merriconeag Waldorf School, has contributed his original play, "Waiting for Isaac," and with gratitude the OWL received permission to post the play "Momo and the Thieves of Time" by the late William Ward from his wife Andree Ward. All of these resources can be found on the OWL as pdf files.

Several site visitors have inquired about downloading eBooks and articles to Nook, Kindle, or iPad for reading. At this time it is easiest to first download the OWL article or eBook to your computer, and then copy it over to the eReader. We anticipate being able to offer eReader formats other than pdf in the coming year, although we will always have pdf files which need only a free download of Adobe Reader.

The Online Waldorf Library and the Research Institute continue to focus on

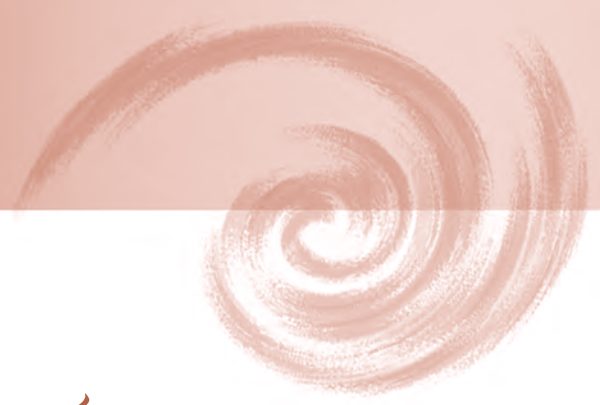
translating eBooks into Spanish. Currently in the works are two titles: *Handwork and Handicraft: Indications by Rudolf Steiner* by Hedwig Hauck and *Developing the Observing Eye: Teacher Observation and Assessment in Early Childhood Education* by Cynthia Murphy-Lang.

In addition to eBooks and articles, the OWL lists (by grade and subject) currently available books in English including a direct link to the bookseller. Recent additions are the many excellent curriculum resources from the Steiner Schools Fellowship in the UK, now offered through Floris Books (UK). These include: *Educating Through Arts and Crafts* by Michael Martin and *Towards Creative Teaching* edited by Martyn Rawson and Kevin Avison, both available from Waldorf Publications; and *Rudolf Steiner's Curriculum for Waldorf Schools* by E.A. Karl Stockmeyer, available from SteinerBooks.

Feel free to offer comments, suggestions, or questions regarding the OWL.

Visit the
Online Waldorf Library
at

www.waldorflibrary.org



About the Research Institute for Waldorf Education

The Research Institute for Waldorf Education (RIWE), founded in 1996 in order to deepen and enhance the quality of Waldorf education, engages in sustained dialogue with the wider educational-cultural community and supports research to serve a wide range of educators in their work with children and adolescents.

The Research Institute supports projects dealing with essential contemporary educational issues such as attention-related disorders, trends in adolescent development and innovations in the high school curriculum, learning expectations and assessment, computers in education, the role of art in education, and new ways to identify and address different learning styles.

As a sponsor of colloquia and conferences, the Research Institute brings together educators, psychologists, doctors, and social scientists for discussions on current issues related to education. We publish the *Research Bulletin* twice a year and prepare and distribute educational resources, including a growing collection of eBooks and articles to help teachers in all aspects of their work. These are all available without charge at the Online Waldorf Library (OWL), which is overseen by the Research Institute.

As an initiative working on behalf of the Waldorf movement, the Research Institute receives support and guidance from the Pedagogical Section of the School of Spiritual Science and financial support through the Waldorf Schools Fund, the Waldorf Curriculum Fund, and the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), of which the Research Institute is a daughter organization. The Research Institute is a tax-exempt organization and accepts contributions through its annual giving campaign and special appeals.

Summary of Activities Supported by the Research Institute

PROJECTS

The following projects are in process or have been undertaken by the Research Institute:

- Teaching Sensible Science Seminars
- Sexual Education Grades 4–12
- Survey of Waldorf Seniors
- Waldorf High School Research Projects

BOOKS and PAPERS

The following books and papers were printed by the Research Institute and are available from Waldorf Publications:

- *Topics in Mathematics for the 11th Grade*
- *Tapping the Wellsprings of Health in Adolescence*
- *New Approaches to Teaching Grammar*
- *Developmental Signatures: Core Values and Practices in Waldorf Education for Children Ages 3–9*
- *Education, Teaching, and Practical Life* by Rudolf Steiner
- *Survey of Waldorf Graduates, Phase I*
- *Survey of Waldorf Graduates, Phase II*
- *Survey of Waldorf Graduates, Phase III*
- *Effects of High-Stakes Testing on Children*

Subject-Specific Colloquia, 2000–2010:

- Chemistry
- Mathematics
- Computer and Information Technology
- English
- United States History
- Life Science and Environmental Studies
- World History – Symptomatology
- Physics

Proceedings for all of the above are available from Waldorf Publications at: www.whywaldorfworks.org.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Online Waldorf Library, a website of resources for Waldorf education

Themes in Waldorf Education, compilation of Rudolf Steiner's indications on teaching language arts and mathematics

Education, Teaching, and Practical Life by Rudolf Steiner

Developmental Signatures – new source book

Earth Science by Hans-Ulrich Schmutz

Over 200 articles placed on OWL from Steiner Library
150+ eBooks created and placed Online for teacher reference

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