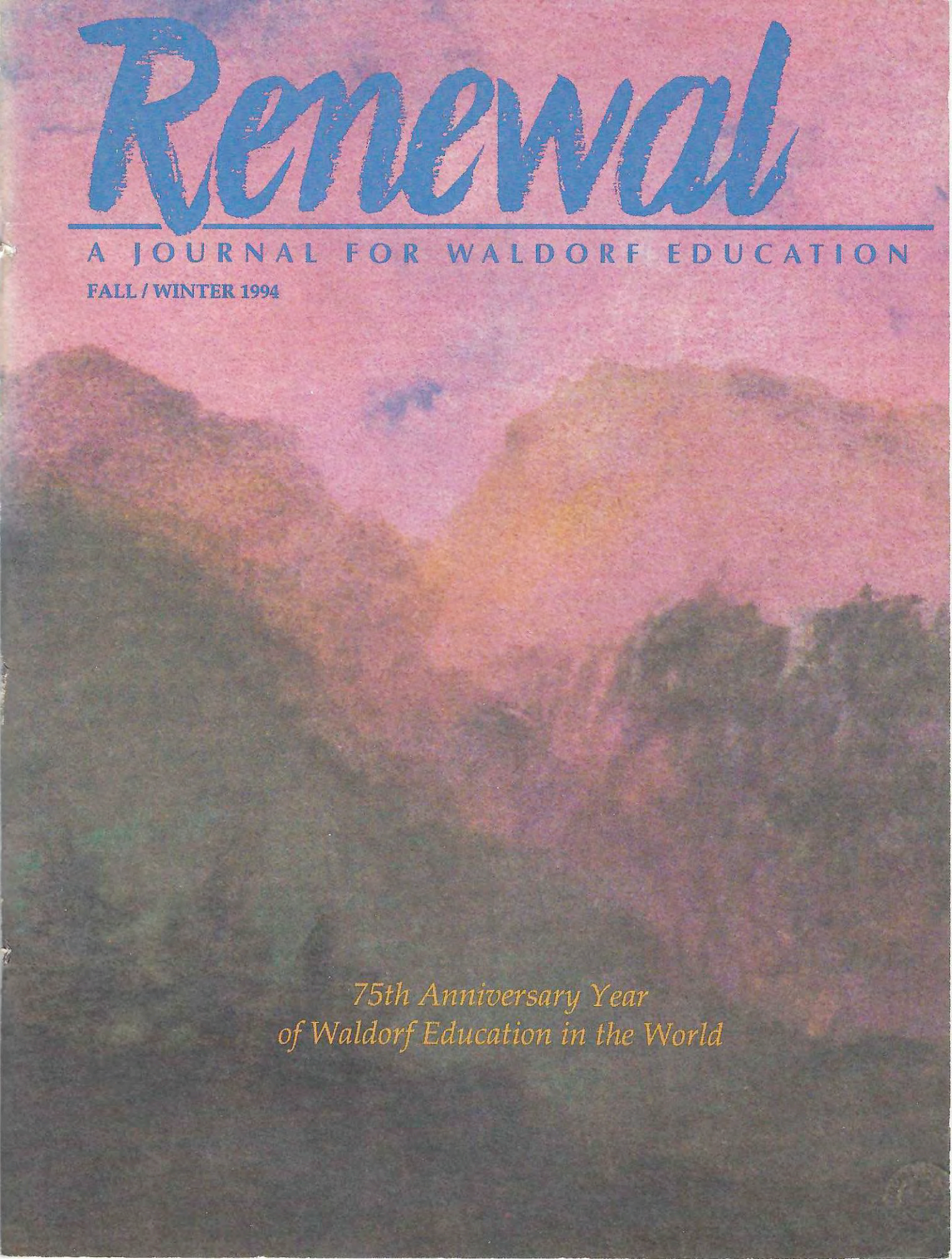


Renewal



A JOURNAL FOR WALDORF EDUCATION

FALL / WINTER 1994

*75th Anniversary Year
of Waldorf Education in the World*

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Renewal

A JOURNAL FOR WALDORF EDUCATION

Dear Readers,

Seventy-five years ago the first Waldorf school was founded in Stuttgart, Germany. This sixth issue of *Renewal* marks that event in several ways. It contains a long and interesting article by Henry Barnes on the social and historical conditions surrounding the establishment of the first school. It contains a letter from AWSNA chairman, David Alsop, recounting his experience at the anniversary celebration in Stuttgart. And it features a striking eight-page section on an exhibition of art by Waldorf students which appeared at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City. This is *Renewal's* first use of color photographs in its inside pages.

But this *Renewal* ventures into the controversial as well as the historical and celebratory. In her article on the Milwaukee Urban Waldorf Program, Ann Pratt writes of the first three years of an apparently successful experiment in which Waldorf education is taking place within a public school system. In the piece immediately following, Gary Lamb argues that the Waldorf movement should avoid just such involvement with the state, and that it should remain a cultural force, free and independent of the political and governmental sphere!

This issue of *Renewal* also broaches the controversial topic of the role of religion in Waldorf education. Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf education, expressed a spiritual and in a broad sense a "religious" world view. For Steiner, the invisible, spiritual world is as real and important as the physical world. The human being is a creature of spirit, as well as of soul and body, and has its origin and destiny in the spiritual world. It is on this view of the world and of the human being that Waldorf education is based.

Recently, an article by Dan Dugan and Judy Daar in the journal *Free Inquiry* charged that Waldorf schools are religiously-based, sectarian schools which conceal their true nature. In his piece "Waldorf Schools are Non-Sectarian," Norman Davidson addresses various points made by Dugan and Daar. The role of religion in Waldorf education is a very large and complex topic, though, and in the future we will consider it further.

We hope you will find these and the other articles informative and thought-provoking. Please send us comments and criticisms, and suggestions for future articles. If you have an idea for an article that you would like to write, please let us know. We are looking for pieces that will be of interest and practical use to Waldorf parents, teachers, alumni, and friends, but will speak also to any person interested in quality in education.

Ronald E. Kotzsch, Ph. D.
Editor

News from AWSNA

By David Alsop, Chairman

This year, Waldorf schools all across North America, and indeed around the world, are celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of Waldorf education. Since 1919, the Waldorf school movement has grown from a single school in Stuttgart to over 620 schools worldwide, serving about 150,000 young people.

In September, anniversary festivities were held at the Free Waldorf School Uhlandshöhe (Die Freie Waldorfschule Uhlandshöhe), the original school in Stuttgart. The event consisted of a special faculty meeting, a public program, and an school open house. Attending as Chairman of the Waldorf School Association of North America, I felt honored to be part of this celebration.

In the evening prior to the public festival, past and present teachers of the school and representatives of the world Waldorf movement gathered in the faculty meeting room— an impressive, history-filled room, permanently graced by portraits of the original 1919 faculty. The purpose of the meeting was to take stock of the progress of the Waldorf school movement since 1919, and to hear from five representatives from other parts of the world – from Israel, Sweden, South Africa, Russia and North America. Each of us described the development of the Waldorf school movement in our own area, emphasizing the challenges we face. A common theme was the rapid growth of interest in Waldorf education.

The next morning, the public program, attended by 2,500 people, was held at the Stuttgart "Liederhalle," the largest concert hall in Stuttgart. In the lobby was an UNESCO exhibit depicting the educational and social impact of Waldorf education. The Waldorf school orchestra began with a performance of Mendelssohn's *Hebridean Overture*, which set a joyful and celebratory tone for the balance of the event.

Hans-Joachim Mattke, a teacher at the school, then spoke, welcoming all, and noting Waldorf education's important place in the cultural life of Stuttgart. His remarks were met with a hearty round of applause. The people of Stuttgart seem to know and to appreciate that Waldorf education (there are now three schools in the city) has long had a positive influence on the quality of life there. There were other speakers, including a representative from UNESCO; the mayor of Stuttgart; Stefan Leber of the German Waldorf Association; and Dr. Heinz Zimmerman, head of the Pedagogical Section of the Anthroposophical Society in Domach. Each spoke of the impact of the Waldorf school movement – on the local, national, and international level.

The program also included a eurythmy piece performed by students from the Kräherwald Waldorf School, also in Stuttgart. And the event concluded with a performance by the student orchestra and chorus of the Uhlandshöhe school of Chorus No. 14, *Die Himmel Erzählen* ("The Heavens Speak") from Haydn's oratorio *Die Schöpfung* ("The Creation"). There were many smiling faces and warm greetings all around as people left and began to go up to the "open-house" at the school.

A special "Waldorfschule Weltweit 75 Jahre" ("Waldorf Schools Worldwide 75 Years") poster has been produced to advertise the events of the day. It was to be seen on kiosks and postboards all over the city. One of these posters, beautifully framed, now hangs proudly in the AWSNA office!

The Origins of Waldorf Education

Reflections After Seventy-Five Years

By Henry Barnes

We wanted – modestly, but with strong will – to contribute toward the improvement of social conditions. There was little to start with, only courage and will power; few children, no building, no teachers, much work!

With these words, spoken in September 1929 in Stuttgart, Germany, on the tenth anniversary of the founding of the original Waldorf School, Emil Molt, the school's founder, characterized the mood and the impulse with which the school began. Molt continued:

What counts is that we educate whole human beings: beings who not only have dead "head knowledge," but above all have a social feeling for others. The term "school" is a narrow word. It must be grasped in a wide, comprehensive way. A school must become a place where human beings build on themselves, become truly human. (Today) one has given up on taking the full harvest of the educational possibilities in the schools into the social life. The ideal of education which seeks to live in the Waldorf School is: the human being shall himself become the method.

As Molt spoke, the twentieth century hung in the balance. Europe was slowly recovering from the wounds of the First World War. In a few weeks, the stock market crash on Wall Street in New York would trigger economic collapse and instability. The Great Depression, its effects felt

around the world, would give Hitler the second chance he needed, and thus prepare for the rise of National Socialism and the start of World War II. The school which Emil Molt had helped found would soon be marked for destruction by the forces which were then unleashed and, in March 1938, just as Hitler returned triumphant from the annexation of Austria, would be forced to close.

Who was Emil Molt? What moved him to ask Rudolf Steiner to take on the spiritual-pedagogical direction of the school which he hoped to found? Out of what social, historical situation did the impulse for Waldorf education arise?

Emil Molt (1876-1936) was a true son of the Swabian people of southwestern Germany – practical people of deep feeling and strong will. He was, in every sense of the word, a "self-made man." He had worked his way up through the hard school of a practical business apprenticeship in the to-

bacco importing and manufacturing trade to become director of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette company. Under Molt's genial, pioneering, and determined leadership the company had grown and prospered.

While Molt and his wife, Berta, were still in their twenties they heard Rudolf Steiner speak in Stuttgart and were immediately and deeply impressed. In 1906, Molt joined his wife as a

Steiner maintained that the cultural and economic life should be free from control by the political state, and each should be allowed to organize itself according to the intrinsic needs of its respective sphere.

member of the German Section of the Theosophical Society (later to become the Anthroposophical Society), of which Steiner was the General-Secretary. It was perhaps the profoundly human quality of Steiner's teachings, and his absolutely nondogmatic view of Christianity which appealed most strongly to the young man's heart. In all probability, Emil and Berta Molt were among the listeners when, during 1907, Rudolf Steiner spoke in Stuttgart and other places about the light which Spiritual Science can shed on the development of a child and how these insights can become the basis for practical education. And the Molts almost certainly purchased the booklet in which Steiner, at the request of many of his hearers, set down in writing what he had spoken about in numerous lectures at this time.

The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy (Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1965) contains the seed ideas of what we today know as Waldorf education. In this book Steiner describes how the human "life forces" – the forces of soul, of will, of feeling and thought – gradually penetrate the body and are then freed from the organism to become instruments of the human spirit. And he shows how these insights might be applied in educational practice. With this publication Steiner "tested the waters" to see if the time was ripe to translate these ideas, the fruit of years of observation and research, into practical work. No one, at that time, grasped the opportunity. The ripening process evidently still needed the shattering experiences and the suffering of the war which followed before the impulse could awaken as deed.

Seeds of Cultural Renewal

In May 1917, a German diplomat, Otto von Lerchenfeld, deeply troubled by the world situation and desperately seeking ideas which might become the basis for a genuine peace when the World War finally ended, sought out Rudolf Steiner in Berlin. Von Lerchenfeld poured out his frustrations and despair. Steiner listened attentively and invited von Lerchenfeld to return the following day. From this conversation ensued several weeks of work in which Steiner developed the observation that contemporary social life was struggling to free itself from the centralizing power of the unified political, national state, and

was seeking – without this being consciously recognized – to differentiate its functions, as the organs are differentiated in a living body. Otto von Lerchenfeld acted as secretary and with his help Steiner drafted two memoranda setting forth a new understanding of the social order. Steiner maintained that the cultural and economic life should be free from control by the political state, and each should be allowed to organize itself according to the intrinsic needs of its respective sphere. The state should evolve into an organ of social balance whose primary responsibility would be the administration of justice and the protection of the rights of each individual regardless of race, religion, or economic standing. These ideas, describing what came to be known as the "Threefold Social Order," were presented to many leading personalities in Germany and, later, in Austria, often eliciting interest and tentative respect. But the pressures of war and the weight of conventional thinking prevented serious consideration of this new way of seeing social realities. However, in the months after the war's end on November 12, 1918, as people struggled to make sense of the cataclysms that were sweeping away the familiar landmarks of the past, there was a new openness of mind and heart. And the seed cast upon the waters found, when the tide of war receded, here and there patches of fertile ground.

In 1917, the United States entered the war and the German High Command injected Lenin – as a bacillus of revolution – into the body social of Russia. Meanwhile Rudolf Steiner was engaged in two new projects which bore directly and indirectly on the future educational movement.

In November 1917, shortly after Lenin and Trotsky hijacked the Socialist revolution for their own Bolshevik ends, Steiner published *Von Seelenrätseln* ("Of the Riddles of the Soul"). (Parts of this have been translated and appear in Owen Barfield's *The Case for Anthroposophy*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1970.) To the body of this work, which deals primarily with aspects of psychology, Steiner appended eight "Commentary Notes." In the seventh of these, entitled "The Principles of Psychosomatic Physiology," which Steiner says contains the results of thirty years of spiritual-scientific research, he describes the three

autonomous, yet interacting, organic systems within the human being: the nerve-sense system as instrument for perception and thought; the metabolic-limb system as instrument for volition; and the rhythmic system of breathing and blood circulation as instrument for feeling and emotion. In this inconspicuous setting, Rudolf Steiner summarizes three decades of investigation into the total nature of the human being as comprised of soul, spirit and body. And he shows how the supersensible entities of spirit and soul work into, and through, the physical organism.

Stated in this succinct way, these insights are abstractions, but investigated in detail and carried out in practice, they provide the understanding of the human being which makes Waldorf education possible. They also open new approaches in medicine, the social sciences, the arts and in other fields.

Parallel with these endeavors in the realm of thought was Steiner's involvement as architect, sculptor, and painter in the construction of a great building in the village of Dornach in the northwest corner of Switzerland. Begun in the autumn of 1913, this double-domed structure of carved wood had arisen within sound of the great guns of the French and German armies to the north. In 1917, it stood nearly complete on the crest of the Dornach hill. The men and women who worked on the building came from seventeen different nations, and many of these nations were at war with one another. The volunteers worked together, carving, painting, engraving colored glass, mixing colors, preparing surfaces, and doing whatever else needed to be done. The building received the name "Goetheanum" in recognition of the pioneer work of Goethe, path-breaking scientist as well as great poet and dramatist, who had prepared the way for the new disciplines of Spiritual Science in our time.

The first Goetheanum was, in the full sense of the word, a work of art. In it, as in the human being and in the social organism, a "three-foldness" was present, but in sense-perceptible form. Two intersecting domes of unequal size created a powerful polarity, but they were separated, harmonized, and unified by a third space common to both. The building spoke a language



Emil Molt, founder of the first Waldorf school.

similar to that of the human organism. There the nerve-sense organs and thinking are in polar opposition to the limb-metabolic system and willing. The two are separated, harmonized, and unified by the third system, circulation and respiration, which in its rhythmic pulsation is the carrier of feeling.

Steiner, though, would have strongly rejected the assumption that the building "represented" or "symbolized" anything other than itself. His response would have been – I believe – that the human organism and the organic architectural structure are both works of art in which cosmic, creative forces come to expression.

The War Ends: A Moment of Opportunity

After the November 1918 armistice was signed and the fighting stopped, negotiations intending to lead to peace began. In defeated Germany there was confusion and exhaustion, anger and searching, suffering and despair. A few people were alert enough to recognize that Rudolf Steiner's new way of seeing and understanding the human being and human society could become the basis for a genuine peace in Europe. One of these was Emil Molt, already co-owner and director of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory.



The original Waldorf school in Stuttgart in 1938.

On November 9, when revolution broke out in Germany, Molt was in Zurich, Switzerland, on business, and he debated whether to return immediately to Stuttgart or to go to Dornach to seek Rudolf Steiner's advice at this critical moment of European destiny. Molt took the latter course, arriving at the Goetheanum in time to hear Steiner lecture on the underlying issues of the day.

Molt later wrote that in the course of the lecture, Steiner said "more or less":

If someone were to ask me what he should do, I could only advise him to be open, and to listen to what the situation demands of him. For no one of us can know when he or she may be called upon – whether in a smaller or a wider context – to consult and advise, to exert some influence, and to this end he or she will need an open, unprejudiced knowledge about events.

(Emil Molt and the Beginnings of the Waldorf Movement Floris Books, Edinburgh, 1991. p. 121. All subsequent quotations are from this book unless otherwise noted.)

For Molt, this was the answer he needed and he returned to Stuttgart, open for what life might ask of him. He was convinced though that if he hoped to make a contribution toward lasting peace and social health, Steiner's view of the need to separate the social life into its three spheres provided a practical direction. Molt also saw that the political revolution created an unexpected opportunity for real change.

Molt sought out like-minded, equally active friends and colleagues who shared his conviction that Steiner's spiritual scientific insights could shed light on the bewildering chaos of events. The group met each evening at Molt's house, as he writes in his memoirs:

...to evaluate the events of the day and to coordinate further activities, discussing how the social ideas gained out of Spiritual Science might be applied. We had a great sense of urgency for two reasons. ... (We) wanted to effect a change before things congealed again, and, ... we hoped to influence the peace negotiations at Versailles. (p.124)

On January 25, 1919, Emil Molt and two colleagues met with Rudolf Steiner in Dornach to discuss with him initiatives then arising from the government in Baden/Württemberg. Rudolf Steiner's conclusion was:

We cannot rely on old forms any more. We need something completely new. I will give you a document. If you approve of it, then we should have it endorsed by the signatures of at least one hundred publicly-known personalities. If you can get this support, I will have a platform for political activity. I could hold a series of lectures in Zurich which would reach a broader public even if they're not officially recognized. (p. 125)

Molt continues:

On February 2, he (Steiner) gave us an "Appeal to the German Nation and to the Civilized World" – beautifully handwritten on a few sheets of paper.

Within a few days, Molt and his colleagues gathered over 250 significant signatures and the "Appeal" was then published in all major German, Austrian, and Swiss newspapers. It caused, Molt reports, "a general stir for a while ... (which was) soon forgotten." What did result, however, was a vigorous effort by many individuals, who were joined by Rudolf Steiner himself, to carry the ideas which the "Appeal" brought forward to a wider public, wherever opportunity offered. The many lectures Steiner held in Zurich, Bern, Dornach, and other Swiss cities during February became the basis for a book entitled *Die Kernpunkte der Sozialen Frage* ("The Essential Points of the Social Question"). (The book is now available in English under the title *Towards Social Renewal* published by Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1977).

In this work, addressed primarily to the peoples of Central Europe and to the situation in which they found themselves, Steiner stresses the urgent need to free individual initiative and to differentiate social functions on the basis of a threefolding of the social organism. These ideas were then carried by Emil Molt and his colleagues into meetings of workers and into public gatherings. This activity, in turn, led to the founding in April of the Association for the Threefolding of the Social Organism, with headquarters in Stuttgart. It led also to the foundation of an association of

business enterprises which sought to develop new ways of working together in the economic sphere.

Workers in the Waldorf-Astoria company saw Molt's name among the signatures to the "Appeal to the German Nation" as it appeared in the daily press. They asked Molt to speak to them about these ideas and about the thinker with whom they originated. Molt writes:

As well as I could, I held my first lecture on the subject. From then on, Waldorf people became a kind of vanguard for the Threefold Movement and several of us began lecturing extensively in other factories. (p. 126)

Meanwhile, two initiatives within the Waldorf-Astoria concern helped prepare the way for the founding of the school. The first was the formation, at Molt's instigation, of a Council of Workers elected by the employees. There every aspect of the business was discussed without reservation. This helped to build a sense of trust between workers and management, as well as a genuine interest in the health and efficiency of the enterprise as a whole. In this regard Molt writes:

That is why we had calm and peace in our factory while in many others there was turmoil. We never had a strike during the whole inflationary period, but took care of all issues among ourselves. (p. 135)

The second initiative was the introduction of adult education classes into the working day. Of this Molt recalls:

Because the workers in my factory were not fully occupied following the economic and political collapse of 1918, I was concerned that sooner or later they would feel demoralized. They needed mental stimulation and an opportunity to learn. So we instituted a series of afternoon lessons in foreign languages, painting, history, geography, and similar subjects, as well as classes in sewing and mending. In order to ensure everyone's participation, all classes were counted as paid work time.

There was also an introduction to broader questions of life and learning. Every week we had a special lecture on business questions and current issues in one of the work halls. Besides, groups from various

departments visited one another and heard department heads offer a presentation on their work. By this, we meant to transcend the various specialties and give a picture of the whole company. For example, the women whose task was sorting tobacco soon began to learn about processes in the machine hall. I lectured on tobacco cultivation, its purchase, and sales and advertising. (p. 136)

To help in building up this work, Molt engaged a young teacher named Herbert Hahn. A student of Rudolf Steiner's, Hahn soon would become one of the founding teachers of the new school.

Despite the enthusiasm with which this program was at first received, Emil Molt came to realize, that "learning has to be relearned by adults," and hence "one must begin with the young if forces are to be successfully schooled and interests awakened." Molt continues:

I became absorbed by the idea of providing for children what was no longer possible in later years, and of opening the door of education for all children, regardless of their parents' income. (p. 137)

The Question is Asked

On the morning of April 23, 1919, Rudolf Steiner spoke to the workers in the Waldorf-Astoria factory. After this talk Emil Molt asked Rudolf Steiner if he would take on the leadership of the school which Molt hoped to found.

How immediate and how deep Steiner's response must have been is evinced by the fact that just two days later, following a talk to workers in the Daimler Motor Works (later Mercedes-Benz), Steiner met with Emil Molt, Herbert Hahn and another young teacher, E.A.K. Stockmeyer, and discussed with them his ideas for the school and the conditions which he felt were necessary for its existence. There were four conditions:

- the school should be open to all children, not only to the children of workers in the Waldorf-Astoria factory;
- the classes should be co-educational – in Germany then a novelty in the upper grades;

- the school should have a unified twelve-year curriculum for all students. At that time in Germany students perceived to be capable of university study were put into humanistic or scientific high schools at the age of eleven. The other children remained in elementary school until age fourteen and then entered the work force or did a vocational training;

- the educational process should be in the hands of the teachers, as far as the then existing laws in Württemberg allowed. Thus the school was to be independent of outside control, whether political or economic.

Molt accepted these conditions with characteristic wholehearted and practical enthusiasm. He immediately set to work to find a site and to set aside the financial means out of the company's profits. Stockmeyer was given by Rudolf Steiner the task of recruiting teachers. He started with a few persons suggested by Steiner.

Molt, Steiner, and Stockmeyer went right to work. On May 30, Emil Molt took Rudolf Steiner to inspect the larger of the two prospective sites he had in mind – both popular Stuttgart restaurants! Steiner found the Uhlandshöhe property suitable, with room for future growth. The purchase was beyond the means of the company and Molt covered the additional expense out of his own pocket. The restaurant was renovated in time for the school to begin with eight classes in September. Soon two adjoining properties were acquired through Molt's foresight, energy and generosity, and the physical basis had been secured.

Stockmeyer, meanwhile, had recruited twelve prospective teachers. These gathered in Stuttgart and were welcomed by Rudolf Steiner on August 20. On Thursday, August 21, two weeks of intensive preparation began.

Rudolf Steiner held three courses daily. Each day began with the fundamental "Study of the Human Being" from the point of view of the soul, of the body, and of the human spirit. Later in the morning there was a course on teaching methods and on how special subjects could be

built into the educational process. In the afternoon Steiner spoke to questions raised by the participants. The latter sessions began with exercises in speech which Rudolf Steiner had developed.

On September 6, Steiner detailed the structure of the curriculum. On Sunday, the 7th, the festive opening of the Waldorf School took place before almost one thousand persons in the large auditorium of the Stuttgart Municipal Park. That afternoon Emil Molt hosted all the parents and children for coffee and refreshments in the school garden, about which he writes:

There was much lively activity. Each teacher gathered his or her class and played games with them. Every child was given a box with the words: "Welcome to the Waldorf School" printed on the lid. The box was full of chocolates. Many of these post-war children had never tasted chocolate and so it was a wonderful treat. A new spirit had entered the Uhlandshöhe, a spirit of trust and love, and the parents and children had a foretaste of it on that first day. (p. 146)

Deeper Meanings

One might describe what happened during those August/September days seventy-five years ago in the following way.

The handful of women and men who gathered in Stuttgart in response to Rudolf Steiner's call undertook to learn to "read" in the developing child what it means to become a human being in our time. These men and women themselves became pupils in a "school" in which the light of a new knowledge of the human being, as a being of spirit and soul as well as of body, was the goal of their study and research. How, in the growing child, a being of soul and spirit, entering life out of other worlds of experience, gradually unites with a living physical organism -- the gift of inheritance and of earthly substance -- is the "story" of the text which they were learning to read. That this process of union, of inter-penetration, is in the deepest, most dramatic sense, a creative process and a work of highest art, became gradually clear to them. And it led them to realize that to become a teacher really means to awaken, out of insight, the sleeping artist in one's own soul. It was not so much what they knew, but far more who they were, that would become the true edu-

cator of the children entrusted to their care.

With Rudolf Steiner's far-reaching -- often deeply challenging -- descriptions of the human being, in his or her soul-spiritual as well as bodily configuration, as a foundation, the participants were guided to discover in themselves how the light of human understanding, when taken up in heart as well as in the mind, awakens powers of practical pedagogical fantasy within the individual inwardly committed to becoming a teacher. Deciding how and when to introduce the subjects, while keeping in mind the child's devel-

The need for imagination, the sense for truth, and a feeling of responsibility, these are the three forces which are the very nerve of education.

opment, was to build a curriculum which meets the child's unfolding capacities at each new stage of inner and outer growth. The rhythms of learning, of remembering and of forgetting, and of growth from year to year, became musical themes which wove into an on-going developmental melody. This melody, in turn, could nourish and support the integration of inner and outer capacities of soul and spirit with the living, growing physical organism.

On September 5, at the close of the fourteenth and final lecture of the fundamental series, Rudolf Steiner expressed in the following words the inner, moral challenge of what it means to be and to become a teacher :

You can see from all this that there is a certain inner morality in teaching, an inner commitment toward education. A true categorical imperative for the teacher! And this categorical imperative is: See to it that your imagination, your fantasy, remains alive! ... Thus, in addition to what I have just spoken about as the penetration of all subject matter with the powers of imagination, the teacher must add courage for the truth. Without this courage for the truth, the teacher will not reach the children, especially the older students. Courage for the truth must be coupled with a strong feeling of responsibility.

The need for imagination, the sense for truth, and a feeling of responsibility, these are the three forces which are the very nerve of education. And the one who wishes to take the spirit of education, of pedagogy, into her or himself should make her motto: Imbue thyself with the power of fantasy; have courage for the truth; sharpen thy feeling for responsibility of soul.

(Rudolf Steiner, *The Study of Man*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1990 [1947] p. 190)

Seventy-five Years Later

The seeds planted by Rudolf Steiner, Emil Molt, and by those first teachers, parents, children, and friends have grown into an international school movement. Today there are 620 Waldorf schools in forty-five countries. In North America alone there are more than one hundred schools educating some 12,000 children and young people from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

The battle lines for the future are drawn. On one side are those forces for whom it is an absolute fact that man is a machine. For salvation, they look to "high-tech" education, and a national curriculum with unified standards and centralized control. On the other side, are those for whom it is an innermost conviction that the human being has the potential to become creative, free, and individually responsible.

Decisive in this battle is the fact that the methods of scientific inquiry – the priceless achievement of the past five hundred years – have been extended into the realm of knowledge beyond the senses, where the human being is actually at home. Because of this achievement it has become possible to gain objective knowledge of the human being in spirit and soul as well as body. On the foundations of this knowledge it has become possible to build an education which neither rejects science and technology out of an emotional fundamentalism, nor denies the sources of true religious experience out of intellectual agnosticism. It is this cognitive revolution, which is Rudolf Steiner's fundamental contribution to our time. And it is this far-reaching extension of consciousness which opened the way for Waldorf education and the renewal of education.

Rudolf Steiner's hope in 1919 was that the independent Waldorf School (*die Freie Waldorfschule*) would become the standard bearer for the independence of all schools. This was not to be, however. As this turbulent century comes to its close, perhaps the Waldorf schools may once again become rallying points for the truly human renewal of education and standard bearers for the social ideal in which all real education must be rooted.

Henry Barnes has been involved in Waldorf education since 1934. When just graduated from Harvard College, he went to Stuttgart, Germany, to do the Waldorf teacher training. Henry taught first at Michael Hall in England and then for thirty-seven years at the Rudolf Steiner School of New York, as class teacher, history teacher, and administrator. For many years the General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society of America, Henry is a member of the Board of Directors of AWSNA and of the Editorial Board of *Renewal*.

First Spatial Studies Institute Graduation

Forty-five students, members of the Spatial Studies Institute's first in-service teacher training class, received their diplomas on August 16, 1994, in a ceremony at the Kimberton Waldorf School in Kimberton, Pennsylvania. This was the first class to graduate from the program, which began in 1989. The graduates represented twenty-five Waldorf schools. The diplomas were awarded by Jaimen McMillan, director of SSI, with Alheidis von Bothmer of the Stuttgart Bothmer School in attendance to congratulate each student. Graduates are certified as physical education teachers for Waldorf schools, and as movement therapists in the discipline of Spatial Dynamics.

Exploring the Spiritual Foundations of Education

By Douglas Sloan, Ph. D.

It may be that the human being has never before lived in a more critical time. "Critical" here is the key word, for critical does not mean something necessarily good or bad. It means, instead, decisive. It refers to a turning point, a moment, in fact, when new challenges and new possibilities are both mounting and pressing upon us. A friend of mine is fond of saying that we live in a world that today is getting worse and better at the same time. We can see this especially in three areas of our life today: in our relationships with nature, in our relationships with one another, and in our inner relationships with ourselves and with the wider cosmos. The worsening in our relationships with nature is evident in spreading environmental degradation and looming global disaster. In our human relationships we see cultural breakdown in every society in the world, our own included. And weaving through all our discontents is often a deadening sense of futility, meaninglessness, and cynicism.

At the same time, however, it is precisely in these same three areas that we find new and creative forces at work and new possibilities for life and hope beginning to appear. In our relationship with nature, for instance, a new and growing awareness of our interconnections with all that lives is beginning to develop as never before. In the realm of human relations we find, among many young people particularly, a new sense of human solidarity, a sense of the worth and dignity of all persons everywhere. And often in the most unexpected places we find a new hunger for

meaning and purpose, a hunger for spiritual significance, a desire to get to the essential and the enduring.

Of the three, the realm of the spirit is the most important. This is the realm that ultimately provides the foundations for the others, for a healing and creative relationship to nature and to one another. Of course, it is also the realm that is the most difficult for many modern people to attend to or talk about.

For many modern folk the word "spirit" comes loaded with a lot of baggage. It is associated with all manner of

silly assumptions and misconceptions. For some the spirit suggests something spooky, eerie. For others it is just a synonym for things nice and sentimental.

For others, spirit is non-existent, pie-in-the sky, and wishful thinking. So a first question must be: Is it possible to redeem the word spirit, to find in it substance that we cannot avoid because it touches our lives at their deepest?

This is an important question. Much of our modern culture is permeated with conceptions, assumptions, and images of the human being that have no place for spirit, that, in fact, actively deny the reality and importance of spirit. Especially widespread is the view and image of the human being as "nothing but" – nothing but a higher animal, nothing but a bundle of electrochemical discharges, nothing but a machine. This is not a new view. It is the old mechanistic view of

The arts in Waldorf education speak directly, concretely, and practically to the most important issues of our times – those having to do with the future of the children and of their planet.

the human being that has been around since at least the eighteenth century. It is the view, as one wit has phrased it, of the human being as "nothing but a meat machine that secretes symbolism."

It may be old, but it is not an unusual view. This mechanistic and materialistic image of the human being as "nothing but" pervades our culture, our science, even our art, and especially our education. It is found in every university and in nearly every science and history textbook in the world. A good deal of our modern, mainstream education is based upon this narrow and mechanistic view of the human being.

And while this view may be old, it continues to work a lot of mischief. What this view says is that consciousness, mind, goodness, evil, beauty, joy, sorrow, and purpose are all illusory by-products arising from the machinery of the nervous system, or of the genes, or of the economic order. Where this mechanistic, "nothing but" image of the human being holds sway, it means that we cannot deal with the most important aspects of our lives, the very things that make human life distinctively human. And it leads to cynicism – a cynicism that disables us and takes away our will power and enthusiasm to meet the challenges of life and the burning problems of our world with the kind of commitment, earnestness, and eagerness they call for.

Is it possible to recover a new and compelling understanding of spirit? I think it is. But we must do three things:

- 1) We have to identify and become aware of the reality and the working of spirit in our everyday experience.
- 2) We have to see that spirit has detailed and vital consequences for our experience, for all that we are and do and aspire to become.
- 3) We have to grasp spirit as that which stands in its own right and is not to be explained in terms of something else.

In an essay published in 1844, 150 years ago this year, Ralph Waldo Emerson described spirit in a way that can help in our thinking about

it. "The definition of spiritual," Emerson wrote, "should be that which is its own experience." In other words, spirit is that which cannot be reduced to something else, or explained away by something else, or proven by something else. It is its own experience and its own explanation. It is, indeed, that by which we grasp, explain, and understand everything else.

Our lives are pervaded by just such an immediate experience of spirit, though, usually, we know it by other names, and often, therefore, fail to recognize what we are really encountering.

Is it possible that a genuine sense of beauty is actually one of the most radical, relevant, and practical capacities we could develop?

One point at which we encounter spirit directly, daily, and usually unknowingly is in the realm of meaning. All meaning is a spiritual reality and a spiritual activity. Meaning is invisible, intangible, and yet without it the world of our visual, physical experience would be a vast chaos, what William James called a "blooming, buzzing confusion."

Here we can see that one of our first and often most important experiences of spirit is in thinking. Our thinking gives us the world of our experience. The quality of our world of experience depends on the quality of our thinking. Many in our time are becoming increasingly aware of the centrality and importance of thinking. Stanislaus Ulam, the mathematician active in producing the atomic bomb, once wrote: "It is a never-failing source of surprise for me to see how a few scribbles on a blackboard or on a scrap of paper can change the course of human affairs." Emerson wrote in his journal, "Life consists largely in what a person is thinking of all day." And Friedrich Dürrenmatt, the Swiss playwright, said a few years ago, "Thinking has become dangerous in our century. More dangerous than smoking in a munitions factory."

Here we can begin to grasp thinking and

meaning as often our most immediate encounter with spirit. We can, perhaps, also begin to see that spirit is not always of the same quality. Spirit is not only the good. Spirit also includes the mundane and the evil. There is false thinking and partial thinking as well as insightful thinking. There are low-level illusory meanings as well as meanings that embrace truth, beauty, and goodness. Wherever meaning of any kind is involved, there is spiritual reality, for good or evil. Ironically, the materialistic view of the human being as nothing but a machine is, in spite of itself, a spiritual view.

So, experiencing the spirit in the realm of meaning we come to see how important it is, as all the great spiritual traditions have always emphasized, that we be able "to test the spirits," that is, be able to discriminate between the higher and the lower, the real and the illusory, the mendacious and the true.

One of the great spiritual challenges of our time is to value and nurture a living sense of truth. Such a sense of truth enables us to distinguish clearly the propagandistic, the falsely comforting, and all the other illusory meanings from those meanings which are truly insightful, nourishing, and life-giving.

We need also to develop a sense of priority about the meanings with which we occupy ourselves. The theologian Paul Tillich said that whatever we have as our "ultimate concern," — *that* is our god, or gods. Often, of course, we seem to be ultimately concerned about things that on examination do not deserve it because they turn out to be far from ultimate. To give our ultimate concern to things that are less than ultimate is not a very productive use of energy. But not to give thought to the things that are ultimate, that are truly essential and of enduring importance, is simply to miss our lives.

In one of his novels Ignazio Silone describes a professor. "He was the professor," writes Silone. "He was the professor. He knew everything, and that was all he knew." Without a vital sense of priorities and truth we fall increasingly prey to the temptation to direct our great gifts of intelligence and learning solely to the trivial, and

to what satisfies our greed and our desire for comfort. If we are to bring new, life-giving meaning into our lives and into our world — meaning grounded in a sense for truth and for what is important — are there guides that can help us in this task?

Here we see a second area in which we meet spirit in a direct way. We experience spirit in our sense of genuine wholeness. Sometimes people mistake wholeness for sameness, for a kind of monolithic uniformity. But genuine wholeness is alive and includes both the parts in their integrity and the wholeness that is more than the sum of the parts, the wholeness that gives connection and meaning to the parts.

In our dealings with the world today we are very adept in a thinking that deals primarily with the parts. We easily break the world down into its parts; we take it apart. We are not so good at putting it back together in a living way. The living whole escapes us. When we do try to put things back together, we get a plastic culture of increasing sameness — not with the uniqueness and vibrancy of living wholeness. And yet it is just such a wholeness that we seek — for our personal lives, for our broken communities, for our science, and for nature. It is in this wholeness that life-giving meaning is to be sought.

One of the great spiritual challenges of our time is to value and nurture a living sense of truth.

A third area in which we encounter spirit directly is in the experience of genuine newness. A new insight, a new beginning, a new possibility, a new hope — the breaking in of newness in all its forms — this is often our most compelling experience of spirit.

Perhaps we can be more concrete about both a sense of newness and of wholeness if we speak of a sense of beauty. Our world tends to think of beauty as something nice, if one likes that kind of thing, can afford it, and has time for it. This way of thinking about beauty, however, has much to do with the lack of wholeness we find in

our world and the spreading fragmentation of our lives. Is it possible that a genuine sense of beauty is actually one of the most radical, relevant, and practical capacities we could develop?

The arts of all kinds, and an artistic approach to the world, are central in all of Waldorf education. Many reasons exist for this emphasis on the artistic, but let us touch on a few of them.

First, the arts are important because they are essential to the development of powerful imaginative thinking itself. Waldorf has known this from the beginning, and leading mathematicians and physicists long have seen the connection between creative work in their fields and an artistic sense of beauty. So-called mainstream educators are at last beginning to recognize and confirm this.

Second, in the arts we actually develop a sense of wholeness, because we constantly have to work with the parts in relation to the whole.

Third, the arts are crucially important in developing capacities of radical creativity. Here we see that the beautiful is not the same as the pretty. In fact, in genuine artistic work, it is often out of the chaotic and even out of the ugly that newness and beauty arise. In the act of creation that is its own experience, spirit makes its most dramatic appearance.

Finally, in the arts we deal directly with the qualities of life, the qualities of the world – color, sound, rhythm, movement, interconnections, relationships, meaning, values, growth. In the arts we learn to deal with these qualities out of our own whole being, out of our thinking, feeling, willing, valuing selves. This interaction between the qualities in the world and the qualities in ourselves is a spiritual reality we neglect at our peril.

The human being's fouling of the earth that has brought us to the present all-engulfing, global environmental crisis can be seen as the result of an atrophied sense of beauty. This has allowed ugliness of all kinds – polluted waters, poisoned air, urban sprawl, decimated plant and animal life, despoiled forests, lands, and oceans.

Now, perhaps, we can have a better idea of what John Dewey, the great American philosopher, meant when he said that the most penetrating, the "ultimate judgment upon the quality of a civilization," has to do with the quality of its aesthetic life, of its sense of beauty. Perhaps we can also have a better understanding of what Dostoyevsky meant when he said, "Beauty shall save the world."

This sense of beauty is not the nice and the pretty. It is, rather, a radical, compelling, effective grasp of wholeness and life. It can be terrible because it can pierce to the heart of our complacency. But it can also be ultimately healing and life-restoring because in it lies newness and wholeness. This sense of beauty is also basic to our spiritual task of bringing life-giving meaning to the earth. The arts in Waldorf education speak directly, concretely, and practically to the most important issues of our times – those having to do with the future of the children and of their planet.

Finally, we are involved with spirit when we deal with the real identity of anything. We get a sense of this when we use such expressions as "the spirit of the meeting," "the spirit of the class," "the spirit of a people." In using such phrases we are seeking the true identity present in these experiences.

The ultimate identity, the being, of anything is its spiritual reality. When we look at another person, we do not see the whole human being with our eyes. We see a physical body. However, the body can, indeed, become an expression of the I, of the true self. That is what makes the body so important and so worthy of respect. The body is a temple of the self, of the spirit which is the self. And the discovery of our true self, our deepest identity, is our life-long spirit quest. The deepest spiritual reality of our time is the mystery of the individual self. Part of that mystery is that the true self is universal. It is the opposite of egotistic. We can recognize our own true self only if we have the capacity for recognizing the true self of the other person.

The basic spiritual task of education in our time is to nurture the freedom of the self in community with other selves. The criteria for

such an education are that:

- it enhances our clear, imaginative thinking and our grasp of truth and meaning;
- it enhances and undergirds our sense of beauty and life;
- it strengthens our true sense of self, and with that, our freedom, and our sense of responsibility for ourselves, for others, and for the earth.

An education which meets these criteria will serve its students well and prepare them for life in the next century.

Douglas Sloan is Professor of History and Education at Teacher's College, Columbia University, and Adjunct Professor of History and Education at the Union Theological Seminary and the Jewish Theological Seminary. Among his books are *Insight-Imagination: The Emancipation of Thought and the Modern World* (reissued this year in paperback); and *Faith and Knowledge: Main Line Protestantism and American Higher Education*, forthcoming in December. Professor Sloan is Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America.

Waldorf Education Month Declared in New York State

The following is an official declaration issued earlier this year from the office of Mario Cuomo, the governor of New York.

1994 marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Waldorf curriculum for teaching children when, in 1919 Rudolf Steiner began the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart, Germany.

Waldorf schools have proliferated since that time. The Rudolf Steiner School in New York City, founded in 1929, was the first Waldorf school in the United States; and there are now nine successful Waldorf Schools in our state: in Garden City, Spring Valley, New Paltz, Harlemville, Warwick, Ithaca, and Aurora, as well as New York.

In a time when our nation is facing unparalleled challenges in the education of our young children, the continuing success of the Waldorf approach – a nonsectarian method of educating the whole child – demonstrates that alternative educational approaches can succeed and can demonstrate possible directions for mainstream education.

The New York Board of Regents has recently chartered Sunbridge College in Chestnut Ridge as a teacher training facility, offering a Master's degree in education with a specialization in the Waldorf approach. The first class will graduate in May 1994.

Throughout May, a special exhibition of work of children who attend Waldorf schools will be on display at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City.

Now, therefore, I, Mario Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby recognize May, 1994, as Waldorf Education month in the state of New York.

My Three Years at the Milwaukee Urban Waldorf Program

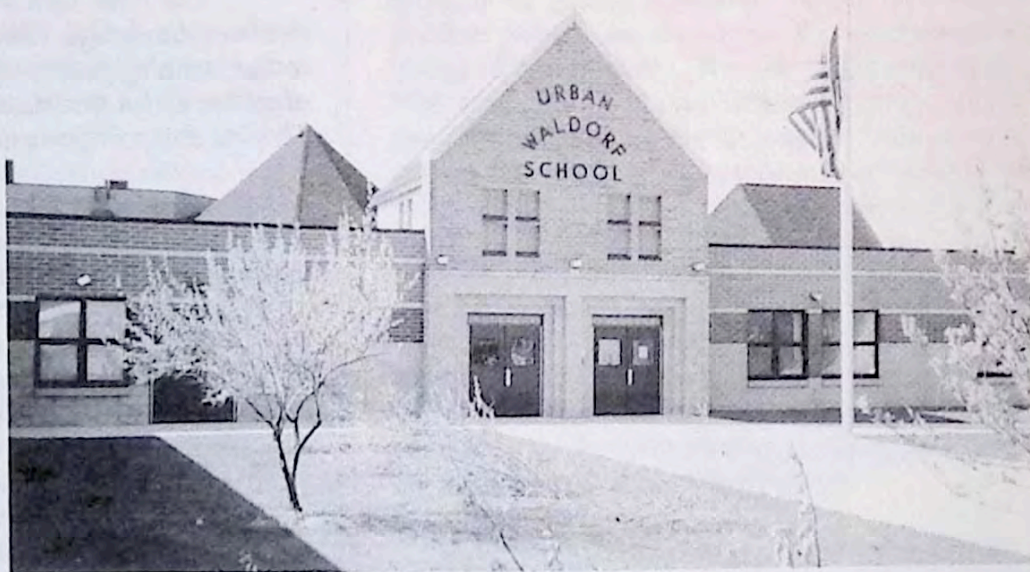
By Ann Pratt

"But Ms. Pratt, wouldn't it hurt God if Kipat shot an arrow into the cloud to make it rain?" This question came from a kindergarten child in the Milwaukee Urban Waldorf School, the first Waldorf public school in the United States. The class had just been told a story about an African shepherd, and the question expresses the mood of openness, wonder, and inquiry which can be found in every classroom in that school. The children there are having a full experience of Waldorf education. Walking through the halls, you know by looking and listening, and by sensing the atmosphere that here the children of the inner city love being in school.

I was with the Urban Waldorf School in Milwaukee from its inception in September 1991 through June 1994. For the first two years, I had the position of implementor, working closely with the school principal, Dorothy St. Charles, and carrying the responsibility for steering the Waldorf training of the teachers. Then last year I shifted gears, teaching one of the kindergarten groups. During this time, "culture shock" came to have a new and vital meaning for me. Before diving

into this innovative adventure, I had had a relatively sheltered professional life within the private-school sector of white, middle-class America. I left Milwaukee feeling very grateful for a profound and transformative personal experience.

The Urban Waldorf School is located in inner city Milwaukee, an area with a large population of African-Americans. The area is poor. Many of the houses are run-down or abandoned and violence of every kind is a daily reality. The school has two each of grades one through five, plus four kindergartens. The school shares a newly constructed building with another school, the Multicultural-Multilingual Academy, whose



The Urban Waldorf School, Milwaukee.

aim is to educate children of Hispanic background. The two schools each have an enrollment of about 350 children. The office space, music room, playground, library, cafeteria and gymnasium facilities are shared by the two schools, but each has its own classroom wing.

And each is a part of the city's "Focus School Program." These forty or so schools within the Milwaukee public school system offer a diversity of programs, and parents can choose the kind of education they want for their children. Fifty-five percent of the children at Urban Waldorf are bussed from all over the city. Each afternoon some twenty-four buses line up on the streets around the school to carry the "bus children" home.

Visitors attest to the remarkably calm and peaceful atmosphere in the Urban Waldorf School. They remark about the children's joy at being in school; the open expression of the affection the children feel towards the faculty and the principal; the beauty of the halls and classrooms filled with watercolor paintings, beeswax figures and crayon drawings; and the obvious difference in ambience from what they usually experience in a public-school setting.

This school is in a healthy state after three years. Many other public-school systems across the country are paying close attention to it, and are considering perhaps to introduce Waldorf-inspired programs into their own districts. Every day people call with questions relevant to a Waldorf school functioning as an inner-city public school. They include:

"What have you done about the religious aspect of Waldorf education?"

"Do you find that the Waldorf curriculum, which tends to be eurocentric, meets the needs of your largely African-American population?"

"Are you making any changes in the curriculum to meet the demands of the school system or the needs of the children?"

Religion is a word that tends to raise eye-

brows when it is connected with public education. If one means by "religion" a fixed adherence to a particular fixed world view and set of doctrines, then in my mind Waldorf education involves something different. However, if one means a reverential attitude toward life, one's fellow human beings and toward creation as a whole, and the moral values and behavior that grow out of such an attitude, then Waldorf education seeks to promote a religious mood. It is not in any sense sectarian, though.

We included seasonal festivals as part of all-school assemblies, but adapted them to comply with state mandates. These mandates allow for the recognition and celebration of religious holidays, provided that equal emphasis is given to the holidays of each tradition. Thus around the winter solstice we celebrated both Christmas and Hanukkah.

When the school opened in September 1991, we plunged immediately into the full Waldorf schedule of main lessons and special subjects. Spanish is the foreign language taught. Other subjects include handwork, painting, form drawing, music, eurythmy and physical education. The schedule, as usual in a Waldorf school, seeks to create a rhythm. The main lesson is in the morning, followed perhaps by an academic subject. Arts, handwork, and movement classes are usually in the afternoon. The block system is used in which children study a particular theme or topic intensively for several weeks and then focus on another. Free breakfast and lunch programs are offered, with most of the children qualifying for both.

Thus from the start we applied the basic Waldorf curriculum. For the most part it worked very well. There were many rough moments and difficult days, especially in the first year. It soon became clear though that the children's substantial intellectual, artistic, social, and academic potential could, within a supportive educational environment, develop fully. Our experience with one fourth-grade class reveals the impact of the curriculum even during the first months the school was open.

The class had had a series of substitute teachers. Substitutes for teachers at the school have to pass through the regular channels of the school district, so they had arrived with no knowledge of Waldorf education at all. Having several times experienced a striking contrast of approach, this group of children sent a note of complaint to Dorothy St. Charles. A meeting was arranged between them, the principal, and myself as implementor. The children expressed their sense of loss and indignation about many things. They complained that with the substitutes they had no painting or drawing in their main-lesson books, no singing, no reciting poems, no moving around, no clapping. Norse mythology is a key element in the fourth grade curriculum, and most revealing, perhaps was a question from one of the boys: "But mostly, why don't we hear about Odin any more? How come?"

It was evident that within a short time the essential technique of working out of imaginative pictures to touch the children and engage the feeling life through stories had begun to have a deep impact. This method, unique to Waldorf education, uses the art of speech to bring content – primarily in the academic work of the main

My three years in Milwaukee have convinced me that (Waldorf) methods are healing for all children and can be applied everywhere.

lesson – in an imaginative picture form that lets the children build their own inner imaginations. This approach has, in this inner-city situation, already proven its ability to produce an amazingly rich harvest. The technique is truly multicultural, for each listener is free to develop his or her own inner pictures.

Whereas most Waldorf elementary schools begin with only a first grade and then grow year by year, the Urban Waldorf School began with five full grades. In one of the fifth-grade classes the teacher had difficulty getting the children to write compositions. Some complained

about not being able to do it, became frustrated, and put down their pencils.

The core of the main lesson work in the fifth grade mirrors for the children the evolution of mankind through the epochs of ancient India, Persia, Egypt, and Greece. The class teacher had bravely begun the year with a main lesson block in ancient history. Then the miracle occurred! The children were suddenly enabled to write, and by the end of the block they were writing not only paragraphs, but pages about the stories of ancient India, Persia, and Egypt. As this aspect of the curriculum unfolded, the children were filled with inner pictures that mirrored their own development, and this inner content had moved their feelings and inspired their will to draw, paint and write. Their inability to write and their frustration at that inability were overcome.

One of the most striking and profoundly moving experiences in the first year was with the handwork curriculum. In some parts of the area it is dangerous for the children to play in the streets so some children must stay indoors after school. This can lead to much television watching which affects their attention span and their ability to learn well. At Urban Waldorf, the handwork program seemed to help reduce television watching. The children found handwork so satisfying that many parents were not left in peace until they found yarn and needles so that the children could do handwork at home. The parents also had to learn to knit and were thrilled to do this with their children. Some said it reminded them of what their grandmothers used to do and exclaimed: "Now I can, too, and I love it!" The children, though, had to be told that they could not knit during other classes, for they had yarn under their desks and were casting on to pencils and knitting in Spanish class and during the main lesson.

Through the handwork curriculum also, the children experienced and learned that everything exists in process. At first, when a finished handwork project was presented as a model, many of the children felt great frustration at not being able to create the same thing in a few minutes.

Gradually, through the handwork projects and with the patient help and hard work of the handwork teacher, the children developed patience to pursue a project slowly through many stages. At the same time they gained confidence in their ability to carry through a project to a successful completion. This patience and self confidence reinforced their work in all the other lessons, where they were painting, drawing, writing, and creating their own books. Blank pages are very frightening until you have some confidence that you can fill them with words or pictures.

Two years ago, an accident outside school put a fourth-grader in the hospital with a broken arm. His classmates were asked if they would each like to contribute a piece of knitting to make one long scarf for him. They responded enthusiastically and each child set immediately to work on his or her contribution to the get-well gift!

My experience in Milwaukee reaffirmed my belief that the handcrafts in the Waldorf curriculum are not frills. They are an essential part of the curriculum, critical in the development of the motor and intellectual skills, and of patience, concentration, self-confidence, self-expression, and aesthetic awareness. The children in the Milwaukee school like children in all Waldorf schools, are profoundly benefited by the handwork classes.

Other aspects of the Waldorf curriculum also enhanced the children's ability to express themselves in a positive and creative way. The daily opportunity to describe, verbally and in writing, what they have learned, and also to paint, to draw, to model clay, to sing, to dance all helped to fill the boys' and girls' deep need for self-expression. Over the past three years some of those children inclined to disruptive behavior have changed greatly. Some techniques to improve the



Morning recess on the Urban Waldorf School playground.

behavior of children such as "peer mediation" are taught in a verbal, discursive way. The Waldorf curriculum though, through its established methods to develop self-expression, directly and deeply touches the souls of the children.

One visitor remarked that we at Urban Waldorf had the most nonviolent and peaceful school he had seen in the district. I attribute this to the inherent nature of the Waldorf curriculum that truly speaks to all aspects of the human being. When we instituted the curriculum three years ago our first goal was to observe how the children responded to it. Last year we began seriously to evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of the curriculum. On the whole, as described, the basic Waldorf curriculum has worked very well. At the same time it is evident that the particular cultural background and situation of the children should be brought in. Now teachers bring appropriate materials out of the African-American tradition for use in main lesson and in the special subjects. African folk tales, African-American tales and fables, for example, are used, especially if they can be related to the inner-city life of the children.

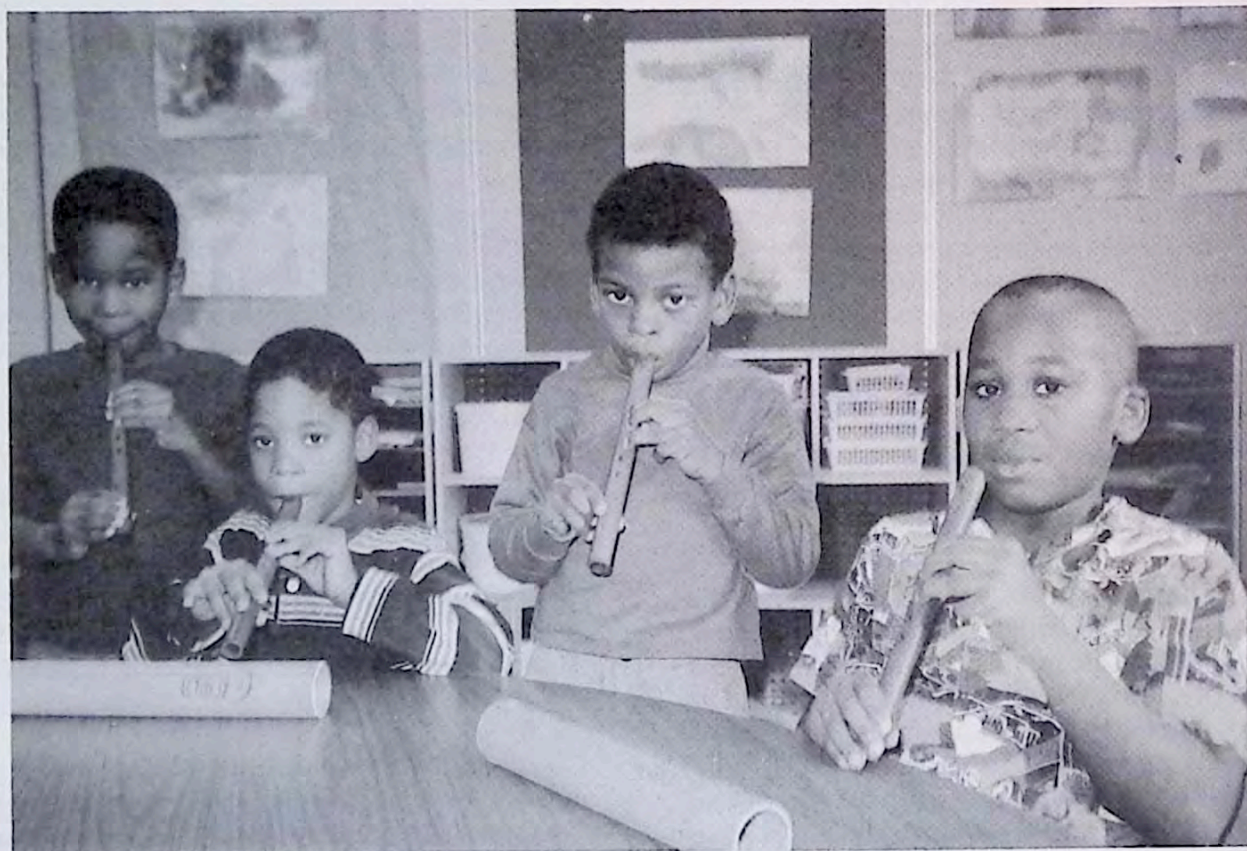
Adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of the children is the aim of ongoing and long-term study by the faculty. And in this project the poverty, the stressful environment, and the difficult family circumstances in which the children live also need to be considered. These are

major and pressing factors that daily affect the children's lives and their educational needs. Making appropriate curriculum changes must be seen as a process that requires the creative effort and insightful knowledge of experienced Waldorf teachers. This work is continuing with great respect for what Rudolf Steiner intended all children to experience in their education – the opportunity to develop into creative, moral and thoughtful human beings. What is being done is by no means definitive. As more Waldorf-inspired public schools come into existence, certainly a sharing in a conference format, similar to what has long taken place among the private Waldorf schools, ought to develop.

Let us hope, though, that on these questions there will not be one fixed solution. We are dealing with the constantly changing and evolving human being. This is the joy of working in the field of education. For Waldorf teachers flexibility of thought, depth of feeling, and direction and purpose of will are necessary in the teaching of the

children, in relationships with parents, and in the life among the faculty and staff. Waldorf education exists in living, breathing schools. It is not a fixed, dead system of education.

Many parents of children in the Urban Waldorf Program have expressed their support and appreciation for the caring and the education their children receive. Many have a genuine concern that their children receive a strong academic education. They stress to their children the need to work hard, to become skilled in reading and arithmetic. They know that education is the key to successful employment and to being able to accomplish something for themselves and for their community. For three years, a group of parents has been advocating that the school not end with the fifth grade, but become an eight-grade school. This has come before the District School Board each year, with the result that a study to promote such growth is now under way, authorized by Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Howard Fuller. Needless to say, the difficulties are many,



A recorder class at the Urban Waldorf School.

but finding trained Waldorf teachers is chief among them.

Our experience with teacher training, though, is very encouraging. When the school opened, its class teachers, drawn from the Milwaukee system, had just begun their Waldorf teacher training in an intensive six-week summer course. Today the school has a fully-trained Waldorf faculty. The training program was sponsored by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America, from which the teachers received their Waldorf certificates last May. This course work was given for credit through the University of Wisconsin/Milwaukee, Department of Cultural Foundations of Education. Dr. Belden Paulson, a professor in this department, became interested in the possibility of offering the Waldorf program to urban children and arranged for these courses at the university.

In a 1924 lecture in England, Rudolf Steiner said, "As I always speak from the standpoint of practical life, I have to say that the Waldorf school method is a method of education and is not meant to bring into the school a philosophy of life or anything sectarian." (*The Kingdom of Childhood*, London, Rudolf Steiner Press, 1974, p. 150.)

My three years at the Urban Waldorf School in Milwaukee have convinced me that Waldorf education is not in any sense sectarian or limited, that its methods are in themselves healing for all children, and that these methods can be applied in all situations everywhere on the globe. I am eager to see schools like the Milwaukee school develop in inner-city situations all over North America.

Ann Pratt received a B.S. in Education from Adelphi University and an M.S. from the University of Wisconsin/Milwaukee. A graduate of Waldorf schools herself, she has more than thirty years experience teaching kindergarten, eurythmy and elementary grades in nine Waldorf schools. For nearly a decade, Ann has been involved in teacher training, and she is currently a core faculty member of the Antioch/New England Graduate School in the Waldorf teacher-training program. Ann is co-ordinator of the Public School Task Force formed by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America.

Editors note: There are two other Waldorf schools in the Milwaukee area. Within the city is the Waldorf School of Milwaukee, founded in 1977 in a program that includes a nursery, kindergarten, and grades one through five. In the nearby suburb of Pewaukee is the Prairie Hill Waldorf School in a nursery through grade six program. Both are independent schools supported by tuition payments, fundraising, and gifts. Both are federated members of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America.



Children at play in the Urban Waldorf kindergarten.

Public Waldorf Schools Cultural Advance or Cultural Suicide?

By Gary Lamb

This article has three main purposes: one, to awaken the Waldorf school movement to the significance of the "Goals 2000: Educate America Act"; two, to address the issue of public Waldorf schools and present reasons for opposing them; and three, to suggest some alternative ways, consistent with its overall mission, that Waldorf education can address modern social problems.

"Goals 2000"

The "Goals 2000: Educate America Act," the Clinton Administration's educational reform program, was signed into law on March 31, 1994. It determines the political framework in which all publicly funded schools – conventional public schools, public charter schools, and voucher-redeeming public or private schools – will have to operate in the foreseeable future.¹ The effect the law will have on private schools that do not accept public funds is uncertain.

The law establishes eight "voluntary" national educational goals and makes provisions to establish "voluntary" national educational standards (i.e., a national curriculum) and assessment (i.e., national testing). The federal government will take the lead in determining what every child and adult should know and be able to do. The word "voluntary" has been inserted in all the major provisions, probably because the federal government has no constitutional authority over education. But the word "voluntary" will be in effect meaningless for schools, teachers, and students once a state has adopted the goals and standards of the Act.

To date there has been little or no opposition from the state governments to "Goals 2000." This is understandable since they have collabo-

rated in the formation of the national goals. And they eagerly await hundreds of millions of dollars that will be available each year from the federal government as an additional incentive for the states to adopt and impose the provisions of "Goals 2000" on all publicly funded schools.

Of particular interest for those connected to Waldorf education is the fact that one of the objectives of the law is to "infuse technology and technological planning into all educational programs and training functions carried out within school systems at the state and local level."² Secretary of Education Riley has intimated that children won't be able to achieve the national standards unless schools are technologically equipped and students utilize appropriate technology in their learning. In addition, national standards will be established in eight subjects with students being tested in the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades.

The law goes beyond the classroom into the home. To insure that all children are ready to learn when they reach compulsory school age it provides federal funding for "voluntary" programs utilizing social workers ("certified parent educators"³) and for agencies organized to guide parents in child rearing.

Clinton's "Goals 2000" is a revamped version of George Bush's "America 2000" educational reform program. Both major political parties have been supporting the trend to nationalize education. In addition, most major American businesses, through the efforts of the national Business Roundtable (BRT), have endorsed and promoted the national educational

goals and standards, seeing them as crucial for the skilled workers business will need to compete in world markets.⁴ "Goals 2000" creates the basis for education to be completely controlled and directed by political and economic interests working through the federal government. When the government goes beyond creating and upholding human rights to dictating educational policy, it can be only a stifling influence on the creativity and initiative of teachers, even the most dedicated and idealistic ones.

"Goals 2000" creates the basis for education to be completely controlled and directed by political and economic interests working through the federal government.

The Mission of Waldorf Education

The founding of the first Waldorf school was an outgrowth of Rudolf Steiner's ideas about the threefold nature of the social order. Steiner maintained that the three spheres of society – culture, law, and economics – each has its own distinct and autonomous basis. His view was that education, which is part of cultural life, should be free of political and economic control – the very opposite of the perspective underlying "Goals 2000." Steiner exhibited caution and reserve when making practical decisions in relation to the state. He once said to the teachers of the first Waldorf school:

Headmasters or teachers of ordinary schools keep coming along wanting Waldorf School education and asking what they can do to help their school acquire it. This is absolute nonsense. The first thing to do would be to renounce a connection with the state. An unreasonable demand like this only goes to show how incapable people are of thinking consistently.⁵

On another occasion Steiner was asked by a person in Holland whether it would be right to accept state subsidies in order to start a Waldorf school there. Steiner replied:

It seems dubious to me that it should be possible to run a school with the aid of state subsidies. For I very much doubt whether the government, if it pays out money for such a school, would not insist on the right to inspect it. Therefore I cannot believe that a free [independent] school could be founded with state subsidies, which in themselves imply supervision by inspectors from the education authorities.⁶

Steiner maintained that the supporters of Waldorf education have a twofold task. One is to encourage the further establishment of independent schools based on the principles of Waldorf education. The other is to liberate education from the state. To strive for one goal without the other is meaningless. Steiner wrote:

Considering the present social situation in Europe, it makes no sense to found a single Waldorf School with four or five hundred, or even a thousand children.⁷ Only if we find emulation everywhere is there any sense in it. And we need a really practical attitude. This is lacking if those who are enthused about the ideas of the Waldorf School do not develop the

understanding for the necessity of spreading the idea that schools must be independent of the state – if you do not have the courage to strive for the liberation of the schools from the state the whole Waldorf School Movement is of no avail. For it has meaning only if this movement grows into a free spiritual life.⁸

Steiner did not start or later justify the first Waldorf School because it would have a positive affect on the destiny of particular group of children. Rather he intended it to benefit all of humanity by being a step toward liberating education from the state.

Rudolf Steiner realized that education cannot be liberated without money. This meant first and foremost finding a broad base of financial support for independent schools. Even though Steiner maintained that every child has a right to an education, he never indicated that a liberated educational system could or should be financed by state tax money. To finance schools he advocated the creation of a "World School Association"

...in all civilized countries in order to make available as quickly as possible the greatest amount of means. On the basis of these means, it will be possible to create the beginning of a free spiritual life. (It is important for people) to work for an understanding of freedom of the spiritual life ... which will bring it about that to the greatest possible extent money is made available for...independent schools...⁹

Unfortunately, no one really took Steiner seriously. Thus today, on one hand, more and more Waldorf schools worldwide are subsidized by the state. On the other, where schools are not subsidized, it is becoming financially impossible for low-income families to enroll their children. The idea of liberating education from the state, which Steiner maintained was essential for the Waldorf school movement to have any meaning, is seen as impractical and has been virtually abandoned. The striving for educational and cultural freedom has been replaced by seeking government subsidies and exemptions from certain government regulations for Waldorf schools; by collaborating with the government in formulating education policy; by seeking the recognition of the government through state licensing, certification, or registration; and by seeking to establish

Waldorf schools within the government-run public educational system.¹⁰

In regard to the last point, the following statement by Steiner should be taken into consideration:

*People think that the state can provide the educational facilities and that the teachers who occupy them can develop culture and spiritual life 'freely' in them. This opinion ignores how closely related the content of spiritual life is to the innermost essence of the human being in which it is developing, and how this development can only be free when it is introduced into the social organism through the impulses which originate in spiritual life itself, and through no others."*¹¹

The question at this point should be: Why have the supporters of Waldorf education failed to take up its real mission?

It should be acknowledged that Steiner did give lectures to public school teachers in Switzerland. But he felt at the time, that:

*... difficulties will arise from [the] Swiss sense of statehood. Even less than anywhere else will it be possible here in Switzerland to find the belief that a truly independent school could be an example for a model method of education. ... Aversion to a system of education that is independent of the state is very great here."*¹²

Consequently, the only acceptable justification for starting an independent school in Switzerland was that it would be a model school to develop innovative educational techniques that the government schools might incorporate.

Even though Steiner said that Waldorf methods could be used anywhere, in the last year of his life he summarized his efforts in connection to Waldorf education in this way:

*With us ... it was never any question of a programme. From the outset we were never interested in principles of educational method that later on might somehow be incorporated in a legalized educational system. What did interest us was reality, absolute, true reality."*¹³

Public Waldorf Schools

The Milwaukee Urban Waldorf Program, the first public Waldorf school in the United States, has been in existence three years. Although some reservations have been expressed as to whether a true Waldorf school can operate as a government-run public school, the leadership of the Waldorf school movement has spent considerable time and effort supporting and justifying the initiative. In spite of the fact that Dorothy St. Charles, the principal, has said that the public Waldorf school is the best-kept secret in Milwaukee, the Association of Waldorf Schools in North America (AWSNA) has stated that it has been deluged with requests from around the country for information on how to start a public Waldorf school. This has led AWSNA to establish a certification procedure for public schools that allows them to be designated a "Waldorf Program." It includes the requirement that eighty percent of the teachers be "Waldorf-Certified Teachers."

The proponents of public Waldorf schools ultimately justify their position by referring to the positive effects on the children in the Milwaukee school experiment. They maintain also that the Waldorf school movement simply cannot ignore requests for help, and that for the first time the benefits of Waldorf education can become available on a wide basis to low-income and minority families. Notwithstanding these justifications for public Waldorf schools, the following are reasons to oppose them:

(1) The creation of public Waldorf schools is the antithesis of the liberation of education from government control which Rudolf Steiner maintained was essential for Waldorf education to have any meaning.

(2) Public Waldorf schools, like all publicly funded schools, will be a part of the performance-based, technology-infused, nationalized education program instituted by "Goals 2000" and consequently will be subject to national goals, curricula, and testing. This program and its standards and requirements are inimical to Waldorf pedagogy and to Anthroposophy, which is its basis.

(3) Public Waldorf Schools make Anthroposophy and Rudolf Steiner subject to public attack and potential court battles over the issue of separation of church and state in relation to education.¹⁴ Court battles will mean that fundamentalist and secular humanist interpretations of Anthroposophy will be spread by the media and become part of the public record. Anthroposophists should never shy away from defending Waldorf education, Anthroposophy, and Rudolf Steiner against maligners. But they should not be trying to support and defend a spiritually-based Waldorf school within the confines of a state school system. Rather they should be defending the idea that the separation of school and state should be added to the separation of church and state.

(4) Public Waldorf schools encourage African-Americans and other minorities to continue to accept the very governmental educational system that has culturally suppressed them for nearly one hundred and fifty years.

(5) Public Waldorf schools have caused the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) to change even more from a cultural membership organization that fosters Waldorf pedagogy to a political body that focuses on certifying teachers and recognizing schools in a manner similar to that of bureaucratic government agencies.

(6) Public Waldorf school proponents make light of the fact that Waldorf teachers in such schools are compelled to be licensed by the state, compelled to negotiate with teachers unions, and compelled to acknowledge the state as the authority over the curriculum. Thus the desire to oppose such restrictions in the private schools is undermined.

(7) Finally, public Waldorf schools are a distraction from what we should be doing to foster independent Waldorf schools and to develop a free spiritual life.

The two tasks that Steiner gave seventy-five years ago to those enthused by Waldorf education can still serve as guiding principles for action today: encourage the development of Waldorf education and develop a broad base of finan-

cial support for independent schools that will be the basis for a free spiritual life.

Rather than create schools under the jurisdiction and control of the government, we should encourage everywhere the further development of independent Waldorf schools and of Waldorf-based educational centers for children, such as kindergartens and after-school programs. And we should create the means for children of low-income families to attend these schools and centers. We can begin to take up these two tasks by raising as quickly as possible at least \$225,000 a year for three years. The money would be used as follows:

- A \$25,000 grant to develop immediately a fundraising strategy for a national scholarship program or private voucher program for families in financial need who want to send their children to independent Waldorf schools.

- Two \$25,000 per year grants to help start after-school Waldorf centers that include children from low-income families.

- Two \$50,000 grants to encourage dissatisfied public school teachers to begin a private school based on Waldorf principles.

- Two \$15,000 grants to start Waldorf-based summer programs that include children from low-income families. (A portion of the preceding three grants should be designated for professional fundraising to assist the initiatives to become self-sustaining.)

- A \$20,000 grant to research the feasibility of developing a stronger connection between Waldorf education and the home-school movement. Courses for home-schooling parents given by the Waldorf teacher training institutes; the creation of outreach programs based in Waldorf schools; and the offering of Waldorf lesson blocks for children at home-school learning centers could be considered.

I have approached two different fundraisers connected with Waldorf education about these ideas. Both felt it would be feasible to obtain money over a short period of time for such projects, particularly if the leaders of Waldorf education were supportive. Inner-city Waldorf after-school programs and summer programs for

low-income families would enhance social relations in communities and would tend to elicit local financial support. I was also informed that the Waldorf school movement is losing some of its major donors because they are tired of funding school deficits and buildings and that they are looking instead to support innovative ideas.

What if all the effort that is going into public Waldorf schools were to go instead into an inner-city private school program run by African-American teachers, dissatisfied with teaching in public schools? These teachers could go around the country on a fundraising tour, praising independent Waldorf schools and advocating freedom in education as a real solution to educational problems.¹⁵ What donor truly interested in education and inner-city problems would not support these teachers and their schools?

With such grant money available, AWSNA could respond to inquiries about public Waldorf schools in the following way.

Thank you for your inquiry concerning Waldorf education and its application in public schools. The basis of our approach requires educational freedom, and, therefore, it is necessary to be free from government control in order to found a Waldorf school. Without freedom our educational methods would degenerate to the level of the education that you are experiencing in your public school. We have no doubt that our methods are applicable anywhere and will have positive results as long as the teachers are willing and free to teach out of the spiritual view of the human being on which the pedagogy is based. Therefore, according to our perspective, if you are truly interested in helping the children in your area, the first step you need to take is to renounce your connection with the state as far as education is concerned. If you are willing to do this, we can assist you and your colleagues in learning about Waldorf education and its spiritual basis, Anthroposophy. Also, funds are available to help you start a private Waldorf school or program in your community. If you feel that you cannot give up your allegiance to public education, you still can attend courses at our Waldorf teacher training institutes for your personal development.

If we had taken the above approach three or four years ago, I am convinced we would have

helped just as many minority children as are enrolled in the public Waldorf school in Milwaukee. Also we would have begun to create a broad base of financial support for families wanting to send their children to independent Waldorf schools, and we would have furthered true cultural freedom. Instead we have created public Waldorf schools, which help to maintain public education until an even more oppressive government control system is set in place through laws such as the "Goals 2000: Educate America Act."

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Notes:

1. To obtain a copy of "Goals 2000: Educate America Act" (Public Law 103-227), telephone the U.S. House of Representatives Document Room at (202) 225-3456.
2. "Goals 2000: Educate America Act," Section 231.
3. "Goals 2000: Educate America Act," Section 405.
4. For a further discussion of the efforts of the Business Roundtable to influence national educational policy, see "An Alliance of Government and Business Seeks to Mold American Education" by Gary Lamb, in Issue No. 8, Winter/Spring 1992-93, of *The Threefold Review* (P.O. Box 6, Philmont, NY 12565; (518) 392-5728).
5. Rudolf Steiner, *Conferences with Teachers of the Waldorf School in Stuttgart*, Vol. I, 1919-1920 (Steiner Schools Fellowship Publications, Forest Row, England), p. 125.
6. Rudolf Steiner, *Soul Economy and Waldorf Education* (Anthroposophic Press, Spring Valley, New York, 1982), pp. 314, 315.
7. The problem of government control of education is equally true today.
8. Rudolf Steiner as quoted in "How Important Is It That Schools Be Independent Today" by Helmut von Kugelgen, *The Threefold Review*, Issue No. 2, Winter 1989, p. 4.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
10. Even though the intentions of individuals working in these ways may be to further Waldorf education, it is time to realize that such efforts in the end only strengthen the power of the government over education and consequently are self-defeating.
11. Rudolf Steiner, *Toward Social Renewal* (Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1977), p. 75.
12. *The Christmas Conference* (The Anthroposophic Press, Inc., Hudson, New York, 1990), p. 219.
13. Rudolf Steiner, *Human Values in Education* (Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1971), pp. 21, 22.
14. An example of this is the recent article, "Are Rudolf Steiner's Waldorf Schools 'Non-Sectarian'?" by Dan Dugan and Judy Daar, which appeared in the secular humanist magazine, *Free Inquiry*, Spring 1994, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Council for Democratic and Secular Humanism, Buffalo, New York).
15. Dorothy St. Charles, the African-American public school principal of the Urban Waldorf School, has spoken in glowing terms about Waldorf education. But her presentations do not help gain financial support for independent schools nor do they promote the essential idea that education should be liberated from the state.

Truth & Beauty

THE ROLE OF THE ARTS IN WALDORF EDUCATION

The students whose artwork appeared in this exhibit might be surprised to see their creations framed or placed on pedestals. Very little of this incontestably artistic work was done by children intending to create "works of art." Almost everything on display was made in the course of a normal school day and valued the same as any other classwork or homework. In a Waldorf school, the ability to create something artistic is regarded as a natural endowment, not the exceptional gift of a chosen few. In all schools, teachers expect children to be able to read, write, and work with numbers. In Waldorf schools, teachers also are convinced that every child will be able to draw, paint, sculpt, knit, sing, and dance. And it is because artistic activity is ordinary in a Waldorf school that it is able to permeate every subject. A remarkable synergy occurs when academic or technical subjects are approached with an aesthetic sensibility. When a child must sketch a physics demonstration beautifully as well as accurately, or when students learn to make felted wool handbags with an eye for color and form as well as for function, "ordinary" artistic capacity can produce extraordinary art.

This color section features a few of the pieces displayed at the recent exhibition at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City. The Association of Waldorf Schools would like to thank the Phoenix Arts Group for organizing the exhibition. Contributions from the following schools are included: Hawthorne Valley School, the Milwaukee Urban Waldorf School, Chicago Waldorf School, Green Meadow Waldorf School, Princeton Waldorf School, Aspen Waldorf School, Baltimore Waldorf School, and High Mowing School.

The Phoenix Arts Group has been asked by the government of China to take the "Truth and Beauty" exhibition to that country in 1995. Persons wishing to support this project can contact the group at (908) 906-1999.



Like the primeval chaos before Creation, the ethereal colors in this kindergarten painting eddy and merge. Within their formless delicacy lies the essence of children's inborn artistry and the seeds of all that informs the artistic life of a Waldorf school. Reflecting the process of evolution, the clouds of color condense with the rising sun, and assume the myriad, circling forms of life. With time, children learn to understand color with their heads as well as their hearts. The quiet harmony of a color wheel transfuses to the precision of geometry and to the conscious imitation of nature, until color is completely absorbed by form and the dodecahedron stands created out of black and white alone. Out of this sepulchral image the human form emerges, pieced together in mosaic. Along the path of learning, from their encounter with pristine formlessness to their work achieving a balance between form and freedom in a self-portrait, the student discovers and rediscovers the ageless bond between truth and beauty.



A pair of leprechauns.



Radiant primary colors.

Simple, natural, and aesthetic surroundings are conducive to artistic activity. Children in Waldorf nursery-kindergartens draw with beeswax crayons, paint with watercolors, and learn how to bake and cook – all in the spirit of creative play that lays a solid foundation for later creativity.

First graders learn to read through writing, as crayoned pictures – drawn from fairy tales told by their teacher – metamorphose into letters of the alphabet. All their work goes into main lesson books, personal "portfolios" that serve as textbooks. Movement is everywhere: in the rhythmic games that introduce the times tables; in form drawing, where children trace lines in the air and with their footsteps before they put them on paper; and in eurythmy, an art of movement based on the inaudible gestures inherent in music and speech. Music is present throughout the day in singing and in playing pentatonic lyres or recorders, and often as well in the preparation for the class play at year's end.



"D" is for Dragon. A first-grade letter drawing.



A drawing from *The King of Ireland's Son*, a frequently used second-grade story.

The lives of the saints and Aesop's Fables, recounting the noblest of deeds alongside the somewhat less than noble, provide the text and illustrations for the second-grade main lesson books. The children start to use lower case block letters and begin reading, often from books handwritten by the teacher. Form drawing, with circles and inscribed polygons, brings a visual dimension to the understanding of numerical relationships. The beeswax crayons used in the early grades are very responsive to hand warmth and pressure, and bring a tactile element into the children's work on paper.

Leaving the paradise of early childhood and confronting the uncertainties of life for the first time, third graders find reassurance in Old Testament stories, filled with archetypal figures who take hold of the world and make it fruitful. Accordingly, farming and gardening, house building, time-telling, measurement and grammar now enter the curriculum. Memorization of biblical psalms and of poems about farming, and learning the parts for longer class plays enhance the development of memory. String instruments enter the music classroom, and with them the possibility of orchestral work in the later grades.



Third-grade painting of a winter scene.



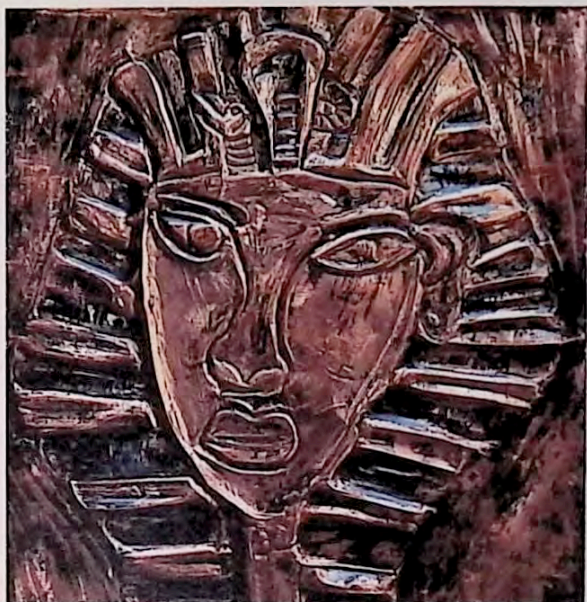
Cross-stitched bag.

Stories based on Norse mythology address the ten-year old's growing sense of self with powerful images and rollicking humor. The braiding that characterizes Norse art is echoed in the complex braids and knots the children create in form drawings, as well as in handwork projects that introduce sewing and the cross-stitch. Zoology brings in science as a separate subject for the first time, and local geography meets the fourth grader's awakening interest in the wider world.

In the children's art work, color, which flowed so freely in the earlier grades, begins to anchor itself more strongly to the lines and forms of representational art.



Painting from the fourth-grade main lesson on zoology.



Copper relief: "An Egyptian Pharaoh."

The study of world history begins, with tales based on epics from India (the *Mahabharata*), Persia (*Zend-Avesta*) and Greece (the *Illiad* and the *Odyssey*), retold and illustrated by the class. Reciting ancient poems, deciphering hieroglyphics, building models of ancient temples, and portraying Indian gods or Greek heroes in a class play are some of the ways in which the experience of history is enlivened. In botany, children see the polarities of growth and decay, light and darkness reflected in the ecological balance needed to sustain plant life. Similarly, they encounter the interplay of active and passive voice in grammar, and become capable of greater sophistication in their compositions on myth and history.

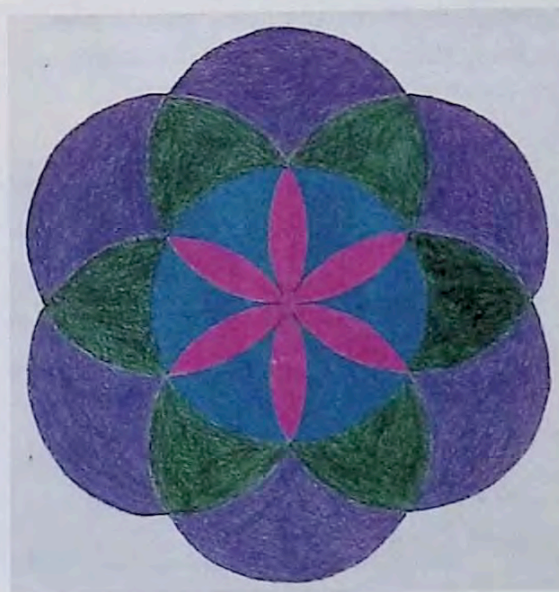
Sewing, the design of patterns, the creation of stuffed animals and dolls, and in later years the making of clothing, help children become producers as well as discerning consumers.



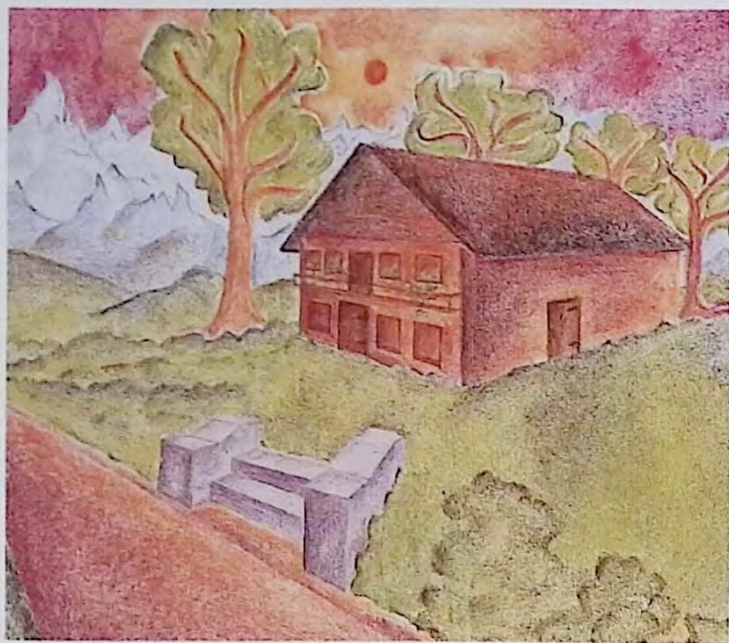
Middle-school handwork projects.

The sixth grader's growing interest in lawfulness and structure finds a satisfying correlate in the study of geometric drawing. Having used a straightedge ruler and compass for precision, the students go on to color and shade their drawings according to their personal aesthetics. This blending of the universal with the particular is also mirrored in physics. Acoustics places the student's already extensive experience with musical tones into a scientific context. Optics experiments with prisms, colored filters, and lenses bring a new objectivity after years of painting and playing with color.

Sixth graders learn astronomy by observing the night sky with the naked eye. As they become familiar with the wandering stars and the phases of the moon, the myths behind the names of constellations come alive for them, and their awe and excitement find reflection in their artwork.



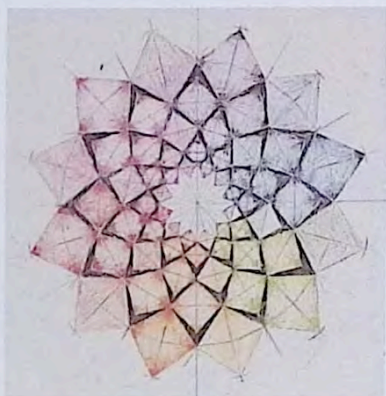
Geometric drawing.



Seventh-grade perspective drawing.

The Renaissance is the underlying theme in the seventh grade. The children reproduce the exercises that led artists to formulate the laws of perspective almost six centuries ago. As Leonardo delved into futuristic inventions and the mysteries of the human body, students study mechanics and algebra, and prepare drawings of human organs for physiology class. Painting, music, sculpting, and the creation of mechanical toys in woodworking all reflect the Renaissance motif.

For the first eight years, the children's main lessons and their overall progress in school are under the guidance of one class teacher. As this relationship draws to a close and students prepare for the big step into high school, the curriculum provides timely parallels. The children study the unfolding of world history, from the Reformation and the Age of Revolution to modern times. Eighth graders also study meteorology; foodstuffs, and their processing in organic chemistry; and electricity and magnetism in physics. With confidence in their capacities as painters and thinkers, musicians and mathematicians, they are ready for their next step.



Geometric drawing.



Stained glass piece, eighth-grade.



Black and white drawing exercise.

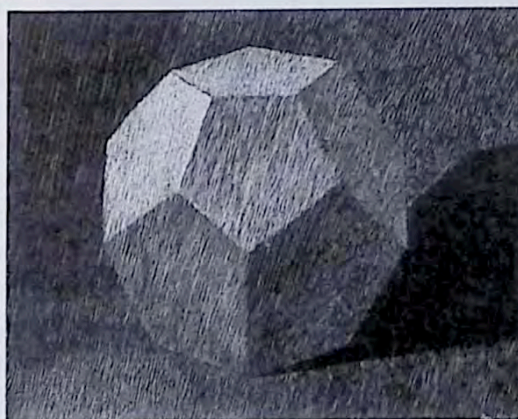
The ninth grader's capacity to think meets new challenges in such subjects as thermodynamics, geology and American government. Exercising greater cognitive powers, however, can easily lead to a cool, critical attitude toward life unless it is balanced with a feeling for beauty. Hence the arts are as essential in high school as they have been in the lower grades. Painting, drawing, and modeling, and crafts such as batik, book-binding, weaving, and woodworking are required elements in the curriculum. Choral and orchestral music, group recitation, and drama provide opportunities for healthy social interaction as well as for artistic growth.

Unlike painting or drawing, which are "additive" processes, work with a scratch-board is a "subtractive" one. The student must learn to envision the planes of light and shadow that define his subject and to render them with patient precision.



Illustrated page from an Art History main lesson book.

The students are now ready to take up deeper questions concerning the origins of human civilization. They plunge into the study of ancient civilizations and their legacy. Now they read the *Odyssey* whose stories they first encountered in fifth grade. And they undertake the rigorous study of Euclidean geometry and of applied geometry, or "kinematics." Since the beginning of their schooling, the children have been hearing and copying poems and occasionally writing them. A block on poetry gives new perspective on the art.



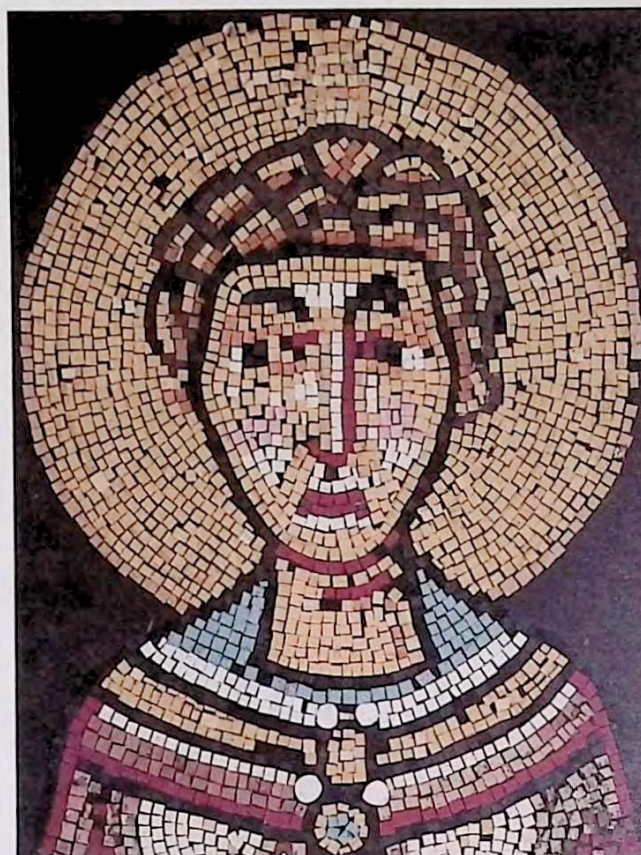
Black and white drawing, tenth-grade.

In the eleventh grade, as a new sense of personal destiny arises, two especially significant studies are taken up. Human embryology examines the delicate processes at work in the development of the physical body, while the medieval story of Parzival sheds light on the equally delicate unfolding of the human spirit. The study of metamorphosis in the plant world and of electricity and magnetism – both using a phenomenological, observation-based approach – are complemented by studies of romantic poetry and of Shakespeare's tragedies.



Self-portrait.

The young woman's face in this self-portrait speaks an inner strength and individuality developed by over twelve years' immersion in the arts and in artistically-based learning. The artist is clearly ready to meet the modern world.



A mosaic, an eleventh-grade art project.

Students are encouraged to look back on twelve years of schooling and to see the various subjects as threads in a tapestry that is still being woven. They now need to relate the warp and weft of their learning to the world at large. Great stress is placed on the ecological implications of zoology and botany. The philosophical aspect of courses on "The Twentieth Century" or "The Idea of History" evinces the lifelong task of harmonizing the often conflicting demands of ideals and realities.

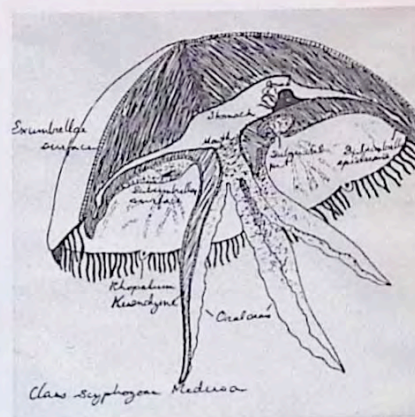


Illustration from twelfth-grade zoology.

Projective Geometry

A Waldorf High School Subject with a Rich and Important History

By Norman Davidson

The science of Pure Mathematics, in its modern developments, may claim to be the most original creation of the human spirit.

Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947)

On board a ship sailing from Constantinople to Venice in the fifteenth century, a German churchman suddenly had an inspiration which sparked a complete change in ideas about space and the universe. This inspiration lies at the root of the way in which geometry and cosmology were developed right up to the present day.

The churchman, Nicholas of Cusa, was returning from a papal mission during the winter of 1437-38. His experience led to his writing a book called *Of Learned Ignorance* in which a remarkable geometrical figure appeared – the first diagram I know of which includes the idea of infinity as a usable concept in pure geometry, and which anticipates modern projective geometry. In Chapter 13 of his book, Cusa writes: "the circumference of the absolutely greatest possible circle will be the smallest possible curve; it will be, therefore, absolutely straight." Figure 1 reproduces his illustration of this.

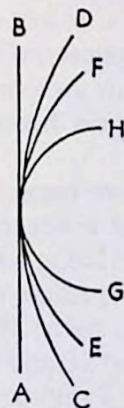


Figure 1.

In other words, the line GH is part of the circumference of a circle. If this circle is expanded towards the right, the part of the circumference remaining will flatten into EF and CD. If one expands the circle infinitely, then the remaining part of the circumference will become the straight line AB.

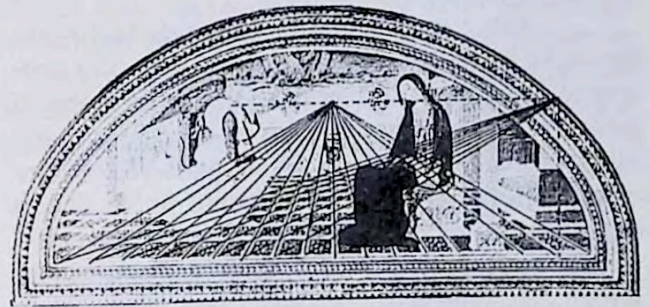


Figure 2.

A reconstruction of the perspective principle underlying Neroccio de' Landi's "Annunciation" (c.1475). Yale University Museum, New Haven, Connecticut. From "The Renaissance Rediscovery of Linear Perspective" by Samuel Y. Edgerton, Jr. Harper and Row, New York, 1975.

This kind of idea was developed by mathematicians during the time of the Italian Renaissance, and the birth of perspective drawing. Pictures had, for example, "vanishing points" where parallel lines converged (Figure 2).

Projective geometry arose out of this background and was organized into a mathematical science in the last century. When developed from pure drawing, it is called synthetic projective geometry and is built up from the simple connection or intersection of points, lines, and planes. It includes the concept of infinity as a "thing in it-

self," involves no measurement but only relationships in space, uses only a straight edge and compass, and has been called the "most elegant" department in the "house of mathematics" by the renowned American mathematician Morris Kline.

Universities and colleges in Europe and America used synthetic projective geometry in their curricula, even in general studies, at the beginning of this century. It was considered to be a valuable exercise in pure, imaginative thinking, but since then the increase in a more pragmatic and utilitarian approach to education has ousted it from the curriculum. Today, Waldorf high schools are about the only places where this important discipline is kept alive. Elsewhere, if it is taught, it is usually approached through algebra (analytical projective geometry) rather than through the elegance of the visual, synthetic drawing exercises.

After centuries of individual breakthroughs by mathematicians into new ideas concerning infinity and space, the principles of projective geometry were formulated and made into a science by the Frenchman Jean-Victor Poncelet. The story of how he came to do this is characteristic of this particular form of geometry, which explores new realms of pure thought, which transcends the physical, and which starts again, from nothing, in the development of a geometry for modern times.

In Poncelet's case, starting from nothing meant being in prison with no textbooks and only his mind to conjure forth the first principles. Poncelet was an officer in the Engineer Corps of Napoleon's army which campaigned against Russia. In the retreat from Moscow in 1812, when he was twenty-four years of age, Poncelet was left for dead on the battlefield but was found alive by the Russians and taken prisoner. He was imprisoned in the city of Saratov on the banks of the Volga before being released and returning to France in 1814. But during these two years he decided to occupy himself by reconstructing and developing in his mind what he knew of the new geometry—working from first principles and then evolving his own research. It is said that he used charcoal from a fire to draw geometrical diagrams on the

prison wall to teach some of his men, who were fellow prisoners, in preparation for their exams should they return to France. When given drawing materials by his captors, Poncelet filled seven notebooks with his work. These notebooks formed the basis for later writings which included important principles of a new projective geometry which could be developed into a mathematical system of its own.

One of the basic principles of the new geometry developed by Poncelet was that of "continuity." It stems from the idea of Nicholas of Cusa, mentioned earlier, that the arc of a continuously expanding circle eventually becomes a straight line. This was later taken up by the great German astronomer Johannes Kepler, who spoke of his "divine Cusa," and created the concept of "points at infinity," later described as "ideal points." A common way of illustrating this idea is shown in Figure 3.

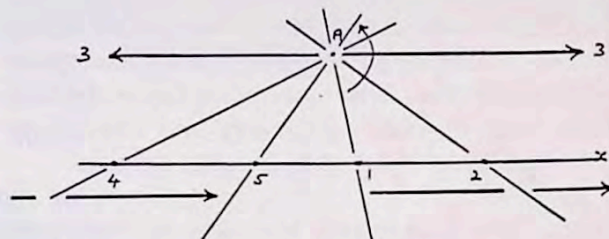


Figure 3.

Here one starts with line "x" and point "A". Through "A" a line is drawn, intersecting "x" in point "1". Then the line through "A" is rotated anti-clockwise. Because two straight lines in a plane do not intersect twice, the line parallel to "x" intersects "x" either once or not at all. However, the progression on line "x" from point "1" to point "5" moves in the same direction as does the rotation of the line through "A".

If we conceive the line parallel to "x" as having one intersection only with line "x" (the intersection being either to the right or to the left), then the movement of the point on "x" is continuous. Thus, point "3" is at infinity on line "x" in either direction, and so an infinite straight line has one of its points at infinity. With this, one is simply saying that in a plane, two straight lines always intersect once. There is no exception if the lines are parallel.

This opened up the whole concept of there being countless points at infinity (derived from countless possible lines in space) and of countless lines at infinity, these points and lines all lying on one plane at infinity. This addition of a plane at infinity (which is flat, yet appears to be all around us) transformed the human being's whole inner experience of space. The progress from points to lines to a plane at infinity took time, lines at infinity being first conceived by the Frenchman Girard Desargues (1593-1662) and the plane at infinity by Poncelet.

Another fundamental principle of projective geometry developed by Poncelet is that of duality. In a plane, point and line are "polar opposite" to each other and interchangeable. In other words, the relation between points is the same as the relation between lines, and a figure can be transformed into its opposite by substituting points for lines and lines for points. The resulting polar opposite figure is also a cohesive geometrical figure, as valid as the one it was derived from. Therefore, the number of possible figures and theorems is doubled. An illustration of the principle is shown in Figure 4, where two points determine one line, two lines determine

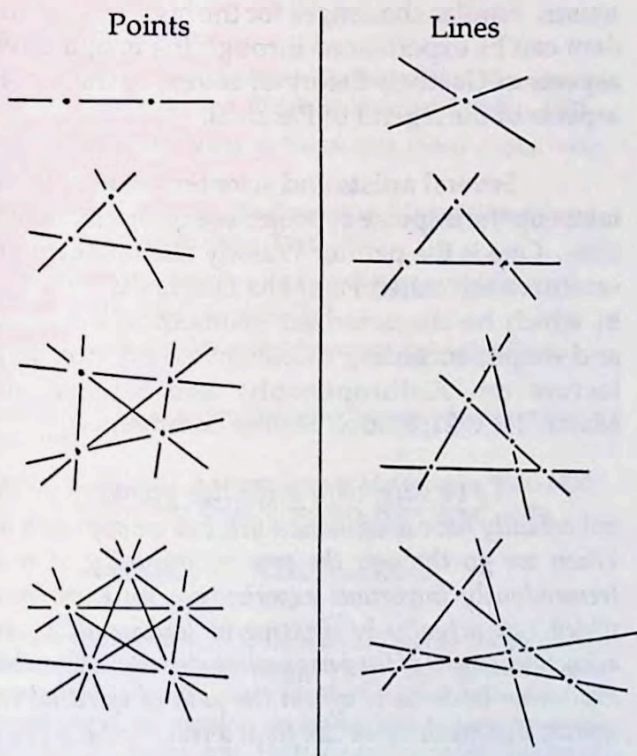


Figure 4.

one point; three points determine three lines, three lines determine three points; four points determine six lines, four lines determine six points; and so on.

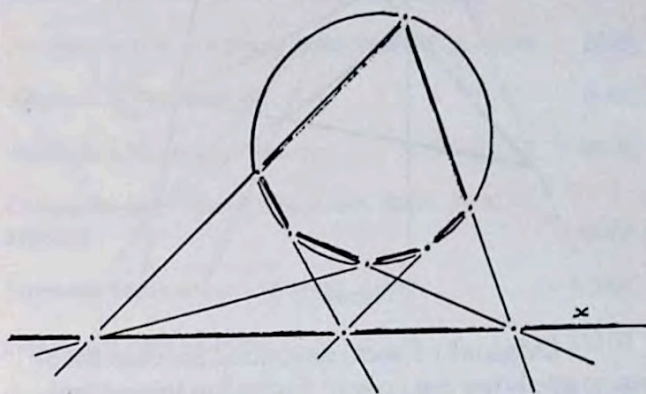


Figure 5.

An example of this applied to a geometrical figure can be seen in the theorem of Blaise Pascal, who discovered it in 1640 at the tender age of sixteen. Figure 5 shows the theorem drawn on a circle and demonstrates that if a hexagon lies with its corners on a circle, opposite sides of the hexagon intersect on a straight line (x).

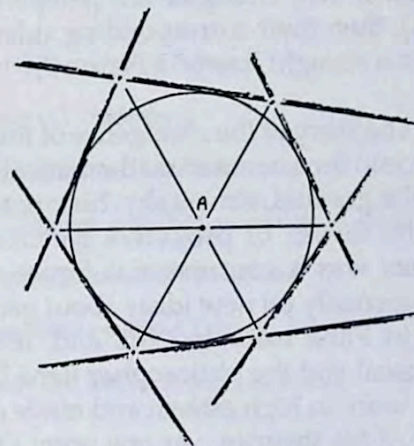


Figure 6.

Here one starts with a figure of six points and ends with a straight line. Taking a circle again, the polar opposite (Figure 6) is to start with six LINES on a circle (tangents) and discover that connections of opposite points pass through a POINT (A). This was the first example of polarization and was discovered by the Frenchman Charles Brianchon in 1806 when he was twenty-one.

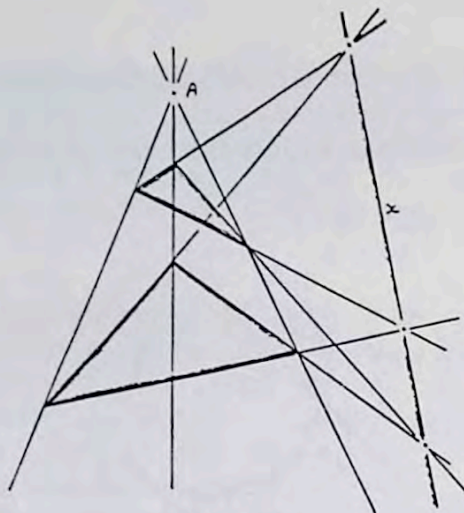


Figure 7.

Originally Pascal described his own theorem as applying not only to circles but to any conic curve (ellipse, parabola, or hyperbola). The theorem is a doorway to the remarkable and profound properties of conic curves – so much so that Pascal named his discovery the "Mystic Hexagram."

Another important geometrical figure standing historically at the birth of projective geometry is "the triangle theorem" of the French engineer and architect Girard Desargues. This states that if two triangles are perspective to a point (A), then their corresponding sides will intersect on a straight line (x) (Figure 7).

The story of the emergence of this elegant theorem into the stream of mathematical thinking reflects the gradual, almost shy, historical unfolding of the flower of projective geometry itself. Desargues was a controversial figure who lectured vigorously on new ideas about geometrical infinity in Paris between 1626 and 1630. Both Blaise Pascal and the philosopher René Descartes held his work in high esteem and made considerable use of his theories. At one point Desargues had posters put up around Paris offering a reward to anyone who could prove that his theory of geometrical perspective was not better than a rival one. In 1639, he published fifty copies of a book on his theories, but all of them were later lost.

Desargues, whose ideas about infinity were mostly rejected, became discouraged and returned to engineering and architectural work. However, his pupil Phillipe de La Hire had made his own copy of Desargues' book and this was discovered by accident in a bookshop in 1845 by

the French mathematician Michel Chasles. Around 1950 an original copy was found in the National Library in Paris.

Reasons, perhaps, for the rejection of Desargues' ideas were his rather obscure style of presentation and his invention of geometrical terms derived from trees and plants. For example, lines drawn through points on another line were "branches" on "knots" on the "trunk."

The history and development of projective geometry has grown to be a significant aspect of modern thinking, just like one of Desargues' geometrical trees with its branches. For students in Waldorf high schools, the fundamentals of this challenging subject are featured in the curricula of the tenth, eleventh, and sometimes the twelfth grades. This is the time when intellectual, critical thinking particularly asserts itself and projective geometry presents the challenge to enter fully into the visual realm of perspective, then balance and transcend it through the concept of infinity. For the elements at infinity cannot be perceived externally, and to grasp them requires an individual effort of imagination by the student. This complements ordinary rational thinking based on the senses. Similar challenges for the high school student can be experienced through the imaginative aspects of Goethe's theory of colors, or the moral aspects of the legend of Parzival.

Several artists and scientists of note have taken up the impulse of projective geometry in our time. One is the painter Wassily Kandinsky who wrote a book called *Point and Line to Plane* (1926), in which he characterized geometrical elements and shapes according to human experience. In a lecture on "Anthroposophy and Science" on March 21, 1921, Rudolf Steiner commented:

To be sure, with projective geometry we do not actually have imagination yet, but we approach it. When we go through the process inwardly, it is a tremendously important experience – an experience which can actually be decisive in leading us to an acknowledgment of the imaginative element. Also, this experience leads us to affirm the path of spiritual research, inasmuch as we can form a real mental picture of what the imaginative element is.

Students of Rudolf Steiner's philosophy have, over many years, worked to develop projective geometry beyond its nineteenth century forms and also to relate it to such fields as botany, physiology and embryology. Two examples of publications in this direction are *The Plant Between Sun and Earth* by George Adams and Olive Whicher, (Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1977) and *The Vortex of Life: Nature's Patterns in Space and Time* by Lawrence Edwards (Floris Books, Edinburgh, 1993).

This article began with Nicholas of Cusa's demonstration of an infinite geometrical concept through seeing a straight line as an arc of an infinitely expanded circle. Before discussing this figure in his book *Of Learned Ignorance*, Cusa gave credit to his predecessor, St. Anselm of Canterbury (c.1033-1109), who had compared absolute truth to infinite straightness. Using a straight line to represent straightness, Cusa also mentioned learned men who had compared God with an infinite circle. Cusa was creating a divine form of geometry to illustrate a book on religious philosophy. In doing so he initiated a new mathematical discipline for today which has its roots in the spirit.

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Some New Ideas for Funding Waldorf Education

By Paolo Pontoniere and Mary Purpura

This piece is actually a letter sent to us by two parents at the San Francisco Waldorf School. Mary Purpura and Paolo Pontoniere both work as writers. They have four children, whose ages are six, four, three and one. R.E.K.

Dear Mr. Kotzsch:

We were delighted to see *Renewal* publish letters and an article on the difficult issue of financing Waldorf education for all families that want it. Letters like the one in the Spring/Summer '94 issue from the former Waldorf mother who had to withdraw her daughters from Waldorf school because the financial burden of keeping them enrolled was too great are deeply troubling. And such situations are apparently quite common. We have one son who has just completed his first year in the San Francisco Waldorf School. Our second son will begin in the fall. We are facing the same problems as the family mentioned above, and so are many of the parents that we've met during our first Waldorf year.

We have given the question of financing Waldorf education a lot of thought. And we have a number of observations and suggestions to share with the larger Waldorf community. First, we'd like to address some of the concerns raised in your Editor's Letter in the Spring/Summer issue. You mention that Waldorf teachers and administrators are not getting rich on their salaries, which are substantially below those of their public school colleagues. You also point out that the tuition at most Waldorf schools is low compared to that at most other independent schools.

You're right, but both of these facts miss

the point. The problem of financing Waldorf education cannot be solved by paying teachers and administrators less. And lowering tuition would offer only a partial solution – though the widely held assumption that tuition must increase each year deserves to be challenged. The problem can only be fully addressed by each Waldorf school developing a policy that grows from a commitment to make Waldorf education accessible to every child. Further, we need to establish an economic policy that looks beyond the annual craft fairs, auctions, and benefit concerts. These fundraising efforts rely on the same small pool of Waldorf parents, friends, and supporters. We need to include the larger world outside of Waldorf and Anthroposophical circles.

Perhaps we can develop a series of economic initiatives that tap the financial resources of the larger communities in which we live. And perhaps these initiatives can serve real needs and help foster a broader understanding of the force for good that Waldorf education and Anthroposophy represent.

We recently have presented one such idea to our Waldorf school community for their consideration. We want to establish a "Kids' Cab Company" that would provide van transportation to and from the school for our students. It would also transport children between the ages of five and twelve from the larger community around the city for a flat, one-way fee. The project would have several benefits for the school. Vans could increase awareness of the Waldorf school in neighborhoods that have little or no contact with it. The issue of child safety – in a city that's been plagued by the problem – would be addressed. And the project would raise funds.

We think that the details of this initiative have been addressed in creative ways. We are looking for car makers to donate vans to the project. We're investigating the use of "green" fuels. And we're looking within our school community for the talent and energy literally to "get this show on the road."

There are many such opportunities for involving the larger community in school fundraising efforts that offer a valuable service or

product. And the larger community is hungry for the information and direction that Anthroposophy and Waldorf education can offer. The success of Rahima Baldwin's book, *You Are Your Child's First Teacher*, which makes Rudolf Steiner's indications for young children accessible to American parents, is a fine example of this. We need to exploit all available opportunities, both to educate people about what Waldorf education is and to dispel the myths that have grown up around it.

Part of the impetus behind our developing the Kids' Cab Company idea is the desire to make fundraising and the financing of school operations a community-wide effort. Currently, there's a feeling that every family is in this for itself. Either you come up with the tuition money, with or without assistance from the school, or you're out. This is quite isolating, and no one likes the feeling of being utterly expendable. We deeply regret the enthusiasm, talent, and energy that's been lost to the Waldorf movement because families – like the family who shared their story in the Spring/Summer issue – without the financial means to pay have simply gone away. The Waldorf movement shouldn't be generating the bitterness and resentment that must result from such departures. We have to come up with more ways for people who are committed to Waldorf education to participate in it.

There's another issue related to the financing of Waldorf education that requires attention. We know a number of families in which one or both parents work two jobs in order to finance Waldorf education for their children. Working two jobs is stressful for anyone, but for parents, it involves a necessary compromise in family life. We know this all too well from personal experience. There simply aren't enough hours in a day to work two jobs and to spend quality time with the children.

Our understanding of Anthroposophy is elementary. It seems to us though that Rudolf Steiner's indications regarding the needs of children, particularly young children, are not consonant with a virtually nonexistent, or greatly compromised, home life. In this scenario, the family's Waldorf journey becomes not a spiritual or cultural path, but an economic one.

The Waldorf movement needs actively to address the questions: What good does it do for a parent to work two jobs in order to finance Waldorf education? Who, if anyone, benefits and who suffers? The commitment to making Waldorf education accessible to everyone should include a commitment to making it possible for families to meet their responsibilities to the Waldorf community without undue and excruciating stress.

Recently we learned of a couple of families at our school who have managed to secure funds from private foundations to help pay for their kindergarteners' educations. Information about such creative solutions to the currently atomized and individualized problem of financing Waldorf education needs to be shared. Perhaps we can create a Waldorf-wide database that would make available (on an anonymous basis, if desired) the particulars of the solutions. Families facing similar challenges would feel less alone and more hopeful. Perhaps the database could include initiatives like the Kids' Cab Company that involve the larger community. It's time to learn from one another, to help one another and to reduce the sense of isolation that families with financial difficulties feel.

Those of us involved in Waldorf education and in other Anthroposophical endeavors still participate in a market economy, i.e., much of our economic resources are spent on products produced by big companies whose main goal is profit, not the welfare of individuals, society, or the planet. Potentially, though, we constitute a mindful minority – within that larger economic mainstream – with considerable economic influence.

Many of us, either on our own or because of our encounter with Waldorf education, have thought seriously about what we buy, why we buy it, and from whom. We seek out toys, apparel, and furniture that are produced with care, with people in mind, and with respect for the renewable materials from which they're made. We support Community Supported Agriculture programs. We do all this though in a fragmented way. Instead, we could organize ourselves and endorse appropriate products. This could be an indication to the larger community of what is

sound. And it could acquaint more parents with the aims of Waldorf education. Products could range from musical instruments to toys to apparel to cars. We've all seen endorsements from various parents' organizations. Perhaps there could be an "American Waldorf Parents and Educators' Association" which endorses products.

We have made many suggestions and some of them may be difficult to realize. Therefore, we'd like to propose a national task force composed of Waldorf parents, educators, and administrators to investigate creative ways of financing Waldorf education. This group could solicit and develop ideas, research the feasibility of new ways of raising money, match projects to appropriate schools, and report results to the Waldorf community. Thank you for your attention.

Readers wishing to share their workable ideas may contact the authors at: 836 York St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

Letter From Smolensk

By Vladimir Pegov

Earlier this year a letter was forwarded to us from Russia. It was written by a teacher in the Waldorf school in Smolensk. (Smolensk is a city of about 300,000 people some 200 miles southwest of Moscow.) We are happy to publish it here. It describes the work being done in Waldorf education in a country where both Anthroposophy and Waldorf education were until recently banned. R.E.K.

We Smolensk teachers began working with Waldorf education for ourselves only in 1989. A bit later, in 1991, a real opportunity to develop alternatives to the state system of education appeared. The first non-state kindergartens, schools, and institutes of higher learning began to spring up. Now in Smolensk, which is one year "younger" than the Russian state (its first mention in the historical chronicles is dated 863 A.D.), there are several alternative educational institutions: a Humanitarian University; an Orthodox Christian "Gymnasium" or high school; a church kindergarten; a "New School;" and a Sunday School.

Our Smolensk Pedagogical Society "Waldorf Initiative" was born in the autumn of 1991 from the attempts of several teachers to work with three groups of children under school age according to the principles of Waldorf education. Looking back we are slightly shocked by the number of mistakes we made during these early attempts. But it was obvious that even at that time the parents of our pupils preferred our teaching to that in the traditional programs in the state schools.

Finally, on the first of September 1992, the first grade, consisting of twenty-six pupils, was opened in the school building of the State School Number 26. In 1993 two more first grades were opened, each consisting of twenty pupils. We are going to organize special seminars in Waldorf education for the parents of the children. Also, some months ago, two kindergarten groups were organized where teachers are trying their best to work according to the



Children of the Smolensk first grade and their teacher.

joys of Waldorf pedagogy.

Like others, our life is full of troubles and of joys. We are lucky to have such a teacher and guide as the American, Colin Young, who treats us in a really fatherly way. Mr. Young is also helping other Waldorf initiatives in Russia. Also, we are very glad to be taught at the seminars of the International Association for Waldorf Pedagogics in the countries of central and eastern Europe by such remarkable teachers as F. Kalgren of Sweden, Y. Nilsen of Denmark, H. Rorwahr, D. Ball, and others. But we also feel our lack of deep preparation in Anthroposophy and our lack of knowledge about Waldorf methods.

We are very grateful to our German colleagues and parents from the Steiner school in our sister city of Hagen, who supply us with wax crayons, recorders and other things which are not produced by our industry. But unfortunately our main problem with the school building is not settled yet. We are still working in the same building with the state school.

Still, we enjoy our little discoveries in the lessons, when owing to Anthroposophy we begin, like children, to comprehend the richness of our native language, and to discover the artists and musicians in ourselves. But still we feel the lack of literature, from Steiner's lectures to works on the methods of teaching artistic subjects.

But our greatest joy is our children, and of course, their unbelievable creativity which amazes us daily. We can also see the results of our work with the parents. We have made some steps from the first lectures and little celebrations with them to serious seminars and festivals. Now they are preparing the traditional Russian winter holiday Shrovetide on their own.

Unfortunately, the changes taking place in our country have brought in not only the positive ideas of Waldorf pedagogy and our American teacher Colin Young, but also Mars and Snickers candy bars; "Santa Barbara" and "Duck Cartoons" television programs; comic books; computer games; and so on, which have become a serious temptation for our children and their parents.

With every month we understand more and more clearly our responsibility to develop Steiner education in Russia and the importance of our participation in the world Waldorf movement. We realize it not only at a spiritual level, but at the level of everyday life events as well. For example, a teacher from Wiesbaden (Germany), where a new Waldorf school opened, came to Smolensk and by chance turned up at our school festival devoted to St. Martin. A professor of psychology from Norway with whom we are acquainted was in San Diego. While out jogging he passed by a Waldorf school, went in, told them about us, and then brought back lots of materials about Waldorf education in the United States for us.

And finally, mixing with our friends and colleagues from Waldorf schools in different Russian cities who have the same joys and troubles as we do, we have come to a conclusion which could seem too brave. Nevertheless, I will share it with you. We think that the Russian Waldorf movement can say something of its own and make its own contribution to the education created by Rudolf Steiner.

Vladimir A. Pegov
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The faculty of the Smolensk Waldorf Initiative.

The Nature of Culture, and Multiculturalism in Waldorf Schools

By Jeffrey Kane, Ph. D.

The following article consists of excerpts from a talk given in the spring of 1993 by Dr. Jeffrey Kane, Dean of the School of Education at Adelphi University. The talk was given to an audience of some sixty Waldorf high school students from the Waldorf School of Garden City, from the Kimberton Waldorf School in Pennsylvania, and from the Shining Mountain Waldorf School in Boulder, Colorado. The students had gathered for a weekend conference on multicultural and gender issues, organized by the students of the Garden City school. The article was first published in the newsletter of the Waldorf School of Garden City.

The concept of multiculturalism in Waldorf secondary schools is complex. Almost every direct approach to the issue raises questions related to the broad philosophical ideas and ideals that underlie Waldorf education. We need perhaps to go beyond the immediate questions regarding the curriculum and what goes on in the classroom and first define what we mean by culture.

What is culture? The question is not abstract, but is a very practical and pressing one, and one that requires a good deal of consideration. When we think of integrating different cultures in the classroom, we usually assume that culture can be identified with particular family patterns, customs, beliefs, etc. We fail though to take into account the multiple cultures that affect each of us. For example, when I use the name "Madonna" in a fifth grade classroom, you can imagine that the children do not always think of a virginal young woman with a babe in her arms. What images arise when I use the name "Michelangelo" in that classroom? He is not generally known as a sculptor but as a mutant turtle. Each of us assimilates concepts about ourselves through television, schools, children in the neighborhood, books, and parents, to name a few. Much of what we learn is

different from cultural source to cultural source. There are, obviously, layers and layers of culture within each of us that have given shape and form to who we are.

Among our present cultural influences is a technology that affects children in particular in a most profound way. The average American child sees about six thousand hours of television before he or she enters the first grade. That's about twenty percent of his or her waking life. What kind of experience does that child have of others, of his or her own self, and of his or her own body? What happens when you don't move your body for twenty percent of your waking life, especially when you are a young child? How does your ability to "flick off" what you don't like affect your capacity to resolve conflict, to compromise, or simply to concern yourself with others? This technology has also helped to create what might be called "McCulture." Television carries numerous programs and events all over the globe. Its effects are not limited to geographically-based cultures. Its power transcends space and its influence on cultural patterns is both as ever-present and as seemingly innocuous as the television set. Here we are discussing but one layer of culture.

Most of us also partake of a culture which is informed by our religious heritage. We are Jews, Christians, Moslems, Buddhists, etc. Each religious heritage brings with it a certain basic understanding of who you are, and what the world is, and what, perhaps, your given destiny is. You also have a national heritage, a racial heritage, a familial heritage, and a community heritage. Each of these brings a profound cultural legacy and a profound cultural influence to every individual. We are all multicultural.

There are also explicit and implicit aspects of each culture, which can be demonstrated with a map, for example. If you look at the map of the world that was used in most American classrooms a decade or two ago, it shows you what the oceans look like, what the land masses look like, and what their relative positions are. But there is an implicit aspect of culture here, an unspoken cultural message. In the center of the map is the United States. The former Soviet Union, though, is cut in half, is relegated to the edges of the world. The map is not only telling you where things are, it is also telling you which things are more important than others by putting certain things in the middle and certain things on the periphery. I guarantee that if you had gone to the Soviet Union in the 1970's, you never would have seen such a map. You would have seen United States split in half and the Soviet Union as one. Cartographers have begun to recognize the inherent biases in maps. They have started to create maps that, for example, relate to prime meridian rather than to political realities. The world map I have described and which influenced many of us in elementary school is relatively difficult to find today.

Could we turn the map up side down? Would it still be correct if we turned it upside down? North would be on the bottom! Is that correct? Certainly. Why must north be "up?" There is an explicit message that comes through the map, and there is an implicit message about how to relate to the world, how to orient yourself in the world. And each book that you read, each story that you hear, each painting that you study has an implicit message as well as one that is explicit. Culture always reveals itself in two ways: in a manner that is direct and conscious, and in one that is unspoken and invisible. This second way culture manifests is invisible because it is rooted in our own assumptions – our unconscious patterns of value, belief, and action.

What does it mean to have unconscious dispositions rooted in you? Consider how two of my children learned to experience their bodies in space and in movement. When my son Gabriel was quite young, I would toss him into the air, go out for a cup of coffee, and return to catch him. But, unconsciously, I didn't do this with my

daughter, Emily. I held her close and protected her. We throw our sons into the air and hold our daughters close. Gabriel and Emily learned to experience their bodies differently.

Similarly, we acquire dispositions about ourselves in the way we learn to celebrate birth, cope with death, arrange our diets, live in our families, and conceptualize what it is to be a child or to be an older person. These things are addressed by our culture even if they are not explicitly addressed. We are each shaped by many cultures, and we are shaped by implicit cultural messages as well as by the explicit cultural messages we get from reading particular literature or history or critiques of art.

Now, one of the problems we often face in a Waldorf school is that the cultures that shape us often do not conform with the philosophy undergirding Waldorf education. To better understand the foundations of Rudolf Steiner's approach to the world (and to education), consider Plato's allegory of the cave, which he uses in *The Republic*, and which he meant as an analogy for the human condition. Plato describes an individual chained in a cave, his back to the mouth of the cave. On the cave wall before him he sees, and takes for reality, the shadows of the real world outside the cave.

What we know to be the physical world is only shadow. We are shackled by our senses. There is a spiritual dimension to reality which does not necessarily conform to the laws by which the physical world is governed. The laws governing the spiritual world are not understood in the same way that we understand the material world. We have to transform ourselves inwardly, somehow, in order to be able to see or comprehend them. We have to be able to see the spiritual world reflected in the physical world.

Waldorf education helps us do just that. When you look at flowers as a small child, when you begin to draw flowers in sixth or seventh grade, when you study botany in eleventh grade, and you see the growth and movement of a plant, you begin to look through the physical world to see the forces actually giving form and shape to the physical world. These are spiritual forces.

When you begin to look at the world in this way, you incorporate a cultural assumption that is not widely accepted, at least not in the United States. As a result, Waldorf students experience a different culture than do students raised watching television, working frequently on computers, or studying detached abstractions in the early grades. Waldorf students often have a rich experience of art, music, myth, and story. Even mathematics and science are approached with imagination, mystery, and aesthetic sensibility in a Waldorf school. Waldorf education provides cultural foundations not widely accepted in larger American society. These foundations, I believe, give you an insight into yourself and into the world, an insight that is truly unique. This in turn gives you the strength and courage you need to live in a world which is appealingly materialistic.

In a similar way let us explore how we understand knowledge and learning. In school, you are most often taught that when you learn something, you learn it in a rational way, in a logical way. You learn it so that you can reason from it and you can reason to it. You understand how one idea fits into another idea in a logical way. You learn to be rational. And you think of knowledge as very rational outgrowth of experience. But some other cultures do not necessarily believe that you can understand the world best through logic, through observation, or through scientific analysis. There are cultures which suggest that you can perceive things more reverently, more deeply, almost as a dream. One of these is the Hasidic culture.

There's a story about a Rabbi who would only put his glasses on when he wanted to stop seeing. When he looked at the world with his glasses on, he saw the physical world. When he took his glasses off, he wasn't deceived into believing he was seeing reality.

In the Bible there is a story in which three men come to Abraham, and Abraham gets a calf to slaughter for dinner. What he did when he went to get the calf is not found in the Bible, but there is a story about it in the "Midrash" tradition. This tradition is concerned with the meaning that is in the spaces around the letters. When we write a letter in English or in Hebrew, we think of it as

a black form on a white background. But we can think of a letter in a reverse way, as a space surrounding the letter. And it is with this space and with the meaning found there that the Midrash is concerned. It is concerned with what is left out of the Bible, with the meaning to be found in the spaces.

According to the Midrash, Abraham goes to get a calf to slaughter. He chases the calf into a cave and in the cave he sees the bodies of Adam and Eve. And then, deep in the cave, Abraham sees a pinhole of light that comes from the Garden of Eden. As we read, we wonder, how on earth could someone write a story about Abraham seeing the bodies of Adam and Eve, seeing light from the Garden of Eden, when there is nothing of that sort in the Bible? It's just not there. Well, according to the Midrash tradition, that story comes out of the dream consciousness between the letters. There is a dream consciousness there just as there is a dream consciousness for us between our days of wakefulness.

This dreamlike consciousness offers unique insights into different aspects of the human psyche and of human evolution. So when we begin to look at the Jewish tradition, we find that the world can be understood through understanding the dreams, rather than through understanding the written word alone. If that sounds bizarre to you, think about psychoanalysis. Think about Freud; think about Jung. They said that if you analyze your dreams you can begin to understand different elements or aspects of your own psyche, aspects that would not otherwise be readily available to you or understood by you. The Midrash tradition tries to explain humanity not through logic, not through reason, but by providing dream stories that might have the same understanding, the same accuracy in the history of humanity that your own personal dreams have in providing insight into yourself.

This dream-like consciousness is found in all great mythology. When in Waldorf schools you study Norse or Greek mythology, that same dreamlike consciousness is brought forth. Logic does not teach you about yourself. The mythologies of the world do this, and they are generally not understood by your waking consciousness.

Where does this leave us? What I've been saying is that we are all the products of multiple cultures, and that these cultures affect us consciously and unconsciously. There are conscious methods of understanding. The unconscious methods are about who you are, what the world is, how the world is to be known, what it is to live as a human being. Those are all fundamental assumptions and beliefs that you are taught through your culture, through your multiple cultures. What I've done by way of illustration with the Midrash tradition is to suggest that your concept of what it is to know the world may be very lopsided. Some people know the world rationally. Some people know the world through the intellect. But there are entire cultures that say that the best way to understand the world is not through the intellect but through the imagination. And the imagination will perceive not the physical events, the shadows in Plato's cave, but will perceive the spiritual events and will understand the spiritual realities, which include, in the end, you and me.

Those are my basic points, but I'd like to address one last issue. I would argue that teachers should bring stories, myths, histories, ideas, insights and religions from each culture, from Africa, from Asia, from South America, from Europe, from all over the world into their teaching. They should do so to the extent that these resources reveal some aspect of our humanity, an aspect of our humanity that teachers believe is ready to be revealed to students at their particular stage of development. Each culture is like a light, not a full spectrum of light, but a limited spectrum of light. And each culture reveals a different aspect of ourselves and of humanity.

Each teacher has to ask, "What aspect or aspects of their humanity are my students ready to explore?" And he might find that it is an aspect that is best expressed by African literature, or by Middle Eastern history, or by Buddhist religious beliefs. Each culture presents a limited spectrum, and the teacher's job is to determine what spectrum to bring to the students so that they may observe their own humanity in a new way.

If Waldorf education is successful, the student receives a full spectrum of light, a full,

rounded perspective of herself or himself as a human being. And strangely, that's actually quite frightening, to get a picture of yourself "beyond culture." If you can begin to free yourself from the limitation of a one-culture perspective, what might happen to you? Truths might be revealed to you as they were to Moses on Mount Sinai. Moses heard the voice of God, and it was not a particular cultural voice, it was direct dialogue between a human being and a high spiritual being.

Similarly, if we learn to transcend the limitations of culture, we begin to think of ourselves as "I am," not as "I am black," or "I am white," or "I am Jewish," or "I am female." And the "I am" is what Moses heard. If we hear the "I am" we will experience the Ten Commandments not with "thou" beginning each but with "I;" hence, "I shall not kill." Martin Buber asks us to think of the Ten Commandments not as a words written on stone by the finger of God a long time ago, but to think of them as spoken words, spoken right now, spoken in the first person. Why shall I not kill? I shall not kill because I recognize myself as a full human being, and I recognize the responsibilities of my own humanity.

If we've been educated well, and if we take the gifts of each culture, we can then transcend the limitations of each culture. We become members of a new culture, a culture of free human beings. This is what Waldorf education strives toward and prepares you for: to walk as a whole, responsible, free human being.

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Waldorf Education is Non-Sectarian

By Norman Davidson

The fact that Waldorf schools work out of a spiritual understanding of the human being and the world, does not make them "religious" schools or church schools. They have no connection with a church. Anthroposophy, on which Waldorf education is based, is a spiritual science which is independent of any religious doctrine or system. It freely investigates the merits or otherwise of various doctrines, be they Christian, Judaic, Buddhist, Hindu, material scientific, humanist, or whatever. If Anthroposophy finds wisdom in any teaching (as it does in all of the above), this does not make it an adherent of this teaching or a part of any group which promulgates it.

Despite this, there are occasionally people who claim that Waldorf schools are church schools, religious schools, and sectarian. This is a charge which arises either out of misunderstanding or antagonism, not from a free, objective inquiry or an in-depth experience of spiritual science. The latest to put the charge forward are Dan Dugan and Judy Daar in their article "Are Rudolf Steiner Schools Non-Sectarian?" in the Spring 1994 issue of *Free Inquiry*.

Free Inquiry is a journal published quarterly in Buffalo by the Council for Democratic and Secular Humanism. Dan Dugan is an audio engineer whose son attended the San Francisco Waldorf School in sixth and seventh grades in the late 1980's. Judy Daar is a secular humanist and a board member of the East Bay Skeptics Society.

The Spring 1994 issue of *Free Inquiry* carries a front-cover statement which reads:

American democracy draws its special vitality from the First Amendment, which incorporates the principle of the separation of church and state. In essence, the United States is a secular republic; this means that the government cannot establish a religion. It cannot favor religion over non-religion. The unique character of the American experiment is the existence of a wide diversity of creeds, sects, and voluntary organizations, each free to flourish on its own terms without any special encouragement by the state, with tolerance for a wide range of beliefs and values.

The statement then continues in a defensive mood:

We therefore deplore the growing hostility toward secularism that has emerged across the political spectrum. Leaders from the center and left, including President Bill Clinton, have recently joined the familiar voices on the right in scapegoating secular ideals. It is naive to indict secularism for the alleged decline of society...

This is the context within which the anti-Waldorf article by Dugan and Daar appears. It states that because Waldorf schools are "openly sectarian" and operated by a "cult-like religious sect," Waldorf schools should not receive public funding, as they do in "Milwaukee and Detroit." Dugan and Daar go on to say:

The establishment of publicly-funded Waldorf schools should be cause for alarm for anyone who is concerned with preserving the separation of church and state, because these schools are the missionary arm of a religious sect hiding behind a facade of propaganda and dissimulation.

Real cause for alarm for an open-minded person would be:

1. That there exists the prejudice that Anthroposophy is a religion or religious sect.
2. That there are people who want to keep Waldorf schools with their spiritual and human values, out of an education supported by the general public.

The plays of Shakespeare or the works of Jung could equally come under the scrutiny of Dugan and Daar and be condemned as "religious" in their meaning of the word. Waldorf schools seem to have been caught in the cross-fire between humanism and religion, yet the schools are party to neither. In fact, Anthroposophy is far from such sectarianism and, from its independent position, is free to extend its understanding to diverse teachings, religious or otherwise. For example, The Academy of Humanism has goals which include:

...furthering respect for human rights, freedom, and the dignity of the individual; tolerance of various viewpoints and willingness to compromise; commitment to social justice; a universalistic perspective that transcends national, ethnic, religious, sexual, and racial barriers ...;

and these tenets are admirable.

There follow some of Dugan and Daar's specific statements (in italics) with my comments:

The group's (the Anthroposophical Society's) activities include ... a church, the Christian Community. The Christian community is not part of the Anthroposophical Society. Rudolf Steiner did not found the Christian Community. It was founded and headed by a former Lutheran pastor who became involved with Anthroposophy and asked Rudolf Steiner for spiritual advice for this separate initiative.

Steiner's mystical world view is deeply pessimistic. Despite the article's mention in this context of the "reincarnation of the dark god Ahriman," this charge of pessimism reveals the poverty of the authors' knowledge of, or understanding of,

Steiner's work. His world view has as its basis a picture of human life and consciousness evolving to higher levels.

Steiner states emphatically, in the manner of all religious dogmatists, that HIS revelation is the only truth, and that all other traditions and ways of knowledge are erroneous. This is completely contradicted by Steiner's continuous appreciation of, and positive insight into, a wide variety of philosophies, religions, and work of individuals. Dogmatism was the very thing which Steiner fought.

The (Waldorf) teachers are as dedicated as Catholic nuns. Waldorf teachers are not Catholic nuns, but they are dedicated. So are members of Congress. This does not mean that Congress is a religious institution.

Besides their seductive beauty, these schools use deliberate deception about their purpose and organization to attract the children of outsiders. From the beginning, Steiner planned to attract the general public by systematically concealing the objectives of the schools and the contents of their curriculum. If this is true, then where did the authors get their information for the article? As the article states, "Steiner's world view can be found in books from Anthroposophical presses on sale at Waldorf schools." Also, Steiner opened the first school specifically for non-Anthroposophical parents.

The authors then quote Steiner on the question of establishing an independent school movement in the State of Württemberg. Steiner had earlier mentioned the need for a "certain mental reservation" in negotiating with the authorities of the Weimar Republic (which succumbed to Nazi dictatorship within little more than a decade). Steiner then added, in the context of mental reservation, that the authorities would inwardly be made fools of. The intention was not inwardly to make fools of the authorities. That, though, would be an objective consequence of the need for inward reservation. Dugan and Daar, however, pull Steiner's words (spoken at a private meeting and taken from shorthand notes in German) out of context for their own purposes.

Any knowledge that conflicts with Steiner's eccentric doctrines is simply omitted (from the science curriculum). ... Waldorf graduates are unlikely to have a clear notion of the electromagnetic spectrum, despite having taken physics in both grammar and high schools. Any Waldorf school worthy of its name will teach the theories of conventional science along with an imaginative approach which penetrates the subject with lively human experience. Countless Waldorf graduates take up college studies successfully.

The use of the word "God" in Waldorf class prayers was already, in the 1920's, a conscious accommodation to public sensitivities [sic]. Anthroposophical writings usually refer to "the gods" rather than "God." These changes were consistent with Steiner's policy of camouflage. Anthroposophical writings do indeed refer to "God" when appropriate, as here. This was no accommodation to the public. Also, the morning verse is not a "prayer," as Steiner explains in another quotation cited by the authors.

Waldorf painting classes have nothing to do with creativity or self-expression. Their secret intention is to work on the student's subconscious by meditation on pure color and symbolic images. Nonsense. This statement is more fantastic than anything the authors are accusing Anthroposophy of. Waldorf painting classes introduce the student to the laws of color and form through creative artistic activity, as any good art class should.

Waldorf schools ... have their own methods, which they have received from their master. Since Steiner is dead, there can be no modification or development. Untrue. Steiner was against any two teachers teaching the same thing in the same way. Waldorf teachers are continually researching their subjects and developing the curriculum. I have a research paper from a Waldorf teacher on my desk right now. The training institute for which I work graduates, every year, students taking an official New York State Master's Degree which requires free and independent research projects on Waldorf education.

Waldorf primary school students never touch a computer. The public explanation for this is that a child shouldn't use anything before he can understand how it works. The private reason is that computers are

believed to be an incarnation of the evil spirit Ahriman. This is a good example of how concealed doctrine has a deleterious effect on the curriculum. Not so. The computer, as all of modern science, justifiably has its main focus in the upper rather than the lower grades of school. This has nothing to do with keeping Ahriman, or anyone else, out! Waldorf educators consider, along with many non-Waldorf educators (such as Dr. Jane Healey, author of *Endangered Minds: Why Our Children Can't Think and What We Can Do About It*, and Professor Joseph Weizenbaum of MIT) that work with computers is not appropriate for younger children and even may adversely affect their intellectual development.

Thus the article continues, and I do not have the space to cover it all. Nevertheless, I would like to salvage something positive. First, there is the question of whether a full-fledged Waldorf school can exist within a governmental school system. The fundamental characteristic of Waldorf education is that it must operate in cultural freedom, independent of state control concerning its curriculum, methods and organization. Also, the faculty of such a school must have trained or genuine, Waldorf-committed teachers who freely handle the curriculum and the affairs of the school in mutual responsibility. Even given the teachers' freedom, where will they come from? Already we do not have enough trained teachers to go round the growing number of Waldorf schools which are independent of the state.

Secondly, I think that Dugan and Daar make a valid point when they ultimately say:

It might be possible to establish schools that take many of the good Waldorf school ideas into a secular environment, but this could only be done by people not indoctrinated by Anthroposophical training.

This is a fair comment, with the exception of the word "indoctrinated." The authors also suggest that "school boards are looking for creative alternative solutions to educational problems."

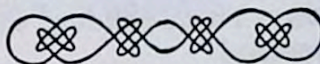
Countless inquiries asking for help from Waldorf methods have come to my training institute over the past few years. I think that an important way in which public schools can benefit from

Waldorf education is for certain external techniques regarding, for example, the curriculum, classroom methods, and faculty co-working to be integrated into the public school system. This could be done in response to the stated needs of the public school teachers. Steiner himself lectured to public school teachers and already courses and counseling for public schools are taking place through Waldorf training centers in the United States. This could be developed further.

Before arriving at their final and important point about non-Waldorf schools taking up "many of the good Waldorf school ideas," Dugan and Daar seek to discourage public funding for Waldorf with an attack against the very spiritual science which inspired the good ideas. They assert that Anthroposophy is a "cultlike religious sect" and Waldorf schools are "sectarian." If this were true I would not have spent the last twenty years or so working within these schools and within the Anthroposophical movement, and doing the work I am doing now. I am simply not the type, and neither are my colleagues.

New Publications

In our Spring 1993 issue we reviewed Volume I of a two-volume set entitled *Waldorf Schools*. Volume I contains thirty-three articles about kindergarten and the early grades. They are taken from *Education as an Art*, which from 1940 to 1978 was the bulletin of the Waldorf Schools of North America, and was therefore *Renewal's* predecessor. Volume II, containing thirty-four reprinted articles about the upper grades and high school, is now available. It contains a wide variety of excellent and ever-relevant pieces, such as "The Community Sense in Children and Adults," by Marjorie Spock; "Modern Physics in the Waldorf High School," by Stephen Edelglass; "The Value of Art for the Adolescent," by A.W. Mann; and "A Creative Approach to Language Teaching," by René Querido. Both volumes are edited by Ruth Pusch and the set is published by Mercury Press, Spring Valley, New York. (914) 525-9357



The Anthroposophic Press of Hudson, New York, has begun the publication of a uniform series containing all the lectures and writings by Rudolf Steiner relating to education. Some of the material will appear in English for the first time. This autumn five volumes have been published. They are:

The Spirit of the Waldorf School

The Genius of Language: The Place of Language in Teaching

Education and the Soul: The Need for a Developmentally Centered Curriculum

Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy

The Kingdom of Childhood

The publication of these five books was made possible by an anonymous donor. The press plans to publish an additional sixteen volumes over the next three years. Those interested in the project can contact Victoria True at the Anthroposophic Press, RR4, Box 94 A-1, Hudson, NY 12534, (518) 851-2054.

Waldorf Education in a South African Township

By Truus Geraets

Tsutseletso was discovered five years ago by my colleague Theo Thorne. When walking through the township of Alexandra, Theo saw a boy about six years old leaning against a shack. The child was dirty and totally neglected but with intelligent, questioning eyes.

"Why is this boy not in school?" he asked the grandmother. "I have nothing," she said, "not even money for food."

Then she started to tell the whole story – of how Tsutseletso's father was already a long time in prison for armed robbery and of how his mother had recently been shot by a jealous lover. What she did not mention was that she, whenever she had a little bit of money, would drown her misery in alcohol.

The response of Theo, the first grade teacher at that time, was: "On Monday this boy is coming to school to the Inkanyezi Waldorf Centre. If he does not turn up, I am coming to fetch him." Tsutseletso came and he has not missed a day since. In fact, he cries when the holidays come around.

Tsutseletso is not only intelligent but also very artistic. We feed him and many other children in the school, but also have to give him some food to take home for an evening meal.

This is only one example of the difficult situations children face growing up in a black township. We have Waldorf initiatives under the umbrella of the Centre for the Art of Living in other townships such as Soweto, but the problems are the same: poverty, hunger, overcrowding (entire families living in one room), personal and political violence, incest, and unhygienic condi-



The nursery class at the Inkanyezi Waldorf School.



The neighborhood surrounding the Inkanyezi Waldorf School in the Alexandra Township.

tions. The conditions ask for special qualities in the teacher. A teacher here must often act as both father and mother figure to the children, be concerned about their diet and hygiene, and help them deal with traumatic experiences.

Under the apartheid system, all blacks irrespective of their level of income and education, had to live in the areas designated for blacks. Despite the end of apartheid and the start of majority rule, the residential patterns remain largely unchanged. Thus the schools still have children of different social strata. Many children come from situations like Tsutseletso's, but many come from families which can maintain a good family life and can pay something for their children's education.

An additional problem is that since the apartheid laws were revoked the population of the townships has grown greatly. Many people have moved in from rural areas and we have now 260,000 people living in one square mile, most of them in shacks nine feet by nine feet. There are shacks all around the school.

Just before the South African elections,

when political violence was still rampant, I was in Switzerland, and heard a radio interview with some women from Alexandra. It is a bad situation, the women agreed, but there is one school – the Inkanyezi Waldorf Centre – where people have respect for each other and where there is school every day. The government schools were

often closed at that time because the teachers constantly engaged in "chalkdowns" and marches to force the government to listen to their demands for higher salaries, for more schools and equipment.

The Inkanyezi school has been able to keep its neutrality and to gain the respect of both warring factions. Children whose parents belong to the African National Congress and children whose parents belong to the Inkatha Party both attend the school. The school, situated at the dividing line between the factions, has been an oasis of peace and stability, indeed a "true star" (Inkanyezi) of hope for the surrounding areas.

The same is true for the nine other Waldorf initiatives that have sprung from the social impulse of the Centre for the Art of Living. The Centre was started in 1984 to build bridges between people of different races.

The Waldorf movement faces an important challenge. How do we include multicultural and multi-ethnic concepts in our teaching? What do we teach children who come from a totally different cultural background? The underlying,



The author and dollmakers of the Rainbow Project.

I went to visit Thulisile's family in Venda, a six-hour drive north of Johannesburg. They live there in their cool, round huts, but without any cash. It is such people who flock to the cities to find work and wind up in shacks in overcrowded townships. The fact that I went to visit and got to know Thulisile's family and her home situation and very different culture, made all the difference for Thulisile. Since that time she has blossomed. She has started to speak and has turned out to be one of the best students in math. Such home visits are part of our continuing efforts to build bridges.

prior question is: How do we get in touch with people whose way of living is very different from our own?

In Waldorf education the aim is always to bring together the life of the school and the life of the home. In situations where the teacher and the children come from very different cultures this is especially important. In such cases, we, as Waldorf educators, should be interested in and find out about the way of thinking and the way of living of the culture of our students. This will help us understand them better. It will also help us gain acceptance as teachers in the community. If we can be accepted first simply as human beings in the community, we will be more easily accepted as teachers. And with that acceptance will come an interest in what we try to bring through Waldorf education. Experiencing and studying the culture of the community should be part of the outreach program of each school.

We had an interesting experience at the Inkanyezi school with Thulisile, the daughter of our caretaker. She was so shy that she never spoke. We were not sure even that she could follow the lessons in the classroom since her work was totally unsatisfactory.

Some of the Waldorf initiatives are in the crowded townships, but many are in rural areas. One is in Madietane in the northern Transvaal three and a half hours from Johannesburg. The problems facing Waldorf education there are poverty (partly due to recurring droughts), conservative attitudes, and distrust of things new.

Mongezi, who received his Waldorf teacher training at the Baobab Community College in Alexandra township, has taken a first grade class in the Lesedi Waldorf School in Madietane as of January 1994. But prophets are often not honored in their own land. The people of Madietane insist that the next class teacher definitely should be a white person. Who will take up this challenge, to live and work in a rural area with no electricity, quite far away from any town – to be reached only by minibus and with little remuneration?

It is important that the international Waldorf community think inclusively about initiatives in the Third World. One way to help such initiatives is to form a worldwide network for the sale and distribution of Waldorf handicraft products. Parents of the Inkanyezi Waldorf Centre

make beautiful ethnic dolls and soft-soled (eurythmy) shoes in bright colors, beaded and unbeaded. The Camphill communities (Anthroposophical communities dedicated to helping the developmentally disabled) are already marketing these products on a worldwide scale. A worldwide Waldorf network would help children in Waldorf schools in each area become aware of the culturally diverse world Waldorf movement. This is one way we can bring multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism into our schools.

Persons who have suggestions about such a program and/or who are interested in participating should please contact the writer at Box 1123, Blue Hill, ME 04616. Thank you.

Truus Geraets was born in Holland in 1930. She studied special education in Eckwaelden, Germany, and eurythmy and curative eurythmy in Dornach, Switzerland. She has taught eurythmy and curative eurythmy in Holland, Scotland, and the United States to people of all ages and in all walks of life, including persons in prison. In Germany she ran a home for children with special needs. In 1984 Truus moved to South Africa, and co-founded there the Centre for the Art of Living. Recently she has moved back to the United States.

Book Review

Courage and Love for Children in South Africa

By Truus Geraets

(Schaumburg Publications, Inc., Roselle, Illinois, 1993)

Reviewed By Frances Vig

It is neither difficult nor unusual today to find articles and books focusing on the inability of individual human beings and their communities to come to terms with a drastic and overwhelming world. There is no dearth of examples of the disintegration of human values in the face of present social, political and economic conditions.

This little book about Waldorf education in South Africa focuses on the activity of individual human beings of different nationalities and races who,

perceiving a need, felt inspired to work for true social renewal in a situation where the majority of human beings were by law denied their freedom. The political situation in South Africa is changing dramatically but the events described are of the very recent past.

Truus Geraets, on behalf of her colleagues, paints a vivid picture of life in the townships of South Africa. She provides historical background to the educational situation of the black African child; describes the social and political changes leading up to this year's



Inkanyezi nursery school children.

elections; and against this backdrop, profiles the contributions of the many women and men involved in the initiatives described. These people are not left as faceless statistics or lists of names but, being described through their work, appear as real individuals, lively, determined, and very refreshing. They include:

- Brigitte, who taught mothers how to make mealie (corn) leaf baskets from materials normally discarded as useless. The women sell the baskets to help support their children's school.

- The father of Tetoza, a child who had learning difficulties. In working with the parents to find a way to help the child, the teachers learned that the father had found Tetoza as a baby abandoned in an alley in the township. Despite his own poverty, he had taken Tetoza to raise him in his own family.

- Miriam, a public school teacher, who worked to open the Sikhulise Children's Garden in Soweto. Her life was threatened because she refused to be intimidated by a teacher's organization that wanted to dictate exactly how teachers should work.

- Emily, who discovered Waldorf education when she worked as a domestic for a white couple, and whose child was the only black child in their Waldorf nursery. As a teenager, Emily had had to walk four hours to school, leaving home at four in the morning and returning at seven at night without having eaten. Despite many difficulties, funding was found for her to train as a Waldorf teacher in England. Today Emily is facing the challenges of working in the Transvaal.

Again and again one reads of hunger, violence and extreme poverty. But it is not faceless hunger, faceless violence or faceless poverty. It lives and breathes and walks about. The experience of this hunger, poverty, and violence spurs on these human beings to create an education out

of nothing other than their creativity, ingenuity, and a determination that life can, and should, be shaped differently.

We ourselves live in a deeply divided culture. We too must seek solutions to problems whose existence we may not even acknowledge.

Our individual responses to the questions implicit in this book require a plumbing of the depths of our own humanity. If we, as individuals and communities, ignore our real differences, we will lose the vital contribution each can bring to the other. And we will become more deeply entrenched in our cultural one-sidedness. We will be depriving ourselves and our children of a far richer and deeper experience and understanding of what it means to be human.

This small book is an exploration into the indomitable quality of the awakened human spirit, and into the changes that can be wrought when awakened human spirits bring the full strength of their individuality to bear on a common goal.

Frances Vig was born in London, England. While studying at a teacher's college in Canterbury, Kent, she encountered Waldorf education. After doing a two-year Waldorf teacher training at Emerson College in Sussex, she visited the United States, and much to her surprise, decided to stay. Since 1973 Frances has been active in the Chicago Waldorf school community. After raising her three children, Frances began teaching full time in the Chicago Waldorf School in 1982. She currently has a second grade class and also teaches clay modeling. Frances was involved in the training of the teachers for the Milwaukee Urban Waldorf School.

TRUUS GERAETS

COURAGE AND LOVE FOR CHILDREN IN SOUTH AFRICA



NEWS

New Center at Teacher's College, Columbia University

In 1993, The Center for the Study of the Spiritual Foundations of Education was established at Teacher's College, Columbia University, with funding from the Fetzer Institute of Kalamazoo, Michigan. The Center seeks to provide a forum within mainstream American education where questions about the nature of an education for the whole human being can be raised and pursued. The aim is to identify the imaginative, ethical, aesthetic, and spiritual capacities our critical times require, and to explore the ways our educational and social institutions can nourish and reflect those capacities.

With this as its aim, the Center held four conferences during the 1993-94 school year. "Consciousness and Reality" was the theme of the first conference, which explored the relation between consciousness and education at their deepest levels. Speakers included Arthur Zajonc, Professor of Physics at Amherst College and an expert on Goethe and Rudolf Steiner; William Irwin Thompson, Lindisfarne Scholar at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and a student of the evolution of consciousness; and Robert Thurman, Chair of the department of Religion at Columbia University and renowned Buddhist scholar. They challenged the common assumption of the modern world that consciousness can be explained as nothing but the machinery of electrochemical brain functions. The nature of consciousness as a primary reality of life was underscored. The nature of an education that nourishes the full capacities of a truly imaginative and powerful consciousness emerged as a main concern.

The topic of the second conference was "Education, Culture, and Technology: A Creative and Critical Reappraisal." Speakers included Joseph Weizenbaum, Professor of Computer Science at MIT; Helena Norberg-Hodge, known for her work on ecology and the destructive effects of modernization on both traditional and industrial societies; Charlene Spetnak, co-founder of the Green political movement in the United States and

author of *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age*; and Jerry Mander, author of *In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations*.

These speakers examined the attitude of "technological utopianism," which characterizes much of modern education. This perspective uncritically assumes that all human problems are technical problems which will be solved by the extension of machines and chemicals into every corner of human existence. The speakers posed critical questions about the destructive effects of technology on environment, on communities, and on the sense of self. They challenged conference participants to explore what is technologically appropriate and technologically destructive in education, a question seldom posed by most modern educators.

The third conference, "Education for the 21st Century: Toward a Renewal of Thinking," had for its main speakers, David Elkind, Professor of Child study at Tufts University; Jane Healy, author of *Engangered Minds: Why Our Children Can't Think and What We Can Do About It*; Joseph Chilton Pearce, author of *The Magical Child* and *Evolution's End*; Henry Barnes, master Waldorf teacher and former President of the Board of Trustees of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America; and Joan Almon, Chairperson of the Waldorf Kindergarten Association of North America. Speakers described how the latest brain research confirms that excessive television viewing and other aspects of modern life are actually changing the process of human brain development, and thus making children harder to teach, less responsive, and less able to take an active role in their learning. Considered were the requirements of an education that would develop those capacities of thought and character needed for the complex problems our children will face in the twenty-first century. The papers presented in this conference will be published in a forthcoming issue of the *Holistic Education Review*.

The final conference was on the theme, "Education for a Living Planet: The Renewal of Thinking of Thinking and the Future of the Earth." Questions explored included: "What kind of education is required to begin to respond adequately to the global environmental crisis now threatening the future of the planet? To what extent is our

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