

FALL/WINTER 2014 – VOLUME 23, NUMBER 2

Renewal

A JOURNAL FOR WALDORF EDUCATION



*Seventh-Grade Dogsledding Expedition • Waldorf Education in Canada
On-Site Geology on the California Coast • Ninth Graders at the Blacksmith's Forge
Meeting the Questions of Adolescents • Tribute to a Fifty-Seven-Year Teaching Career*

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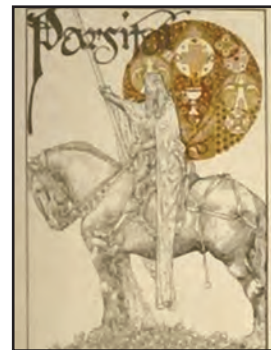
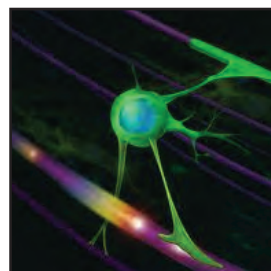
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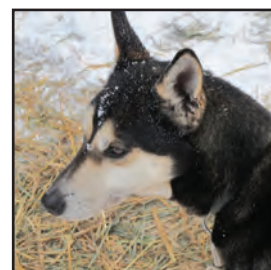
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Waldorf Alumni Forum

A Passion for Learning and for Teaching

BY GEMMA COHEN

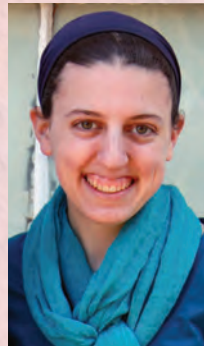
Gemma Cohen was a student at the Charlottesville Waldorf School for eleven years and graduated from the eighth grade there in 2006. She attended Western Albemarle High School, a public school, in Crozet, Virginia, and then the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia, where she majored in sociology and minored in German. She is now a graduate student at UMW in the College of Education. Gemma plays the violin and enjoys spending time with family and friends, cooking, knitting hats, and doing crossword puzzles.

—R. E. K.

Recently, in one of my graduate classes at the University of Mary Washington, the professor asked us to think back to elementary school and write down our most memorable experiences. My peers shared stories about the pies they baked during a unit on fractions and the Oreo cookies they used to learn about the phases of the moon. Meanwhile, I was thinking that, while for my classmates such experiences were rare and exceptional, for me, multidimensional, authentic learning was at the center of every single day of my prekindergarten through grade-eight Waldorf education.

My class teacher, Vivian Jones-Schmidt, led me and my class through all eight grades and played a significant role in shaping my attitudes toward school and learning. She taught me all four core subjects, as well as how to paint, play recorder, and meet deadlines. She taught me how to solve problems and to think critically and creatively. Now that I am studying to become a teacher myself, I am able to more deeply appreciate the amount of planning and preparation that must have gone into teaching so many different subjects and grade levels.

When I tell my friends and fellow students about Waldorf, they are awed not only by the fact that I had the same teacher for eight years, but also by the fact that I didn't have grades, textbooks, or standardized tests. "How did you learn?"



Gemma Cohen

they ask. I describe all the experiential, developmentally appropriate learning we did. And I assure them that I was well prepared for public school and excelled academically and socially in both high school and college.

Despite the skepticism of many curriculum developers and educators, much of the cutting-edge educational research points toward strategies Waldorf has been using for nearly one hundred years. I have been thrilled to discover articles that highlight the positive social and academic impact of using arts in the classroom (Brouillette 2010), the importance of time spent in nature (Louv 2009/2010), and the necessity of hands-on, authentic learning experiences (Duke et al. 2006). Is the rest of the education world finally starting to catch on? Are they beginning to see that there is more to education than memorizing facts? Without a doubt, I can say that Waldorf gave me much more than the academic basics—it shaped me into a lifelong learner and a passionate educator.

I love school. I am constantly amazed by the world around me, enjoy learning about it, and also enjoy thinking deeply about what and how I am learning. Although elementary education has become my primary focus, the enthusiasm for learning that Waldorf instilled in me keeps me fully engaged in whatever course I am taking—whether American history, chemistry, geography, or even calculus. I truly enjoy learning; it is not a chore. It is not merely something to suffer through so that I can pass a standardized test. I find great joy in the process—not just the final product.



Toy horse and rider, knitted in second grade



Watercolor, painted in first grade

From the Editor

“It’s All Things Considered, Kids, Cover Your Ears!”

News, Media, and the World as Good, True, and Beautiful

BY RONALD E. KOETZSCH, PhD

One of the first things I do each day is log on to Google News and read the leads for the “top” stories—international, national, state, local, sports... Later on, at home for lunch, I usually hear a news summary on National Public Radio, and at the dinner hour, I listen to *All Things Considered*, which includes updates on the top stories. In this routine, I am probably more or less typical of the majority of people involved with Waldorf Education, although there are, no doubt, some who remove the silk cloth coverings from their discreetly concealed televisions to watch rather than listen to the news.

In any case, most of us are exposed daily to what is referred to as “news”—those events that reporters and news editors have deemed of importance and/or of interest to us. The guiding principle of most news media is “If it bleeds, it leads.” In other words, the more violent, bloody, or perverse some incident is, the more likely it is to be disseminated as news. So this morning Google News featured the murder of Jewish rabbis in a synagogue in Jerusalem, the beheading of an American aid worker by the Islamic State, the murder of a Honduran beauty queen just before the Miss World contest, allegations of sexual abuse against Bill Cosby, the arraignment of a New York man who pushed a stranger in front of a subway train, and some dire warnings about global warming, climate change, and Ebola. These and similar stories are no doubt making it onto the day’s radio and television news reports.

Such stories that comprise the news do not portray the day-to-day reality for most of the six billion people on the Earth. They present a very narrow sliver of world reality, a radically skewed and darkly distorted picture. The Buddha’s first Noble Truth is that “Life is suffering,” and, in fact, suffering is intrinsic to the human experience in sickness, loss, old age, and death. All of us suffer and some—refugees,

the homeless, people in war zones—are suffering much more than others. But, for the mass of humanity, even in the underdeveloped and poor nations, life goes on and people find meaning and joy in it. Love, human relationships, friendships, the beauty of Nature, the joy of music and the arts, the enjoyment of learning, the satisfaction of a job well done, religious belief and intimations of a higher reality, all support us and give meaning to our lives. Despite what the news is telling us, we know, consciously or unconsciously, that ultimately, the world is good, true, and beautiful.

As adults, we can hear of the world’s daily horrors, harvested instantaneously—thanks to modern communications—from the furthest corners of the world and not be traumatized by them. If we were, we would be weeping onto our radios every day. However, what a daily diet of such images and narratives does to us is an interesting question.

Our children probably are exposed, to some extent, to the “secondhand smoke” of the news we adults get from radio, television, and the Internet. In their openness and innocence, they take in what they see and hear without the filter of long life experience and an informed perspective. Terrible images may be impressed indelibly on a young soul.

That the world is good, true, and beautiful—this is the transcendent truth that we as parents and educators want our children to experience and incorporate into their being. We want this living idea to accompany and sustain them throughout their lives. How we can create and preserve for our children this archetypal, healing, and supportive truth is worth our serious consideration. o



*The editor with
Amelia, his assistant*

From the Association Studying Together

BY DAVID OWEN-CRUISE

The Executive Team of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) is made up of Beverly Amico, the Leader of Outreach and Development, Melanie Reiser, the Leader of Programs and Activities, and myself, David Owen-Cruise, the Leader of Administration. Together, the three of us

are responsible for overseeing the daily operations of AWSNA—everything from payroll to school accreditation to fund-raising. Beverly and Melanie are in Boulder, Colorado, and I am in Ypsilanti, Michigan, not far from Ann Arbor. One of the tasks we have assigned ourselves is to engage in regular study of both anthroposophical and educational texts.



David Owen-Cruise

We study for several reasons.

First, we want to deepen our understanding of Anthroposophy

and its application to our lives. Second, we find that stepping back from our daily job responsibilities to examine the larger context in which we work helps keep us in balance. Each month, we meet for two or three days to work together on Association business. We start each of those days with an hour discussing the reading that we have chosen.

When we first started our jobs in the summer of 2013, we began by studying Steiner's *The Threefold Social Order and Educational Freedom*. We felt that this would be a good place to start our study as leaders of the Association. We followed that with Linda Darling Hammond's book *The Flat World and Education*. This year we are focusing on leadership in school communities by studying a new book, *Creating a Circle of Collaborative Spiritual Leadership*, published by the Pedagogical Section Council of North America. The book is about the work of the College of Teachers in a Waldorf school.

The first thing we learned is that short periods of discussion with a month between them is a very challenging way to discuss the threefold social order. However, that first study has continued to shape our understanding of both the operation of AWSNA in

the larger world and the functioning of an individual Waldorf school. Rudolf Steiner saw human society in terms of three distinct realms—the political or rights sphere, the economic sphere, and the cultural sphere. Each has its particular governing ideal—that of the rights sphere being equality and that of the economic sphere, brotherhood. The cultural sphere, which includes education, should be characterized by freedom. While schools belong in the cultural sphere, we are realizing that some areas, such as personnel policy, live in the rights sphere, while budgeting decisions live in the economic. Seeking to create a balance among these spheres within an organization is one of the unique characteristics of a Waldorf school.

We shifted to Linda Darling Hammond's book to see what lessons we could draw from the larger educational world that might apply to Waldorf Education. We also hoped that it could help us better assist member schools in making a clear distinction between Waldorf Education and public education in North America. We came away continuing to feel that Waldorf Education's focus on developmentally appropriate education of the whole child is vastly superior to trying to teach our students to pass high-stakes, standardized tests. This study helped us understand how to better support teacher training students as they get classroom experience before becoming a class teacher for the first time. It also stimulated us to consider how we can enable our experienced teachers to share their knowledge and experience with each other so that the quality of teaching continues to improve.

We have just begun working with *Creating a Circle of Collaborative Spiritual Leadership*, but we are already finding it to be both easily comprehensible and highly informative. The book is very relevant to the question of school governance. Steiner held that a core group of teachers deeply committed to Waldorf Education and to the destiny of the particular school—working collaboratively—should take responsibility for and guide the school. We anticipate several months of engaging discussion as we strive to understand this book and its importance for our schools. ☺

Discovering My Aunt Irene

BY ANNE MANDEVILLE-LONG

Late one evening in 2005, with my family settled in for the night, I finally sat down to read an article about the early history of Waldorf Education in America. It was written by Stephen Sagarin and began, “Picture yourself in Irene Brown’s living room on East 39th Street in New York City in 1928. You are looking for a building for your tiny new school with its thirteen students, the Rudolf Steiner School.” I sat there in shock as I realized that the

Irene Brown mentioned in the article was my “Aunt Irene.”

Growing up in Connecticut, I had heard stories about a previous generation of family members that included A.G. Spalding, founder of the Spalding sporting goods company, Albert Spalding, a renowned concert violinist, and Horace Brown, a landscape painter and Vermont state senator. Occasionally there were family comments about “Aunt Irene” accompanied by adjectives such as “eccentric,” “odd,” and

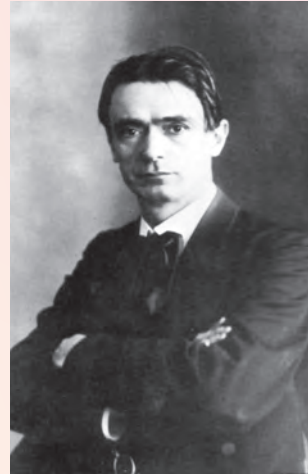
“loony.” I knew very little about my great-aunt, my grandmother’s older sister; other than that she had been involved in some way with the Rudolf Steiner School in New York City and had died of cancer at a relatively early age. I have since learned that Aunt Irene was born in 1881 in Hastings, Michigan, as Harriet Irene Brown, and died in 1934 at age fifty-three in East Orange, New Jersey.

My curiosity now piqued, I began a magical process of discovery that included communications with Susan Howard, head of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association, a meeting with Henry Barnes, the official historian of Anthroposophy and Waldorf Education in America, and a visit with Marjorie Spock, a pioneer of Anthroposophy in this country. Through this journey, I learned much more about Irene Brown, and also about Marjorie Spock and Rudolf

Steiner, and their collective impact on the genesis of Waldorf Education, eurythmy, and anthroposophical medicine in America.

I first contacted Susan Howard, who had recently published an article about the beginnings of Waldorf early childhood education in America. Susan was able to tell me that my Aunt Irene was one of the early members of the General Anthroposophical Society and one of the very few Americans who were present at the Society’s founding at the Christmas Conference in 1923 in Dornach, Switzerland. Irene had adopted two sons during World War I, had introduced another legendary Waldorf figure, Arvia MacKaye, to Anthroposophy, and had made numerous trips to Dornach to study under Rudolf Steiner. In 1923, together with Arvia MacKaye and Lucy Neuscheller, she established in New York City a branch of the Educational Union for the Realization of Spiritual Values, which later became the Rudolf Steiner Educational Union. In 1928, with funds secured from the family business, Irene Brown purchased a brownstone on East 39th Street in Manhattan. That building served as Irene’s residence but also as the home of the first Waldorf school in North America. It housed as well the office of the fledgling Weleda Company.

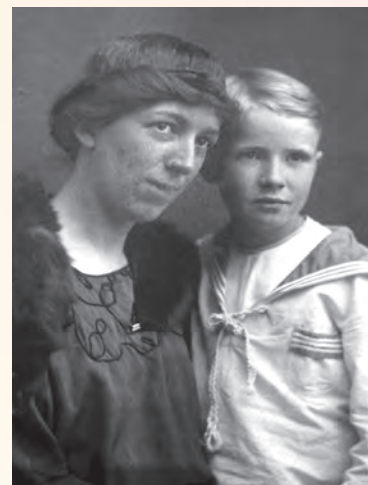
Susan encouraged me to contact Henry Barnes, whose 2004 book, *Into the Heart’s Land*, is a history of the anthroposophical movement in America. I met Henry in Spring Valley, New York, and we had a long and far-ranging conversation. Henry confirmed what I had learned and added more details about my aunt’s involvement with the early years of the New York school. During our conversation, we both realized the coincidence that my newly



Rudolf Steiner
(1861–1925)



Irene Brown with her mother, Mary Spalding Brown, at the family home in Llewellyn Park, New Jersey, early 1930s



Irene Brown with her adopted son Guy, early 1920s



Old English Medieval Christmas Play in New York City, 1926: Leo Neuscheller, Arvia MacKaye, Lucy Neuscheller, Henri Zay, Ralph Courtney, Olin Wanamaker, and Irene Brown

found interest in Aunt Irene had begun at the same age, forty-eight, at which Irene discovered she had cancer.

As I was leaving, Henry strongly encouraged me to travel to Maine to meet with Marjorie Spock, an early protégée of my Aunt Irene and

the sister of famed pediatrician Dr. Benjamin Spock. When I later learned that Marjorie was still sharp as a tack, but 102 years old, I resolved to see her as soon as possible.

In August of 2006, my husband, Robert, our daughter, Anna, and I journeyed to Sullivan, Maine, with an appointment to meet Marjorie. On August 16, Marjorie greeted us at her front door, offered us refreshments, and ushered us into her eurythmy studio. We introduced ourselves and related the information that I had garnered from Henry Barnes and from his monumental book. Marjorie smiled and proceeded to relate her own memories of my aunt and of their experiences together nearly eighty years earlier.

For the next two hours, I luxuriated in the glow of this remarkable woman and listened eagerly to her recollections of Rudolf Steiner, Dornach, eurythmy, and Aunt Irene. My eyes, mind, and heart focused on Marjorie, while Robert took notes from this very personal conversation, full of Marjorie's detailed memories of the many people and events that helped to shape the introduction of Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy in the United States in the 1920s.

Marjorie's connection with Aunt Irene



This building on East 79th Street, near to Central Park, has been the home of the Rudolf Steiner School of New York since 1944.

began in 1921 when, at Miss Everett's Summer Arts Camp for Girls in Brattleboro, Vermont, she was a seventeen-year-old counselor and my Aunt Irene was teaching painting. Marjorie described Irene as "tall, slender, and a little on the vague side." During their conversations, Irene spoke of her visit to Dornach, Switzerland, where she had studied a particular style of painting with a man named Rudolf Steiner. In subsequent discussions, Irene introduced Marjorie to the basic concepts of eurythmy and artistic movement. Marjorie's passion was dance. Forgoing her enrollment in college, she asked her parents for permission to accompany Irene to Dornach on her next trip. Marjorie's mother and father were initially skeptical, but eventually agreed, having met my Aunt Irene at the camp. According to Marjorie, her mother said, "Miss Brown is lovely and has beautiful hands. She told me about Dornach, but I didn't understand what she meant."

To Marjorie, the opportunity was much more meaningful and predestined. She saw in the name "Dornach" the words "door knock" and the (implied) phrase "Knock and the door shall be opened." This opened door led to her lifelong passion for and involvement with Anthroposophy and eurythmy.

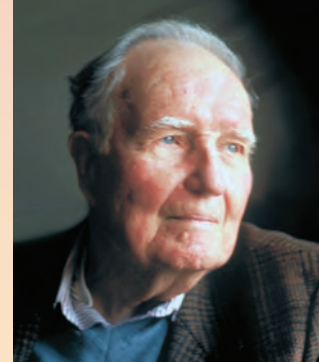
Marjorie crossed the Atlantic that October with "Miss Brown" and another young woman on a "little 5000-ton freighter with a pool and an orchestra." It would be the first of three trips she would take to Dornach to study eurythmy. She remembered that Aunt Irene was seasick during much of the voyage.

In Dornach, Irene had a house in a meadow, a short walk from the Goetheanum. Marjorie lived at the nearby Villa Saint George. Irene's cousin, Scott Pyle—"a very handsome, simply glorious artist who lived in Paris"—visited them in Dornach, and when the ladies visited Paris, he squired them around that city. Scott painted eurythmy scenery with plant colors that he derived from his garden. He also had assisted with the interior painting of the Goetheanum. Marjorie remembered that Irene at the time was "very droll, very witty." When Irene's mother, my great-grandmother, visited Dornach, Irene was very tender with her. Grandmother Brown confided to Marjorie that, in Irene, "she had whelped a very strange offspring."

Regarding Rudolf Steiner, Marjorie recalled: "Steiner was not intimidating. He was not awesome. I saw



Arvia MacKaye, 1926, as the angel in the Old English Christmas Play



Henry Barnes (1912–2008), first American to be trained as a Waldorf teacher and longtime General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in America.

many instances of Rudolf Steiner's great human awareness. . . . At a eurythmy performance, a fiery, young dancer was given an ovation which encouraged her to begin again. From the first row, Dr. Steiner quieted the audience, saying that the audience had gone too far in its enthusiasm. The dancer kneeled at the edge of the stage and begged forgiveness. Dr. Steiner pulled her to her feet and hugged her as they walked off the stage."

During one of her trips to Dornach, Marjorie's father came to visit. He attended a eurythmy performance, which he thought was wonderful. "My father met Dr. Steiner in a carpentry shop behind the stage. They just shook hands—there was no conversation. My father said that Steiner seemed just like everyone else and that he felt utterly at home with him."

Marjorie remembered that Steiner "had an enormous pocket watch. He built up his lectures slowly, then went more quickly, using enthusiastic hand gestures. . . . There were sculptors, painters, and dancers at his lectures. The lectures were always full." Marjorie attended Steiner's final lecture on September 29, 1924, after which he was too ill to speak in public.

Henry Barnes and Marjorie Spock both confirmed that Rudolf Steiner had instructed Irene Brown to accomplish three tasks in America. She was to help establish Waldorf Education, eurythmy, and anthroposophical medicine.

Irene succeeded with each of these challenges. She purchased the property for and underwrote the founding of the Rudolf Steiner School in New York City in 1928. She helped introduce eurythmy by encouraging Marjorie Spock and others to study, teach, and popularize the subject. And, she was a founding member in 1931 of the American Arlesheim Laboratories, which became what is now known as Weleda, a company that continues to this day producing anthroposophic homeopathic remedies and natural body care products.

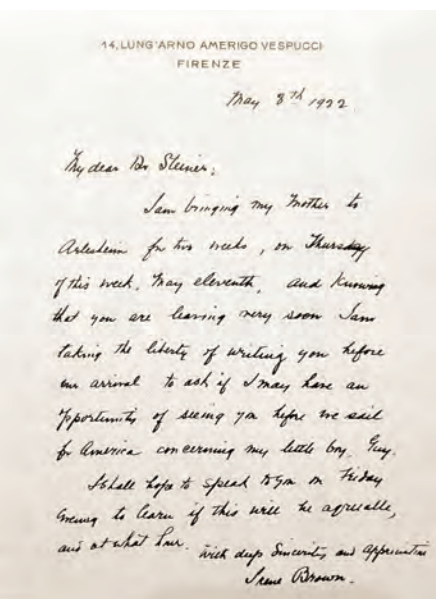
Marjorie visited Irene in Llewellyn Park, New Jersey, following the onset of her illness. Irene had undertaken cancer treatment in Dornach after her initial diagnosis, but she had later returned to her family home.

In April of 2012, I attended the International Waldorf Early Childhood Conference at the Goetheanum in Dornach. I hoped that during the conference I could visit the Steiner archives and learn more about Aunt Irene's connection with Rudolf Steiner. When I arrived in Dornach something remarkable happened. I was assigned to a room in a house near the Goetheanum. My host greeted me at the door and started my tour by saying, "I want to begin by telling you that this was the house of Scott Pyle, the man who used plant-based dyes to paint the interior of the original Goetheanum." My jaw went slack in surprise. Our host then showed us the garden where Irene's cousin Scott had grown the flowers used for dyes, his painting studio, and the adjoining studio for his wife. Later in my visit, I found at the archives correspondence between Dr. Steiner and Irene Brown that confirmed Marjorie Spock's recollections.

Both Marjorie Spock and Henry Barnes have since passed on. They unveiled a significant part of my family history that might otherwise have been lost with the passage of time. Through their guidance, they enabled me to find a new and deeper connection to my great-aunt Irene Brown and to Rudolf Steiner. Just as Steiner inspired and supported Irene Brown, I am inspired and supported by them both in my work with children and their parents. ☉



ANNE MANDEVILLE-LONG lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Anne grew up in Fairfield, Connecticut, graduated from Greens Farms Academy in Westport, Connecticut, and received her BA in 1981 from Hampshire College. In 2000 Anne established Moss Garden Nursery School and is the lead teacher of this play- and nature-based preschool. She and her husband, Robert Long, have seven children, all of whom attended the Emerson Waldorf School in Chapel Hill.



Courtesy of Rudolf Steiner Archives

Letter from Irene Brown to Rudolf Steiner, dated May 8, 1922, requesting an appointment for her and her mother

My Path to the Forest

BY RACHEL KENNEDY

From the time I was a child growing up on a homestead in the Maine woods, purposeful work and connection to the land have been woven into my life. My parents built a home with stones from the river and logs from the woods. They raised vegetables and dairy goats. I played with magic stumps and built houses for wee people, had milkweed wars with my brothers, clipped brush from the edges of the pastures, dug outhouse holes, swam in the lake as the loons called, and was acutely aware of the wonder of life.

Later I attended a high-powered, suburban-Boston high school. As I looked toward college, I was full of questions and felt distant from the wonder of my earlier years. At a college fair, I wandered past the tables uninspired until I came to a big poster of two hands covered in mud tending to a task. It said “Working Hands. Working Minds.” My heart sang with resonance. Off I went to the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont to Sterling College. I swung an axe, read literature of the rural experience, learned to

drive draft horses, canoed rivers with my handmade paddle as the ice broke, planted seeds, and studied environmental science. I felt alive again.

After Sterling College, I became a carpenter. With my toolbox and my purple pickup truck, I got a job with an environmental contracting company. We renovated barns, the Union Oyster

House in Boston, and lovely country homes. I had the satisfaction of working with my hands and the gratification of tangible results. But something was missing ... more questions came ... Is this meaningful? I felt disconnected from some central part of myself.

Then three things happened. I met Dan Kennedy at a Groovasaurus concert and he asked me for my phone number. The contracting company asked me to build bird feeders with a school group. And, around the same time, I saw a sandwich board advertising a speaker at a school in Lexington. Torin Finser was to speak that evening about adolescence. Unsure of what I would discover, I went to the talk. Inspired by his words, by his presence, and by the beauty and intangible elements of the school, I called the next day with questions. “How do I learn more about Waldorf Education? How do I become a Waldorf teacher?”

Four years later, I was married to Dan, I had a Waldorf teaching certificate, and I was a mother. My dear friend Margaret and I had become mothers for the first time on the very same day. Needless to say, as new mothers, we were full of questions and very little wisdom. My son, Caleb, was a busy fellow—a big-bodied little person. He needed to move—a lot. Then my daughter, Sarah, was born. I recalled my childhood as I watched my children grow. We were missing the trees, the streams, the exploration, and the purposeful work. We went to visit Margaret and her family on their beautiful hillside homestead in Western Massachusetts. Not far away, there was a Waldorf school. It had a working farm and was nestled in green rolling hills.

Dan and I bought a farmhouse surrounded by fruit trees, and Caleb entered first grade at the Hartsbrook School in Hadley, Massachusetts. Sarah



Rachel, her brother, and goats on the family homestead, New Vineyard, Maine, circa 1985



Rachel with brothers in the DIY stone foundation of their (in-process) family home



Torin Finser,
lecturer, Waldorf
educator, General
Secretary of the
Anthroposophical
Society of America

entered the nursery, and soon I applied for the newly open position of kindergarten teacher. On my application I cited “Love,” my connection to the land, and my interest in purposeful work as my main qualifications. Somehow I got the job! My colleagues were wise, steadfast, and supportive. I grew in my teaching as they listened to my questions.

Each year I have had more questions. What do modern children need from Waldorf early childhood

education? Young children before the age of seven learn through imitation. Why are they not imitating? Or more accurately—what are they imitating?

One morning in circle time I made full-bodied raking gestures, singing a merry little autumn song. Rather than imitating me, the children started up their leaf blowers, motors purring. One day, on a walk into the meadow, we gathered for a little snack and story. A child began to speak without pausing in the middle of my tale. With the sun shining down on the golden grass, surrounded by birdsong, he told me that the memory on his iPad was full. I asked myself: In their lives, are the children witnessing human activity worthy of imitation? Am I as their teacher offering them what is essential and true, the wonders of life on Earth?

Freya Jaffke, in her book *Work and Play in Early Childhood*, talks about the mantle of the child’s life forces. She says,

Let us look first of all at the mantle which is created through our own behavior, our actions and our attitudes. We shall call it the *mantle of activity*. Most importantly it should involve the creation of a world worth imitating. Rudolf Steiner says in this context: “And so the task of a kindergarten teacher is to adjust work taken from daily life so that it becomes suitable for the children’s play activities.” *Adjust work* is the key element.

One cold winter morning, I went to the school barn to tend the cows and give our dear farmer a much needed rest. It had been a difficult week in the kindergarten. The children had been tired, restless,

and unkind. I needed help and there were questions in my heart. Where can modern children find rhythm in their lives, their lives that are so full of rush and worry? How can we help them build the social capacities for caring for one another?

The cows’ breath was warm and visible, and their tender eyes met mine, eager for their grain and hay. I pulled my notes from my pocket, telling me the location and order in which to tie up the four cows. As I led each willing cow into place, I felt I was entering a familiar routine that the animals knew. The rhythm of the farm was alive, tended each day by purposeful work. All I had to do was enter the flow. These dear creatures were devotedly dependent on me for their care, and the work of caring for them was richly rewarding. Their wet noses sniffed me and their strong tongues felt my wool coat. You don’t really know love until you’ve been kissed by a cow!



The rolling hills of the Hadley Range, just behind the Hartsbrook School, Hadley, Massachusetts

A farmer does not have to create the rhythm from scratch the way a teacher does. There are the natural rhythms of the rising sun, the hungry beasts, and the full udders. Mother Nature is the teacher here. It came to me as I tended these animals that the elements I work so hard on as a kindergarten



Freya Jaffke, Waldorf early childhood educator, born in Germany in 1937

teacher—creating a breathing rhythm full of work worthy of imitation and helping children to develop a social sense of the other—these elements are available in abundance outside my classroom doors.

A farm is a great blessing to a school. We don’t have a farm to help children become future farmers, although it might happen.

We have a farm to help children become human beings—human beings who are connected to the rhythm, order, and beauty of the natural world, human beings who can direct the strength of their will in service of another being.

Early in the 2013–2014 academic year, I had to ask a student to leave my classroom and the school for the first time in my career. It was heartbreaking to have a student whom I could not meet. “There are so many children,” I told a dear colleague, “with needs in the realms of sensory, movement, attentional, and social integration. I don’t know if I can meet them. I don’t know if Waldorf early childhood education can meet them. And if it can’t, then what?” My colleague told me, “Let your questions drive your teaching.” And so I sat still, had courage, and listened . . .



There is nothing quite so interesting as watching a cow eat—scene at the Hartsbrook School farm.

“I can see the whole world from here,” Henry David said with joy and exhilaration as he looked out from the highest point on the ridge. The deep and healing wonder of the natural world was all around us. We stayed together as we walked along the top. It was nearing the holidays and Henry David collected some bits of evergreen as we walked. We saw some trees standing on their roots—“on their tiptoes,” we thought.

Then Henry David saw a beautiful little fir tree. “We could cut it down for a Christmas tree,” he said. “Please?” It was clear this boy needed this tree. He remembered our shovels. “We could dig it up and plant it in a bucket. It could be my Christmas tree.” I was not going to say no. The soil was frozen and

I went to visit my former student, whom I will refer to as Henry David, to say goodbye. Sad and scared and not sure what to expect, I asked our angels to accompany us. Henry David greeted me excitedly and showed me around his house and toys in a bit of a panic. Then he asked his dad if we could go for a walk in the wooded ravine below his house. We bundled up, got some shovels, and set off. Through crunching leaves, over rocks and logs, we walked down into the valley and up onto the ridge.

the roots were deep, but we managed. As we carried it together back to his house, he told me, “Shhh, the trees are sleeping.” And quiet and leafless, the trees were asleep in the frozen November air.

Back at his house, we found a bucket and loose soil and planted the tree. We sat down together on his couch, with tired legs and windburned cheeks. He took a book off the shelf—Margaret Wise Brown’s *The Little Fir Tree*. We sat close together in the warmth and read the tale of a boy unable to walk, whose father digs up a little fir tree every year at Christmas to bring to the boy’s bedside and then replants it in the spring. One year no one comes to dig it up. As the tree sits waiting and wondering, the boy comes walking to the tree. We read it twice, this story about the healing power of trees and love. I drove home stunned and moved. What a gift I had received. Something sleeping in me came alive. “Wake up!” it said. “To the woods!”

That night as I lay in bed, I read from Richard Louv’s book *The Last Child in the Woods*. He describes modern children as suffering from what researchers call “directed attention fatigue” marked by symptoms such as impulsive behaviors, agitation, aggression, and an inability to concentrate.

Louv writes, “If you can find an environment where the attention is automatic, you allow directed attention to rest. And that means an environment that’s strong on fascination. . . . The fascination factor associated with



The Forest Kindergarten tent and the outdoor gathering area with stump seats



When two or more young boys are gathered on a log, there is fun to be had.

nature is restorative, and it helps relieve people from directed attention fatigue.” Louv is right. A little boy in my class cannot sit still; it is challenging for him to be kind or calm. But when he finds a woolly bear caterpillar or an ant, a change comes over him. He is centered and becomes gentle and slow.

I asked questions and listened, and slowly the answers came:

- The cows in the barn said, “Let Mother Nature be the teacher; rhythm, beauty, and care are her specialties.”
- Rudolf Steiner and Freya Jaffke told me to create a world worth imitating.
- My colleagues told me to let my questions drive my teaching.
- Henry David and Richard Louv said, “Wake Up! To the woods!”
- The faculty chair, the College of Teachers, and the enrollment director said, “Okay. Let’s do it.”



Rachel with students on the fields behind the Hartsbrook School

And so this fall I began a Forest Kindergarten at the Hartsbrook School. I am, of course, still full of questions. But two threads will weave through this endeavor into the future: purposeful work and a connection to this beautiful land. ☉



Line based on a pair of mittens knitted by Gemma in fifth grade

Cohen, continued

And I am passionate about sharing that joy with others. The atmosphere in my Waldorf classrooms communicated that *everyone* can learn and excel. Music wasn’t just an elective for the talented few. At Waldorf we *all* played in the orchestra, drew replicas of famous Da Vinci portraits, carved wooden spoons, knitted wool socks, and acted in the class play. And thus I found it disconcerting that many of my high school peers felt they couldn’t learn. They would shrug and say, “I’m not musical” or “I’m just terrible at math.”

I asked myself, “But can’t everyone learn?” and began helping my friends with homework and conducting informal study sessions during lunch. Before long, I had my own private tutoring business. I found that I had an unquenchable desire to teach, to share my love of learning. Somehow, Waldorf had imbued me with an outlook very different from the one my public school peers had developed.

Going through the teacher education program at the University of Mary Washington has plunged me deep into the world of public education. I’ve learned the jargon and acronyms and been immersed in the world of high-stakes testing. Yet ultimately I have decided that, although I deeply love and respect

Waldorf Education, I want to teach in a public school, in spite of the standardized tests and the stifling bureaucracy—because of the children.

I am strongly committed to working with students at the bottom of the academic spectrum—the children who most need to hear that they can learn and who most need to be given opportunities to grow. My goal is to teach in public school and incorporate as much Waldorf as I possibly can. I want to create art, music, and poetry with my class. I want to spend time outdoors. I want to give my students opportunities to draw and write about what they are learning—not simply read and memorize. And I definitely want to teach all of them how to knit! ☉

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“Please Pass the Magenta”

BY CONNIE HELMS, MEd

We live in a world of color, and according to Rudolf Steiner each color has a particular effect on us. For this reason, in a Waldorf school, the walls of the classrooms of the different grades are painted different colors. The writer is an art therapist specializing in the therapeutic use of certain colors and painting exercises. Here she focuses on the healing and restorative qualities of the color magenta.

—R. E. K.

“Is this a day when I can paint more of the magenta?”

“Yes,” I replied to the girl who sensed her soul’s need for this color. I merely validated her instincts. That day, she was not the only one to seek the magenta. Earlier, an adult client reached for the magenta jar and was painting halfway down the page when he realized, “Oh, I think I was supposed to start with the other color.” I nodded in assent and thought, “Oh, wonderful, another soul who knows that he needs magenta.” At the end of that day, yet another ten-year-old girl reached for magenta first, something she had done in prior sessions.

The two girls and the man were each working within The Extra Lesson™ therapeutic program. The Extra Lesson concept was developed in the 1970s by Audrey McAllen (1920–2010), a Waldorf teacher in England. As a foundation for her therapeutic approach, McAllen took indications from Rudolf Steiner about the nature of the human being—that the physical body is a vessel holding the soul and spirit of the person and that our bodies have an inner gyroscope that helps us feel oriented in ourselves and also in the world around us. The Extra Lesson uses archetypal forms in physical movement, in form

drawing, and in painting to help anchor the soul and spirit more firmly into the physical body. Thus, it helps people feel and appear more at home in their bodies: their faces light up and they stand taller in the world. Efficient, functional patterns of movement replace cumbersome ones and everyday tasks are done more easily.

McAllen’s friend and colleague, Liane Collot d’Herbois (1907–1999) was an English artist and painter. Collot used indications from Rudolf Steiner and from Ita Wegman (1876–1943), a Dutch physician who worked closely with Steiner to develop anthroposophic medicine. Collot developed a medical therapeutic modality of painting and also of charcoal work based on the laws of light and darkness that is effective in correcting imbalances in the nerve/sense, cardiovascular, and metabolic systems. Audrey McAllen’s collaboration with Collot resulted in a basic exercise for The Extra Lesson using magenta and viridian green.

This magenta–viridian Extra Lesson exercise calls for the painting board to be placed vertically. A paper 13 inches X 18 inches (33 cm X 43 cm) is made wet on both sides and adhered to the board with a sponge that also smoothes away air pockets. The painter dips a wide but soft brush into a very light mix of water with viridian green paint and wipes it carefully on the edge of the jar. The painter, following the directions of the therapist, paints long, even strokes across the page from left to right, starting at the top and going three-quarters of the way down the page. The brush is rinsed, blotted on a cloth, and then the magenta color, mixed with water, is painted on the remaining quarter below the green. (I use brand HWC’s tubes of viridian green and rose violet/quinacridone magenta.) The green should never be darker than the magenta, for here the green carries the light, the bearer of consciousness, and the magenta carries the



The magenta–viridian green therapeutic painting exercise



The magenta carved glass window created for the First Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland, representing the incarnation journey of the human being

darkness, with a certain warmth and potential for creation.

McAllen recommended doing this painting exercise at the beginning of a session with persons age ten and older. I did this with a boy whom I shall call Max. He had little ability to self-regulate, to check impulses, or to feel safe. The brief color meditation helped to relax Max, slowing and deepening his breathing. According to Collot, viridian green “helps the ego to penetrate the organism” and magenta brings integration and wholeness.

Over the course of my work with Max, he developed a strong relationship to magenta. In our third session, he painted magenta in the lower quarter of his paper, then picked up the jar and looked intently at it, saying, “This violet looks yummy. It looks inviting and tasty.” His soul had found a healing balm. After fifteen weekly sessions, we took two months off. A few weeks after we had resumed, Max sat at the table and asked, “Can I paint magenta first?” He painted the whole page in magenta and let it flood in through his eyes—the windows of the



Magenta dahlia with viridian leaves

An early childhood teacher shared with me an incident showing the healing power of magenta. A four-year-old was in the midst of a crying episode—her chest heaving with sobs. The teacher sat the child on her lap and painted magenta across a horizontal sheet of paper, creating a flowing expanse of the all-embracing and protecting mother color. Soon, the child stopped heaving, and the crying subsided shortly thereafter.



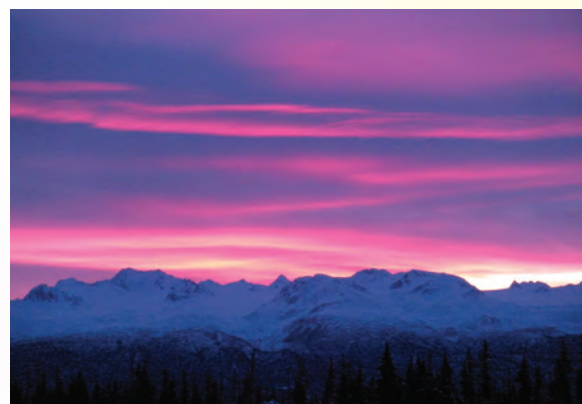
There are many plants with magenta colored leaves and viridian veins, such as this Persian Shield (Strobilanthes dyerianus).

soul. In those months away from this experience, Max had clearly missed this color and the way it flowed on the page. A month later, he again asked, “Could I just paint magenta today?” This was an oft-repeated question throughout our work together. Once he said, “I love to swim in a pool of magenta.” Another time he covered the full page in magenta saying, “This is fairy land.”

The magic of magenta works even with adolescent boys. While they might resist the Extra Lesson work and ask “Why am I here?”, after a few sessions, they are asking “Could I paint the magenta first today?” or, “Could the bigger part be magenta today—just for a switch?”

Often the magenta will creep up the page as though these budding men cannot get enough of it. They are looking for a color soul experience that our mainstream culture does not readily provide. When they ask me why we use these colors, I repeat what Collot told Audrey McAllen, that the pale viridian green signifies thinking and clarity, whereas the magenta is grounding. I do not mention that the color is soothing and nurturing, but that is apparent.

I worked with a fourteen-year-old boy, a generous, warmhearted soul who was lax in his academic work. In our sessions, he carefully executed the paintings and geometric drawings. He used a variety of rich colors, often choosing colors of the heart: red and magenta. One day, while doing an exercise that involves lying down with eyes closed, he “felt” color sensations in his arms, including magenta in his right arm.



Magenta sunrise over the Kenai Mountains, near Homer, Alaska

Another fourteen-year-old boy was the opposite—very competent in schoolwork but very much in his head all the time. Despite warm and close ties to his siblings, within the class he was not always able to put aside his driving intellect to enter into his peer group socially. He could not help but talk all during the viridian and magenta painting exercises, expounding on various scientific and intellectual topics.

Gradually, the area of magenta in his paintings increased, and one day he asked if he could reverse the colors and give magenta three-quarters of the page. “Has anyone ever done that?” he queried. While the other youth had needed the pale green light of clear thinking, this boy’s realm of feeling needed stirring. He had told me earlier

that colors were not part of his scientific thinking. Now it seemed his soul felt otherwise. I was thrilled and acted surprised at his brilliant idea. Through our work together, his threefold nature of head, heart, and hands became more balanced. A week before the performance of his class play, this boy was asked to take over the lead role. He did so and gave a superb performance. His generous spirit shone through with heart and soul, earning admiration among his peers.

Magenta is a “delicious” color that characterizes good-tasting and healthful foods. Blueberries, plums, raspberries, elderberries, red beets—especially when they are mashed and/or cooked—glow with the generous, warming spirit of magenta. Red-colored foods that contain little or no blue—cherries, cranberries, watermelon, pomegranate, red grapes, radishes, radicchio, red onions, rhubarb, and red chard stems are cousins in the magenta world. They all contain phytochemicals that detoxify the body, build the immune system, and aid in heart health.



A magenta health drink of blended blueberries, black and red raspberries, and strawberries

The color magenta is a real blessing. It serves in therapeutic painting. But we can also experience its beneficial calming, balancing quality



The redbud tree (Cercis canadensis) is a small deciduous tree native to eastern North America from southern Ontario to northern Florida.

in the clothes that we wear, the flowers and foods we choose, and in colors we use in creating the places where we live, work, and study. At the literal or figurative table, our souls ask: “Please pass the magenta. I need it today.” ☺



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Creating A Circle of Collaborative Spiritual Leadership

Roberto Trostli, Editor

Reviewed by R.E.K.

When Rudolf Steiner created Waldorf Education, he not only envisioned a new way of educating children, he also envisioned a new way that schools would be governed. Steiner maintained that a school should be governed by a group of teachers, each a serious student of Anthroposophy, committed to the school and its destiny. This College of Teachers would rule collaboratively, that is, it would be dominated by no individual. The opinions of all members would be given weight and ideally each decision would have the assent of every member of the group. The members of the College, as individuals and as members of the group, would commit themselves to a discipline of personal and spiritual development and would try to bring to bear in all their work together a spiritual perspective. Steiner established a College of Teachers in the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart, and even today most Waldorf schools are governed by a College of Teachers.

This collaborative and spiritually based approach to governance, of course, is not typical of educational institutions today. Most schools have a principal or headmaster who sits atop a hierarchical organization and is the ultimate authority and decision maker. Effectively applying the model of a collaborative spiritual leadership in a culture in which it is an anomaly is challenging.

This book about spiritual leadership brings together essays by leading members of the Waldorf community in North America, teachers and administrators with long experience. The articles look at the College of Teachers and its work from various perspectives, including the meditative, artistic, and esoteric. The book concludes with a listing of the Core Principles of Waldorf Education, set forth in January 2013.

The book is meant for Waldorf teachers and administrators, but is also relevant for parents who have an interest in the deeper foundations of Waldorf Education.

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The Magic of Magenta

BY MARTHA LOVING ORGAIN, MFA

Human beings have an innate attraction to the color magenta and its nurturing quality. It is the color of birth and new beginnings. Magenta is the color of the dawning of a new day and of the first buds of spring. Trees, bushes, flowers, and even newborn animals begin their growth process through magenta. Human beings come out of the spiritual world, and our entrance into the physical world begins in the magenta and darkness of our mother's womb. The color is associated with mothering, newborns, maternal love, and goodness. Collot d'Herbois writes that magenta is a "warning of the coming of the light." For Collot, magenta is also the "bloom" on newborn humans and animals and is a color that has a fragrance. Rudolf Steiner refers to magenta as "bluish-red" or "rose violet" and more a "mood than a color."

In ancient times, magenta dye was made from shellfish harvested near the city of Tyre on the Phoenician coast, and was exported to Rome, southern France, and Greece. It was more valuable than gold. The color was

associated with power, authority, and wisdom and was reserved for priests, sages, and emperors. The phrase "born to the purple" meant that the person referred to was royalty. Collot writes that in Byzantium "the sheets on which a [future] emperor was born were magenta." Those who possessed the color or wore it and were not royalty could be put to death.

Magenta brings a certain peace and calmness, a feeling that everything is all right with the world. It brings balance, a loosening and relaxing of what is too taut, and a



The purple-dye murex or spiny-dye murex (*Bolinus brandaris*) is a predatory rock snail native to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The snail extracts bromine from the seawater and uses it to produce a mucous-like secretion. The secretion is colorless but turns purple when exposed to air. Since ancient times, the snail has been the source of the coveted Tyrian purple dye. The snail was described and named by Aristotle more than 2000 years ago. It is between four and six inches long. There are other species of murex snail that also can be used for producing dye.

—R.E.K.

return to unity of what has lost its coherence. Magenta applied in translucent watercolor layers is the wall color in Waldorf kindergartens all over the world. It is used extensively in art therapy. Doing a veil painting (in which washes of a color are layered) and using magenta as the dominant color can calm and comfort a child or adult who is hyperactive or traumatized. In a veil painting that has gone awry, a pale wash of magenta over the entire painting will bring it back to wholeness. With its unifying aspect, magenta is particularly important to use when working with adopted children.

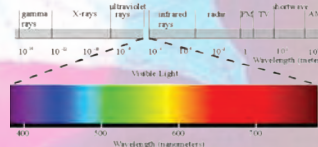
We can utilize the healing power of magenta through thinking in color. We can imagine a restless child or a troubled friend surrounded by magenta. We can also fill our inner field of vision with this magical color, which is a gift of the gods. ☉



A piece of cloth dyed with Tyrian purple. The color can vary from magenta to crimson to deep purple, depending on the type of murex sea snail used and the way the dye was processed.

MARTHA LOVING ORGAIN is an artist and a Collot painting therapist working in private practice. She teaches painting and drawing in Waldorf schools around the United States, to doctors and teachers, and in the first and only holistic residential care home in Vermont. She has a website at: www.lovingcolor.org

When the color magenta is described as a "threshold color," as the "color of birth and new beginnings," or as a "warning of the coming of the light," the phrases have a mystical nuance. However, from a scientific perspective there is a basis for characterizing magenta in this way. As the chart below indicates, visible light and the color spectrum are situated on the electromagnetic spectrum between the shorter ultraviolet waves and the longer infrared waves. Magenta is at one end of the spectrum just before the ultraviolet waves. Thus, it is in fact on the threshold between the visible and the invisible. After magenta comes darkness. And if one is coming out of the darkness, magenta is the beginning of the world of light.



—R.E.K.

Parenting as a Path of Self-Development

BY HEIDI DREXEL

The information revolution has changed the world, including the world of new parents. For every question they have, parents can find multiple answers and professional opinions in a matter of minutes. Free guidance abounds on the Internet. In the past, there were generally accepted cultural assumptions and practices concerning parenting. Now, we have an array of parenting philosophies, each with its own list of dos and don'ts.

The term “Waldorf parent” refers to persons who send their children to a Waldorf school, but it has come to be associated with its own do and don't list, especially in relation to young children. Elements of “Waldorf parenting” include the elimination or limiting of media exposure, use of simple toys, plenty of time in nature, natural fiber clothing, a calm pace of life, and a predictable, rhythmic daily routine. But one, less tangible, element of central importance is the recognition that parenting is a path of self-development. It requires us to examine ourselves and our own limitations and to develop means of finding for ourselves answers to the questions that parenting brings today.

While this idea is mentioned in some of the popular parenting literature, it generally means only that a parent needs to learn new management skills. Even those parenting approaches that encourage compassion for

and support of the child still generally focus on parental skill development. They often follow the model: if A happens, then do B. Such advice can be helpful for a brand-new parent, or for a parent seeking a new perspective. But parenting is not about following a recipe. It is about the relationship between parent and child. This relationship requires engagement with the difficult process of self-discovery and personal transformation. It also requires parents to develop the inner resources needed to meet the challenges of parenting.



Bundled up against the autumnal chill, the writer and her sons, George and Duncan, take a walk near their home in Portland, Maine, and ...

Rudolf Steiner spoke with the teachers of the first Waldorf school about the invisible threads that connect them to their students. He asserted that working on oneself, consciously trying to transform one's own limitations, is a part of being an effective teacher. For this, the teacher needs to practice thoughtful reflection in relating to his or her students. I think the same holds true for mothers and fathers trying to be good parents.

Parenting is not following a recipe or simply developing management skills.

Relationships between parents and their children are deeply personal. Our children challenge us in a multitude of ways, bringing to light the places in ourselves at which we fear to look. A child can be a mirror that allows us to see ourselves through someone else's eyes, creating an opportunity to change. The struggles we face as parents can make us conscious of ourselves and can bring light to our own important personal issues that need resolution.

These same challenges can help us develop crucial inner resources. If, as parents, we confront a vexing problem manifesting in our children's lives—difficult behavior, sleep issues, or anxiety, for example—there is a temptation to take immediate action and go for a quick fix, even if we are not sure it is the right thing. Instead, we can be honest with ourselves and acknowledge that we don't know. Then we can slow down and take the time to form a clear question that needs to be answered and, in doing so, leave an opening for something new to come in.

When we articulate and earnestly hold a question about what to do in a particular situation, observation and meditation can help us “live our way into the answer,” as the poet Rilke so beautifully put it. We can carefully and quietly observe our child at play or engaged in his daily activities. We can strive to see the child for who he really is, without judgment or evaluation. We can bring that picture of the child into our silent meditation. Perhaps another image will arise that will be an answer to our question. Perhaps an insight into our own attitudes, assumptions, and patterns of behavior will come up, one that calls for us to recreate ourselves.

I experienced this in my own parenting. During the entire first year of my older son's life, he had trouble napping. During the day, he would sleep for only about thirty-five minutes. I read books on the subject and tried everyone's suggestions. I lay down with my son and tried to soothe him back to sleep when he awoke; I left him alone, hoping that he would fuss himself back to sleep; I tried car rides and the baby sling. Nothing worked.

I struggled with this problem for a long time. I meditated on it, and at first I felt frustrated, because none of my efforts—spiritual and otherwise—seemed to make any difference. Then I realized that my stress about it was the problem. I was trying very hard to be a perfect parent. Because I had been a Waldorf teacher, I felt that I knew all the dos and don'ts and that I was following them faithfully. But this situation was trying to teach me something more nuanced than all that—namely that perfection has nothing to do with success when it comes to relationships. Parenting is above all a relationship, and it wasn't until I let go of the image I was holding—of me as the perfect parent—that things began to resolve.

Finding myself exhausted and at a loss, I gave up trying to fix his naps. I accepted that what I was doing was enough. I let go. I shifted my focus to work on controlling the things I could actually control, namely my responses. And then, one day when my son was fourteen months old, he napped for two hours, and from then on that was his new norm. I have no idea what changed, but I was pleased about it, and also certain that I couldn't give myself the credit.

Observing and meditating upon a child is a kind of listening. It is a deep recognition: a form of love.

Observing and meditating upon a child is a kind of listening. It is a deep recognition: a form of love. Through it we can develop our ability to perceive the true being of our children and to experience those hidden threads of destiny that connect us to them. This meditative observation also gives children the opportunity to be seen, and it allows us to better see and understand ourselves. This slow approach, which combines engagement and inner activity, allows us to draw on our deep, unconscious wisdom.

As a parent, I have encountered many situations in which I just didn't know what to do. Every new phase

of development brings something different to explore and respond to, and what worked for one child may not for another. I constantly find myself in unfamiliar territory, and I can still get stuck in the feeling that I am failing. For a time, I tried to remedy this by finding the "right" answers. I was sure that if I found the right information I would always know what to do. I grasped onto certain ideas, defending their "rightness" so I could know that I was doing the best for my children.

But now I strive rather to be aware. I formulate my questions clearly; I observe my children; I meditate upon what I see and hear; I am open to what arises in my meditations; and I am not always assuming that I'm right. Sometimes I have to put the question to sleep for a while, to let the answer incubate. But I trust that the answers I and my children need will find me.

Parenting with all its challenges is a valuable opportunity for personal growth. The ideas and perspectives of others can help, but in the end we must make the decisions and try to meet the needs of our own unique children. The daily and ever-new work of parenting can help us learn to be attentive, to observe—carefully and lovingly—to form relevant questions, to create an open space through meditation and silence for answers to come, to exercise patience in waiting, and to develop the virtue of humility. In treading this path, we can become the parents our children need and deserve. ○



... then take a rest in the local community garden, Duncan preferring the comfort of the blue Adirondack chair.

HEIDI DREXEL was a Waldorf class teacher for seven years in New Hampshire and California before having children of her own. She and her family moved to Maine in 2010 and are happy to be making their home there. Heidi spends much of her time at home with her two young boys taking walks, gardening, singing, and cooking. She also works part-time at Merriconeag Waldorf School teaching parent-child classes and doing outreach work for the early childhood center.

Teaching Our Children to Read, Write, and Spell—At the Right Time

BY SUSAN R. JOHNSON, MD, FAAP

In mainstream education today, children in kindergarten and even in preschool are made to sit at desks and learn to read, write, and spell. The belief is that an early start will lead to later academic success. However, young children who have not yet fully developed a sense of balance and/or proprioception—the sense of self in three-dimensional space—are ill-suited to sit still and concentrate for long periods. Besides, their developing brains are

not yet ready to acquire academic skills in an efficient way. Thus many developmental specialists, occupational therapists, physicians, and teachers are concerned that early academics is causing children, particularly boys, to develop Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), behavior problems, as well as challenges in visual and auditory processing. My experiences as a

pediatrician lead me to share this concern. I believe that children should start to read, write, and spell only when they are physically and neurologically ready to do so, which is typically about seven years of age.

Before a child can sit still and learn, he needs a strong sense of balance, both when his body is moving and when his body is still. The process of developing this sense begins in utero and continues during the first five or six years of life through the interaction of the three semicircular canals in the ear and the brain. Only when a child is able to maintain uprightness without thinking about it is he able to retain verbal information. This is why a six-and-a-half-year-old child may be able to remember a sequence of four verbal requests while lying flat on the floor or snuggling in a parent's lap but not when sitting still in a chair, and certainly not when standing up without moving.

Also, the young child needs to have accurate proprioception, a clear sense of what her body is doing at a given moment—how it is located in space, and whether it is moving, and how. The development of proprioception, begun in utero, continues when the child is born into gravity. Movements of the trunk and extremities activate proprioceptive receptor sites within the muscles, joints, tendons, and ligaments. This sensory information goes to the cerebellum and thence to all parts of the brain.

If the young child has adequate opportunities for physical movement, these proprioceptive pathways are developed by age seven or eight, with girls generally completing the process somewhat earlier than boys. The child then has an accurate sense of her body in three-dimensional space. She is able to locate her trunk, arms, hands, fingers, legs, and feet even when she is sitting still, standing still, or lying in bed with her eyes closed.

This level of proprioception frees the child's mind, allows her to sit still, pay attention, and visually remember the shapes of letters and numbers. Her mind is no longer preoccupied with keeping her body in position and with gauging distances in space. Her mind is free to pay attention, focus, and learn, and to notice the nonverbal social cues given by other children and adults.



The proprioceptive sense—the awareness of the location of one's own body in space—is developed through activities such as circle games . . .

Premature academics can create a negative attitude toward school and learning that may continue long beyond the early grades.

In my clinical practice, I have seen that a child who has not had this normal, healthy development usually exhibits specific symptoms. Unable to perceive his own body, the child has a hard time remaining upright in a chair. He wiggles in his chair—sometimes falling off—leans on his desk, sits on his legs and feet when in chairs, and/or wraps his feet around the leg of the chair, all to help his brain perceive the position of his trunk and extremities. Such a child also typically has difficulty standing on one foot for ten seconds with eyes closed.

A child with inadequate proprioception will have difficulty holding a crayon or pencil and copying forms, especially those involving diagonal lines. In addition, her drawings of a person will reflect the lagging level of proprioception. A child of five or six should have a sense of three-dimensionality and should be drawing figures that contain diagonal lines (for example, a triangular skirt), as well as tubular arms and legs. If the child is drawing stick figures, typical for three-year-olds, that is a clear sign of delayed proprioceptive development.

The social and emotional behaviors of these children parallel the development of their proprioceptive systems. If a six-year-old draws at the level of a three-year-old, he likely has the emotional development of a three-year-old. With the mind occupied with maintaining uprightness and perceiving spatial relations, such a child tends to miss nonverbal social cues, cannot concentrate or pay attention, and tires quickly in new environments and unfamiliar social situations. He is, in effect, in a perpetual stage of “fight or flight,” may exhibit explosive behavior, and is likely to be diagnosed with ADHD, dyslexia, or other learning challenges. He certainly is not ready to learn how to read and write.

The proprioceptive system is developed and strengthened in children by large and small physical movements.

Activities that involve the entire body—the fingers, hands, arms, trunks, legs, and feet—and that involve the experience of pressure against the body are especially effective.



... and pushing a wheelbarrow ...



... and jumping rope by oneself ...

These include digging with a shovel, pushing a wheelbarrow, carrying groceries, moving rocks, pulling weeds, hanging from the monkey bars, and taking part in circle games that involve clapping, stomping, jumping, hopping, skipping, and galloping.

Waiting for the brain— for reading

Myelin is the insulating sheath that forms around the axons of nerve cells and brings the cell into full, efficient function. In children between the ages of three and seven, myelination of the neurons in the right hemisphere of the brain is taking place. The myelination of the left brain begins in girls around the age of six-and-a-half and for boys a year or two later.

Children learn to read most efficiently when both hemispheres are in full function. The left hemisphere enables the child to hear the separate sounds within a given word—phonemic awareness—and string the individual sounds together to sound out and recognize words phonetically. The true and very important function of the right hemisphere, particularly the frontal area, is to create the mental images and pictures associated with the words read. These mental pictures enable the child to fully understand what he has read and to remember it. They also help the child form her own thoughts about what she has read and to express them.



... and digging with a shovel that is bigger than you are!

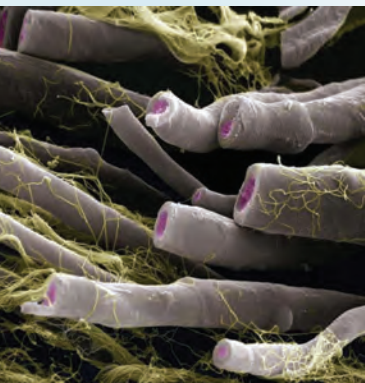
The healthy, normal, picture-creating function of the right brain is the basis for comprehension and enjoyment in reading. Later on, it will allow the child to make sense of, to experience, and to recall what she reads about mathematics, algebra, biology, chemistry, and physics. And it will help her to understand and appropriate as part of her own human experience what she reads in literature, poetry, and history.

A child learning to read at four or five has access only to the right hemisphere. The right brain can only read individual words by sight recognition or sight memory. So the child has to use the right frontal brain to decode or guess at the words on the

page. That part of the brain, then, is not free to do its own very important job of creating accurate pictures and images of the meaning of the words. Thus premature reading may in fact lame, perhaps even for the long term, the child's ability to understand, experience, and remember what she has read.

Waiting for the brain—for spelling

In the past, children had to learn only a few hundred words by right-brain sight recognition. Most of these words are short (i.e., *is, a, and, at, the, are*) and do not have an associated mental picture. Today, children starting to read at four or five must memorize and learn to recognize by sight hundreds, even thousands, of words. They do not have mental pictures for these words, and thus spelling them correctly is difficult.



When the axons, connecting fibers between neurons in the brain, become myelinated with an insulating sheath, the child is optimally ready to learn to read.

Children taught to read (and spell) at an early age typically use their right-brain, sight memory to try to identify a word. They tend to focus on the first and last letters of the word, its overall shape, and its length. They often are oblivious to the sequence of letters within the word. Therefore, these children do not usually notice any differences when shown the sentences, “GAOTS LKIE GARSS” versus “GOATS LIKE GRASS,” or “CTAS HVAE TIALS” versus “CATS HAVE TAILS,” or “BAERS LVOE HNOEY” versus “BEARS LOVE

HONEY.” In contrast, a child who is reading phonetically, because he is sounding out the words, immediately notices all the misspelled words and even tries to phonetically sound out the nonsense words.

A child taught to read (and spell) starting at age seven can sound out a word, that is, decode it phonetically, using the left brain. Having identified the word, he can access the image or picture of that word with its correct spelling in the right hemisphere. Spelling words correctly and identifying misspelled words will be relatively easier for this child.

Children typically become capable of phonetic reading, using the left hemisphere of the brain, about the same time that the bilateral neural pathways integrating the right and left hemispheres of the brain

have developed. An indication of this is the child's ability to do cross-lateral skipping (opposite leg and arm extending at the same time) without having to think about it. The right arm and leg are controlled by the left frontal area and the left arm and leg by the right frontal area. Thus, the child's ability to move an opposite arm and leg at the same time indicates the right and left hemispheres of their brains are “talking with” or connected to each other. A child able to skip only using his feet or skip extending the same arm with the same leg (the homolateral skip) is not yet ready to read, since he cannot access both sides of the brain simultaneously.

The bilateral integrating pathways can be strengthened by activities that involve cross-lateral movements, in which the opposite limbs move simultaneously. In Waldorf schools, circle time in kindergarten and the early grades includes a variety of games and activities that involve cross-lateral movement. Eurythmy, especially if done with conscious therapeutic intent, is a very effective means of developing cross-lateral coordination, as is work in The Extra Lesson™, a Waldorf-based remedial therapy. Also helpful are form drawing (a subject unique to Waldorf schools), jumping rope by oneself, swimming, hiking with poles, snowshoeing with poles, cross-country skiing with poles, contra dancing, square dancing, and ballroom dancing. At the website bal-a-vis-x.com, there are many exercises with balls and balance boards that involve cross-lateral movement. Cursive writing, in danger of extinction in many schools, but involving both brain hemispheres, is also recommended.



In The Extra Lesson™ remedial work, the integration of the left and right hemispheres of the brain is promoted through painting exercises such as this double interlocking lemniscate.



Cross-lateral activities, such as cross-country skiing with poles, helps the integrated functioning of the brain.

Dealing with the damage

In my medical practice, I see many older children (fourth through eighth grade) who are reading mostly by sight—by right-brain memory word recognition. They typically do not have the ability to create mental pictures, internal imaginations of scenes and events based on what they are reading. If the child has no obvious problem with balance, eye tracking, eye convergence, proprioception, and bilateral integration, I recommend a phonetic-based reading program. This switches their reading activity to the left hemisphere and frees the right hemisphere for its image-creating work.

However, if the child has challenges with sensory processing and integration, balance, proprioception, bilateral integration, and especially with eye movements, then there may be a more serious underlying cause. The inability to create images may be due to a cranial compression affecting the cerebellum and brain stem areas at the back of the head and base of the skull. Cranial compressions usually occur at birth, when the cranial plates overlap and are easily shifted. C-section births, prolonged labor (more than twelve hours), a very fast delivery, a labor induced by the drug pitocin, and the use of vacuum suction forceps at delivery can cause a cranial compression.

In such cases, I first recommend treatments by a Biodynamic Cranial therapist or by a chiropractor or osteopath, board-certified and specializing both in atlas orthognist and functional neurology. Such treatments help gently, and often non-manipulatively, to resolve the cranial compression. I then recommend that the child do a specific movement therapy such as therapeutic eurythmy, Extra Lesson, Parelli horseback riding lessons (especially bareback), Bal-A-Vis-X, Brain Gym, HANDLE, or sensory integration therapy with an occupational therapist who specializes in work with children. Once the



The Extra Lesson therapeutic exercises also involve movements, such as tracing a spiral with one's foot.



Folk dancing, as well as contra, square, and ballroom, all promote full brain function. Here, Bulgarian children perform traditional dances.

vestibular—balance, eye tracking, eye convergence, proprioceptive, and bilateral integration pathways are more formed and strengthened, the child will still probably benefit from a phonetic-based reading course.

The development of young children unfolds according to a clear pattern. If we ignore that pattern and try to impose activities, such as reading and writing, on the children when they are not ready, we endanger them and their future healthy development. However, if we recognize and honor the stages of their development and bring academic work in a timely and appropriate way, we are laying the foundation for a lifetime of enthusiastic and efficient learning. ☺



SUSAN R. JOHNSON, MD, FAAP, is a behavioral and developmental pediatrician. After completing a three-year pediatric residency and a three-year fellowship in behavioral and developmental pediatrics,

Susan worked for seven years as the physician director for the School Health Center in San Francisco. After the birth of her son, she was introduced to Waldorf Education and became a certified Waldorf teacher. Susan spent an additional year of training in the Extra Lesson/sensory integration program at Rudolf Steiner College with Ingun Schneider. She also attended a special training course in anthroposophically extended medicine at the Lukas Clinic in Arlesheim, Switzerland. Dr. Johnson makes visits to Waldorf schools in the Sacramento area and has a private practice in Colfax, California.

For further information and to obtain for free the numerous articles she has written, visit Dr. Johnson's website: www.youandyourchildshealth.org

“A Real Teacher?”

BY VIVIAN JONES-SCHMIDT

The lanky seven-year-old looked up at me out of the corner of his eyes: “So. Are you a *real* teacher yet?” Laughing and sassy, he twisted himself out of reach of my arms. When I’d started my two weeks of substituting for his class, he had been as skittish as a wild pony, working hard to hug the perimeter of the classroom. Gradually, he’d been tamed, and, when my two weeks ended, he was joining our circle. Now, a few days later, I was working in another class and just happened to see him in the hallway.

As an educator, I have certain expectations and hopes for the students in my care. I hope that they will learn to love learning—will get so excited about their lesson that they ask for homework—that they will work hard, be well-behaved and civil to one another, that they will steadily improve their basic skills, that they will succeed in their later schooling and get into a good college perhaps, and that in the end they will become self-aware and independent, loving human beings. I may hope, too, that someday they will come back to thank me “for the seed [I] have planted.”

What then are the capacities, knowledge, and qualities that help make “a real teacher,” a teacher who can enable students to develop into capable human beings? This is a timely question, since teachers are judged, more and more, simply by their ability to improve their students’ performance on standardized tests.

A teacher needs the ability to empathize with the basic life experiences of children. She needs to recall what it felt like to enter a classroom for the first time, to interact with adults who are all imposingly taller and bigger and who seem to be able to perform any task perfectly. The ability to enter into the children’s world of feelings enables the teacher to relate to them and help them develop their own capacities.

The ability to observe each child and to appreciate him or her as a remarkable and unique individual is another crucial attribute. Children appear at the classroom door in a wide variety of physical bodies, with different socioeconomic and family backgrounds, health issues, emotional needs and habits, and various levels of “executive function.” Each moves differently, each has a different quality of voice, harbors unique interests and talents. A teacher who appreciates the children as individuals, as well as the class as a whole, can effectively plan lessons and a daily schedule that will well serve the students.

The teacher also needs a clear understanding of the stages of child development. A teacher needs to know what can reasonably be expected of a seven-year-old in terms of learning and behavior. It is quite different from what she can expect of a ten-year-old.

Rudolf Steiner includes *humility* in his description of a real teacher. Teaching, particularly teaching in a Waldorf school, is not for the faint of heart. The teacher is justly humbled when faced with the challenge of imparting the comprehensive, daunting Waldorf curriculum to a class of anxious, eager, and lively students. But Steiner goes further. The teacher is humbled—or should be—not only by the task itself but also by the recognition of the innate wisdom of the unfolding human beings before her. In addition, the teacher is humbled by the realization that imparting intellectual knowledge is only a small part of

The list of attributes of the “real teacher” is long and humbling. . . . Teaching, particularly in a Waldorf school, is not for the faint of heart.

her task, that she really is charged with helping the children become true human beings, and that she must fulfill this task despite her own inadequacies and imperfections.

A teacher needs to be an expert at self-objectification, retrospection, and introspection. He needs to observe himself. At night, before sleeping, he thinks back through the experiences of the day. What were the significant interactions? When was he disorganized, inconsistent, insensitive, confused? Were his gestures and movements calm and nonthreatening? Was his speech clear? Did he remember to enunciate “*written*” instead of “*wri—en*”? Were his thoughts respectful and worthy of being spoken? Or, did he perhaps inwardly rail at a student’s parents for yet again failing to return important paperwork or for explaining to the child that our sun is “just a star, and not a very big one at that?”

The real teacher is aware that she, like every human being, is “a work in progress,” that is, is engaged in a path of self-development. The teacher confronts her limitations and works on them. In this, she models for the students the process of creating *self*, and in doing so teaches them an essential human activity, not didactically but through example, helping them learn by observation and experience. For the real teacher, self-development requires an engagement of twenty-four hours each day.



The writer with her student Gemma Cohen (please see Alumni Forum), 2003

At night, after reviewing the day, the teacher reflects on the role of the spirit in the material world, on his own inner thoughts and purposes, and on the interaction between these two. This attention to the dichotomy between the “outside world” and “inside world” and to their interconnection can have surprising and helpful results. If a teacher falls asleep with a question, e.g., about how to present a particular story or lesson to a class or to a child, he may awake in the morning with a clear and inspired way to proceed.

In the morning, the teacher’s thoughts center on the children—the tender, as yet unformed, beings in her care. With the help of unseen but strongly felt spiritual forces, the teacher is reminded that she plays a critical role, not

only in the imparting of knowledge, but in the development and strengthening of each child.

So the list of attributes of the “real teacher” is long and humbling. It includes empathy, understanding of child development, self-observation, a passion for self-improvement, a daily inner discipline, humility, and most importantly, perhaps, dedication to and love for the children. The response, then, to an inquisitive, frisky seven-year-old’s question, which he himself may not comprehend, is “Surely, the work of becoming ‘a real teacher’ is the work of at least a lifetime.” But if a teacher diligently engages in that work, she will be able to serve her students in the way they need and deserve. ☺



VIVIAN JONES-SCHMIDT is a native of Virginia and has been an educator for thirty-five years. Twenty-seven of those years were in Waldorf schools. For eighteen years, Vivian was a class teacher in the Charlottesville Waldorf School.

Vivian is currently doing substitute teaching in public schools in and around Charlottesville and finds both the students and teachers receptive to the stories, music, and drawing she brings from her Waldorf experience.

Individual Paediatrics: Physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of diagnosis and counselling Anthroposophic-homeopathic therapy

by Georg Soldner, MD, and H. Michael Stellmann, MD

This monumental work is the first English version of the definitive reference for anthroposophic-homeopathic pediatric medicine, published initially in German twelve years ago. The volume provides detailed diagnostic and treatment information for every conceivable childhood condition, including gastroenteritis, allergies, measles, depression, and even warts. Many case studies illustrate aspects of individualized diagnosis and treatment. New developments regarding epigenetics, vaccination, sun protection, and vitamin D are examined. Newly developed and refined treatment concepts for disorders such as bronchial asthma, neurodermatitis, and ADHD/ADD are presented.

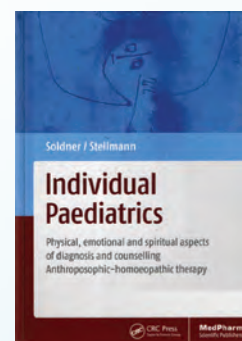
Individual Paediatrics is a valuable and necessary resource for every physician and therapist working from an anthroposophical, holistic perspective. It is really an encyclopedia of the theory and practice of anthroposophic

childhood medicine. Its scope and detail is remarkable and makes possible the treatment of each child and each illness an individual one.

The volume is a valuable resource for parents as well. There is much material on the causes of childhood pathologies, advice on how to prevent the conditions, as well as practical instructions for treatment. For example, the section on pneumonia recommends and describes an enema treatment and mustard and ginger chest compresses, and also suggests a variety of homeopathic remedies. *Individual Paediatrics* is a big book and a substantial investment, but a worthwhile one.

—R. E. K.

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Discovering How the Earth Changes

A Sixth-Grade Geology Class Trip on the California Coast

BY RONALD KOETZSCH with LUISA BURGESS, BODO LANGEN, and LEN PISCIOTTA

Late last May, the twenty-nine students of the Sacramento Waldorf School's sixth grade traveled west by car toward the California coast. Along the way, where the flat expanses of the Central Valley meet the coastal hills, class teacher Luisa Burgess pointed out that they were right at the place where two of the Earth's massive tectonic plates—the North American and the Pacific—come together. This was the first on-site teaching/learning moment of a four-day geology field trip that included beaches, fossils, forges, black sand, red ocher, and various geological mysteries.

That evening, the group met up with Bodo Langen—a longtime practical arts teacher in Waldorf schools

and an instructor in Waldorf teacher trainings—at an organic farm in Davenport, not far from beautiful Half Moon Bay. Under Bodo's direction, the students set up a secluded campsite in a nearby valley rich in rare plants and wildlife. Using stumps and planks, the students made benches for an eating and gathering area. Bodo had arranged for the necessities of camping in the area, including a water truck, fire pit, and fire extinguishers.

There was an unexpected visit from the local fire officials, concerned about campers during the area's fire season. Fortunately, Bodo is well-known for his environmental work with young students and was able to convince the visitors from California Fire that all possible safety precautions had been taken.

The next day, Len Pisciotta, a mineralogist and expert in geology, arrived early in the morning at the camp. Len gave an introductory talk about seismic faults, using as a metaphor the phrase “how

the cookie crumbles.” With each student holding a cookie—representing the Earth's crust—Len explained that when the Earth's crust cracks it creates “crumbs” and radiating small cracks, just as a broken, crumbling cookie does. The talk was immediately relevant, since the group was pretty much right on top of the San Andreas and the San Gregorio faults.

After the introduction, Len and Bodo took the students on a daylong trip to three beaches, each with distinct geological characteristics, which the instructors had selected on a prior planning excursion. At each place, Len encouraged the students to observe carefully what they saw—white sand, black sand, gravel, smooth pebbles, fossil-laden cliffs, striated rock, cobble encased in hardened mud, flat masses of rock jutting out of the earth at an angle—and ask themselves the question, “How did this come to be?”

Len explains:

I wanted the students to look carefully at what was around them to imagine the forces and the processes of change that had created what they were seeing. I wanted them to understand that the Earth is in a constant state of change, that Earth material is broken, is transported, and is deposited again by forces in Nature.



Geology field expert Len Pisciotta with students. They are looking at tafoni rock (see photo on next page) in a tilted bed of sedimentary rock. Len is asking the students how the tafoni rock might have been formed.



Bodo Langen, trip organizer, records a moment on the day spent visiting three places on the coast.

I also wanted them to realize that these changes are happening on a small as well as on a large scale. A seismic shift that thrusts the ocean bed out onto the land is a geologic movement. But drops of rain falling on a beach and moving a few grains of sand or carrying them down into a stream is also geologic activity. And so is that same sand settling to the bottom of the stream and forming a sediment.



Len Pisciotta prepares students for a geological drawing exercise by pointing out the huge gap in time between the upper sandy terrace deposits (60 thousand years old) and the darker, steeply angled beds below (60 million years old).

Each geological phenomenon has a story, has a history. But the story is not always obvious, and sometimes there is a large part missing. For example, at one beach there was a sedimentary layer of Cretaceous rock bar 60–110 million years old jutting out at a 63 degree angle overlaid with terrace deposits only 10–70 thousand years old. How did that come to be? There was a huge gap of missing time. It was like a Harry Potter novel with a couple of hundred pages missing.

I stressed to the children that geologists do not always know the full story and they, as amateurs, might discover something new or see something in a new way. With this in mind, I had the students pick out a geologic feature and draw it on paper and then share their story on how the geologic feature was formed. It was very interesting. They began to look at other features nearby like puzzle pieces or evidence of a much bigger event. Some went in the other direction and looked at the interlocking grains of sand. They began to look deeper into

the rock, use their imagination, and ask questions—especially when Bodo worked with them in the following days. It was a fascinating exercise.



At Pebble Beach, tafoni rock, a sandstone with a lacework, cave-like pattern caused by the chemical and physical weathering effect of the seawater

The next day, the group traveled away from the coast up into the mountains. After six miles of paved road and six miles of unpaved road, they arrived at Bodo Lengen's secluded property in the Big Basin State Park. Bodo's learning center is equipped with charcoal-fired Iron Age-type forges, an archery range, and a workshop equipped for woodworking, metalworking (in iron, copper, and silver), and stone carving.

At one of the beaches, the students had gathered black sand, which is rich in iron and other minerals. At Bodo's center, the students used magnets to extract the raw iron from the sand and then smelted it in a primitive, Iron Age-type furnace. The resulting "bloom" of such a first smelting is a melted conglomerate of iron mixed with impurities that resembles a crystalline flower with many petals. The students experienced a process that was a crucial turning point in human history, the process that made iron available for making tools and weapons. They stood, in effect, on the threshold between the Stone Age and the Iron Age.



At Pescadero State Beach, the students observe how the wind and the water, forces of Nature, are moving earth material (sand) around. They are also identifying evidence below of an earthquake fault zone—a shiny glaze on two types of rock pushing against each other.

Some of the students examined the black sand with a microscope and pebbles from another beach with magnifying glasses. The sand contained tiny crystals of red and green garnets, and among the pebbles they found quartz, agates, moonstone (feldspar), California jade, and jasper. Bodo later showed the students gemstones from his



Using a magnet to extract iron from black sand

ment, finely ground and mixed with various fats or oils. The Native Americans on the Northwest coast mixed ocher with salmon eggs or animal fat. Ocher is also called “goethite” after the German writer and scientist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who was an avid mineralogist. The alchemists in the group of sixth graders ground the ocher in mortars to a fine powder and, by mixing it with olive and linseed oils, produced batches of paint suitable for face painting and drawing of maps.

The third day was a return to one of the sites visited on day one, a private beach rich in fossils. For much



Using bellows to fire up an Iron Age-type forge



The Iron Age-type forge and the “iron bloom” formed in the fire

collection, which are cut from these types of materials.

Another high point was the discovery nearby of a deposit of red ocher or limonite—an earthy iron oxide. Ocher was used in many ancient cultures as a pig-

ment, finely ground and mixed with various fats or oils. The Native Americans on the Northwest coast mixed ocher with salmon eggs or animal fat. Ocher is also called “goethite” after the German writer and scientist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who was an avid mineralogist. The alchemists in the group of sixth graders ground the ocher in mortars to a fine powder and, by mixing it with olive and linseed oils, produced batches of paint suitable for face painting and drawing of maps.

of the day, the students were free to choose an activity. Explorers and researchers among them climbed the cliffs and, equipped with stone-carving chisels, extracted more fossils. Some students sketched, working on a large scale, depicting, for example, the sedimentary cliffs. Others drew something quite small—such as the effect of water on a small patch of sand. Three boys went off with fishing gear and brought back a small flounder. There was time to relax in the sun or just walk on the beach. Near the

end of the day, after a beach cookout, there were skits and music to celebrate the occasion, the natural world, and the teachers.

Class teacher Luisa Burgess speaks of her motivation in planning the trip:

I wanted the students to look at the landscape and to engage their imagination in how dynamic forces gave rise to the now apparently “static” forms. The study of mineralogy can become abstract and disconnected from Nature—simply memorizing categories of rocks and gems. Steiner’s indications were to teach mineralogy out of the studies of geography and history. I wanted the students to see and observe the geological phenomena in their actual context, as part of the landscape. Len and Bodo did a beautiful job in highlighting key geological archetypes, in the context of the geography and history of the area.



Getting a magnified look at black sand and various types of pebbles

Children at twelve years of age are awakening to cause and effect relationships in the world around them. In the weeks prior to the trip, we studied the basics of geology: the three types of rock—igneous, sedimentary, metamorphic—and how these are created, transformed, and moved about. We studied how minerals in solution can precipitate out, as in the formation of limestone, and how lighter precipitates, such as silica-rich material, move to the surface and the heavier ones, those rich in iron and magnesium, for example, move to the bottom. We also talked about the weathering process from wind and water and how that is going on in Nature all the time.

One artistic exercise involved drawing, with graphite pencil, a cliff face showing sedimentary layers, rich with conglomerate rock. Then using engraving tools, the students created a negative image of what they had drawn by carving into the black, waxy surface of a card with a white underlayer.

We reviewed the trip before our drive home, and one of my students simply said, “I see now



Making dye pigment out of ocher (limonite) mixed with linseed oil and olive oil

that Nature is created out of many patterns, and all I have to do is look for them.”

Bodo Langen, who organized the trip and its practical aspects, has a lot of experience with field trips of Waldorf

school classes of various ages. He observes:

Often the class trip, especially in the middle and upper grades, winds up as an expensive, fancy holiday excursion. I think a well-organized field trip into Nature that is intimately connected with a study or main lesson block can be an invaluable experience at moderate cost. We can bring the social, artistic/practical, and intellectual together, spiced up with a spirit of adventure. In this fashion, we deepen our appreciation and experience of the natural world. Out of the love for our planet Earth, developed through such



Class teacher Luisa Burgess and a student adorned with ocher pigment

experiences, a responsibility of soul may arise, which will, in time, grow into an attitude of true stewardship and environmental responsibility for the future.

It takes a lot of planning and preparation. One has to establish

a relationship with people and the authorities in the communities where you are planning to go. Also at times we may have to involve experts in the fields of study we wish to pursue. The students should be prepared by their work in the classroom beforehand. Going into the natural world, observing phenomena, trying to understand and analyze them, interacting with the material substance, and doing relevant conceptual and artistic work creates another, deeper level of involvement. ☺

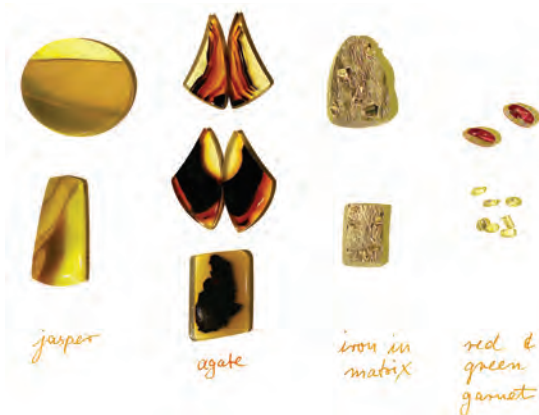


A budding researcher and collector cuts fossils out of a cliff of sedimentary rock.

LUISA BURGESS was born on the Indo-Australian plate, had her childhood in Samoa on the Pacific plate, and was schooled on a fault line between the two, in New Zealand. The sedimentary rock of southeast England allowed her to study and work as a Waldorf class teacher. She now teaches at the Sacramento Waldorf School.

BODO LANGEN, a native of Germany, has been teaching sculpture and the practical arts—woodworking, blacksmithing, and metalworking in Waldorf schools for the past thirty years. To find out more about Bodo’s learning center in the mountains, visit pinemountainarts.org

LEN PISCIOTTA studied cultural anthropology at the University of California at Davis and has worked in geoarchaeology. He is an amateur mineralogist with a special interest in field geology. Len has a California State teaching credential and is currently in the Waldorf teacher education and Master’s program of Rudolf Steiner College. He is a passionate mineral collector and currently has a book coming out on writing haiku for mineral specimens. He can be reached at haikuminerals@yahoo.com



Gemstone samples from Bodo Langen’s collection

Wind, Snow, and Stars

A Dogsledding Trip with Seventh Graders

BY CHARLOTTE JACKLEIN

Forty howling huskies strain at their traces, wide-eyed students cling tightly to heavily loaded sleds, I balance precariously on one runner with my co-driver—our smallest grade-seven student—and suddenly our line of seven sleds jolts forward at the shouted command from our guide. In a moment, the deafening howls of the impatient huskies are replaced by startling silence, interrupted only by the swish of sled runners on snow. The dogs joyfully race along the narrow trail, swiftly carrying us into the snowy forests of the Algonquin wilderness.

Underneath my feet, the sled shifts like a living thing as we drive around tight turns and duck under low-

hanging branches. My foot slips off the runner, but fortunately my quick-thinking student co-driver grabs my arm before I land in a snowbank. Ahead, another student isn't quite so lucky. As the sled rounds a bend, he takes a nosedive into the deep snow, but emerges in a moment laughing and rosy-cheeked and flings himself back onto the sled before the dog team is gone down the trail.

The line of dogsleds, students aboard, crosses a frozen lake in Algonquin Provincial Park. The park is located in the arboreal transition zone and has both thick deciduous and coniferous forests.

Later, as we turn onto a frozen lake, the seven sleds are spread out across the lake in a graceful arc. In less than twenty-four hours, the students have grasped the basics of dogsledding and now stand confidently on the slippery runners. Already knowing the names and personalities of the dogs, they call observations to each other about their favorites. Sunlight glistens on the myriad snow crystals but the air is very cold. As we drive across the exposed

lake, the students duck deeper into their parkas and pull on an extra layer of mittens.

My ten seventh-grade students and I are on the second day of our four-day dogsledding and camping trip. Our school, located in the suburbs of Burlington, just west of Toronto, Ontario, has a tradition of canoeing and hiking camping trips, but winter camping is a new venture. Algonquin Park is a wilderness park located about three hours north of Toronto. Covering an area of approximately 7,650 square kilometers (2,955 square miles), the park offers excellent canoeing routes in the summer and outstanding trails in the winter. Established in 1893, Algonquin Park has been a remarkable resource, inspiring a love of nature among generations of Canadians. It was a favorite venue of the Canadian school of landscape painters that formed in the 1930s, the Group of Seven. Currently, logging in the park (most of it out of sight from popular routes) is controversial. Some of the routes we dogsledded on this trip are to be logged in the foreseeable future.

Preparation began almost a year before the trip. I began speaking with parents about the possibility of this trip, gauged interest levels, and calculated the finances. In class, we looked at different fabrics and discussed the pros and cons for different conditions. Cotton, good for staying cool in the summer, can trap dangerous levels of moisture in the winter. Wool and synthetic polypro or fleece are good choices for winter conditions. Several months before the trip—and well before Christmas—I sent out a packing list of the items the students would need. That Christmas, Santa delivered merino longjohns and thick, woolly socks



The Halton Waldorf School's seventh graders "on ice."

All photos by Charlotte Jacklein



A canvas wall tent, buttressed with snow for insulation, used for cooking and sleeping. One of these tents was at each campsite along the route.

to many of the students, gifts eagerly received and worn to school in the weeks leading up to the trip.

Four days before departure, the class did a complete “duffle shuffle.” The students brought in all their clothes, gear, and equipment, and we carefully checked every item. Being underprepared for a summer camping trip might result in being wet or uncomfortable, but being underprepared for winter camping involves the dangers of hypothermia and frostbite. All the students



One of the daily and necessary chores—getting water . . .

passed with flying colors, and the checked bags remained at school so that no items could go straying before our departure.

There were several reasons behind my organizing and implementing this trip. Before becoming a Waldorf teacher, I worked for years in outdoor education and wilderness guiding, and I felt drawn to connect the best of Waldorf and of outdoor education. Firstly, many elements of winter camping are directly connected to the grade-seven curriculum. In the study block on explorers, we had studied not only world explorers such as Magellan and Columbus, but also Canadian and Arctic adventurers such as Roald Amundsen and John Franklin, driven individuals who made remarkable journeys through harsh winter conditions. Secondly, if the weather cooperated, the clear winter sky would offer an unforgettable conclusion to our astronomy block. Thirdly,

winter camping provides an authentic, tangible, and formidable challenge—an opportunity for restless seventh graders to test themselves as they cross the threshold of adolescence. In addition, the students would experience elements of the traditional Ojibway culture, including sledding with dogs, cutting holes in the ice to get water, and harvesting wood to keep warm in the bitter winter cold.

Winter camping is a unique experience. It requires physical stamina and strength but also attentiveness, cooperation, and a concern for others. Winter camping fosters resilience, self-sufficiency, teamwork and knowledge of self, others, and the broader environment. Everyone has to take good care of him- or herself. The consequences of carelessness are immediate and severe. Lost mittens can quickly result in frozen fingers. But each person must also contribute to the accomplishment of the many tasks necessary for daily survival. The main tent must be set up, firewood must be gathered, the tent stove must be filled, fired, and tended—often when it is very cold and dark. The environment requires, too, that each person be aware of all the others and of their needs, and be ready to help when necessary. Seventh



. . . and another—stuffing one’s sleeping bag after a night’s rest

graders, with some guidance, can rise to the occasion. In the process, they become aware that we can live safely and well, though simply, in a very challenging natural environment when each person takes responsibility for self and for others.



. . . and another—gathering deadfall for firewood . . .

Dogsledding adds another level of responsibility and richness to the experience of winter camping. The students must care for themselves but they must also feed, water, and



Breakfast on the patio

manage, in our case, forty-two lively, energetic, and affectionate Alaskan huskies. In exchange, the huskies offer unconditional love, joyful speedy rides through the forest, a deepened sense of

responsibility for other living beings, and some few, unexpected nosedives into deep snow.

Our canvas-walled prospector tent, just big enough to hold the students, myself, and the guide, was for sleeping and cooking only. The day began at first light with the students cautiously sticking their faces out from the heavy-duty winter sleeping bags. While those closest to the woodstove likely might have been almost too warm during the night, those further away, while also warm in their bags, often might have ice on the sleeping bag fabric around their faces. Soon the students were all up doing the chores: collecting and chopping firewood, preparing breakfast, feeding the dogs, loading sleds, harnessing the dog teams. Simple tasks required a lot of effort. Collecting firewood meant floundering through thigh deep snow, chopping down dead trees, and dragging the logs back to camp. Collecting water meant using a huge ice chisel to make a hole into the meter-thick ice and carrying heavy buckets to the tent kitchen and to the thirsty dogs. Early on, washing dishes became a popular chore, as this meant being inside the tent with warm water, at least for a short time!

Much of each day was spent on the sleds, traveling across frozen lakes, steep winding trails, and through thick snowy forests to the next campsite. Driving the dog teams was a full-body kinesthetic



Huskies include various hardy northern breeds known for their energy, intelligence, and fast-pulling.

experience. Each turn required bold leans above the snowdrifts; steep downhill demands full weight on the brakes; and uphill meant that the students had to jump off the runners and help the dogs by pushing the heavily laden sleds through the deep snow. There was no time for daydreaming while mushing. A moment of distraction could lead to a rude awakening in a snowdrift as the dog team ran on.

In our moments of free time, we all stayed outside. It was so cold that we had to move just to stay warm. On the third morning of our trip, the temperature dipped to -35 degrees Celsius (-31 degrees Fahrenheit). I had had prior winter camping experience and had lived in the Canadian Arctic, but even for me this was truly cold. However, the students found ways to run around and stay warm. They reenacted *The Hunger Games* (no casualties), developed a Jedi training program, and played many running and chasing games.

At night we gathered on the lake, staring in awe at the breathtaking expanse of stars. The students pointed out to each other the constellations—Orion, Polaris, Cassiopeia—that we had previously seen only in our main lesson books or amid the light pollution of the city. When all were in their sleeping bags, I read a story by the light of my headlamp, and even students who had been struggling with homesickness soon fell asleep in the reddish glow of the fire.

Our trip came to an end all too quickly. The students drove the sleds into the parking lot at the trailhead with newfound confidence, capably unharnessed the dogs, and unpacked the sleds. The farewell to the dogs was heartfelt and teary-eyed. For the first part of the drive home, the students were still quite emotional, but eventually they all fell asleep.

Not long after the trip, several parents commented on changes they had observed in their children. The students had acquired an aura of calmness, a new sense of confidence, and a quiet inner strength.



It's easy to get attached to a husky!

I also noticed that the children had changed. In class, they seemed more connected to each other and often responded to each other's needs before they were verbalized. The students had been tested and they found that they could meet the challenge.

Six months later, as an eighth-grade class, we were en route to an eight-day wilderness sea kayaking trip. During the drive, the students reminisced about the dogsledding and confidently named all the forty-two dogs—testimony to how deeply the huskies had affected and inspired them. During this sea kayaking trip, we had challenging conditions—driving rain for days, wind warnings, thunderstorms, and subzero temperatures. Rather than being demoralized by the weather, the students kept warm and dry, worked together, sang boisterously, and had a fantastic trip. As one student sagely pointed out: “You know, Ms. Jacklein, after winter camping—nothing is a problem.”

I wish that all educators and young people could spend time in a wild place, learning about themselves, about each other, and about the world of Nature. The season and the mode of transportation are not important. Careful preparation, working with a reputable outfitter, and involving parents and students, however, are necessary. But the benefits are immense for all involved. With great challenge comes great learning, and we can create such opportunities for our children.

I don't know what challenges my students will face after graduation from eighth grade—in high school and beyond. I do know, though, that they have demonstrated self-confidence, compassion, and

remarkable resilience. No matter what challenging conditions they may encounter, these young people will be able to capably make their way in the world. ☺



On the threshold of adolescence and heading into an unknown future, but, thanks to this dogsled trip, with a clearer sense of self



CHARLOTTE JACKLEIN was born in Ontario, Canada, and attended the Halton Waldorf School from kindergarten to grade eight. She completed her Honours BA in Peace and Conflict Studies and English Writing at University of

Waterloo and received her Bachelor's in Education from Lakehead University. Charlotte has worked in Canada and abroad with a variety of youth adventure leadership and outdoor education-based organizations such as Outward Bound. Charlotte Jacklein now is a grade-eight class teacher at her alma mater, the Halton Waldorf School, and is enrolled in the Master's of Education/Waldorf teacher training program at Antioch University New England. Charlotte has a deep love for the outdoors and can often be found in her kayak or in the woods.

A NEW MEDICAL RESOURCE FOR WALDORF SCHOOLS AND PARENTS

In the last years of his life, when he was founding Waldorf Education, Rudolf Steiner was also laying the basis for a natural, holistic approach to healing. This approach has become known as anthroposophic medicine or anthroposophically extended medicine. Steiner recommended that each Waldorf school have a physician trained in anthroposophic medicine who would collaborate with the teachers and with various kinds of therapists in meeting the health needs of the children.



The Association for Anthroposophic Medicine and Therapies in America (AAMTA) is an umbrella organization that includes associations of anthroposophic physicians, naturopathic doctors, rhythmical massage therapists, art therapists, music and singing therapists, nurses, and therapeutic eurythmists, as well as individual members, all sharing an anthroposophic impulse.

Individuals or schools can access the resources of the Association at www.aamta.org

Learning the Ancient Craft of the Blacksmith

BY DANIEL SMITH

Steel is the most commonly used metal; its use in tools, weapons, machines, bridges, and other structures has been essential in the development of human civilization. Steel is composed of iron hardened

by the addition of small amounts of carbon. The most archetypal and most ancient way of shaping or forging steel is the craft of the blacksmith. The blacksmith heats steel in a furnace and then hammers and beats it on an anvil into the desired shape.

Blacksmithing is enshrined in mythology—in the traditions and stories around Vulcan, Tubalcain, Hephaestus, and Saint Dunstan. Throughout human history echoes the ringing of the anvil. In times of war, blacksmiths forged swords and spears and in times

of peace, ploughshares. Blacksmithing metaphors still permeate our speech. We “strike while the iron is hot,” go at something with “hammer and tongs,” and avoid “having too many irons in the fire.” The blacksmith utilizes each of the four elements of earth, air, water, and fire. He is forging or shaping the same substance, iron, which is a crucial element in human blood.

Forging steel is a difficult, complicated task. It requires and supports the development of physical strength, focused will, and the practical application of theory. It provides an opportunity to turn intention into action, to work hard, to learn a manual skill, to experience warmth and light, and to have the satisfaction of creating something palpable, useful, and beautiful. A session of blacksmithing leaves one tired but enlivened and deeply satisfied, and with a tangible, material object that is the result of one’s work.

I teach blacksmithing starting in the ninth grade. It is a five-week block, and there are three eighty-minute

classes each week. I work with half of the class while the other students do a block on spinning. Later in the year, I repeat the block with the other half of the class. The blocks are scheduled in the cooler months of the school year.

I present blacksmithing as an experiential activity. First, the students experience what it is to cut through cold steel with a hacksaw. They have sawed wood in the past, and they experience the difference between the wood and the steel. They are amazed that something so hard can be cut!

Next, the three key elements of blacksmithing—“heat, hold, and hit”—are introduced. Using carefully selected steel tongs of an appropriate size—the tongs must hold the bar tightly—the students grasp and lift the bar of cold steel. They thrust the black metal into the hot (up to 2200 degrees Fahrenheit) propane-fueled furnace and observe the color change in the steel. They judge when it is ready to forge by the brightness of the metal. The heat has transformed the cold metal into bright and excited material, waiting to be shaped. The six inches of round stock is then hammered. Flat planes are created from the action of the hammer hitting the top of the steel and the anvil flattening



Round stock can be heated and hammered into a bar with a square or a rectangular cross section.



Hephaestus, son of Zeus and Hera, husband of Venus, was for the ancient Greeks the god of fire, volcanoes, blacksmiths, and metallurgy.



Ninth graders, using hammer and tongs, shape a piece of steel, the propane furnace in the background.

the bottom. The rounded cylinder is transformed into a square bar. We then remeasure the steel and note how it seems to have grown in length. Then we taper the steel to a point and measure once again. From this experiment, we learn that the volume of steel actually has remained the same; only the shape has changed. Later in the blacksmithing block, we will be able to calculate the volume of one inch of the starting stock and determine how much length is required to make the new shape we want.

In the course of a Waldorf schooling, students use materials that represent a spectrum from soft to hard. At each stage of their development, they experience materials that are increasingly hard and more difficult to work. This reflects the fact that, as the students grow, they are meeting new and more difficult challenges.

In kindergarten, the children work with warm and soft beeswax and then move to fibers such as wool in the lower grades. In fifth grade, they begin to work with wood and continue this through eighth grade.

When they enter the ninth grade

and are meeting the challenges of high school and adolescence, blacksmithing and working with steel bespeaks what they are experiencing in their lives. In the same year, they do complicated woodworking and start metalworking with copper.

In the tenth grade, the students have a second blacksmithing block. This block is a combination of blacksmithing and woodworking. In the forging part, the students use steel joinery elements such as rivets, tenons, and wedges to make a sculptural form. In the woodworking component, they make a base that complements the steel form. Later, in their senior year, they will do stone carving as a culminating practical arts project.

In 2009 I was approached by the school's Michaelmas festival committee and asked to make a sword. When the sword was being forged, every student

in the school came to the blacksmithing shop and struck the red-hot steel with the smithing hammer. This imbued the sword with the energy of the entire grade school and echoed the theme of Michaelmas of everyone coming together to achieve a common goal. Once the blade was shaped, I forged a dragon-head pommel and completed the more intricate details. The sword hangs in our Performing Arts Center and is used each year in the fourth-grade Michaelmas pageant. ☺

The dragon-head pommel for the Michaelmas sword

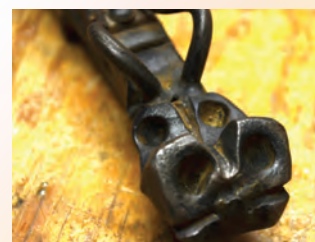
DANIEL SMITH was born in north central Ohio, in the small town of Norwalk. He graduated from Kent State University in 1999 with a Bachelor of Arts in Art Education. In 2001 Daniel moved to Carbondale, Illinois, to do an MFA program in blacksmithing at Southern Illinois University. In 2004 (primarily because he “was called by the universe”), he moved to Austin, Texas. He met his future wife there at a Waldorf school fund-raiser. Daniel has been teaching blacksmithing at the Austin Waldorf School for the last ten years. He and his wife have three daughters, ages three, five, and twelve.



Blacksmithing instructor Dan Smith making a steel skewer with fourth and ninth graders



A three-hook key rack—a ninth-grade project



The dragon-head pommel for the Michaelmas sword

Meeting the Latent Questions of Adolescents—the Waldorf High School Curriculum

BY DOUGLAS GERWIN, PhD

*Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.*

—Robert Frost

In a lecture entitled “Education for Adolescents,” Rudolf Steiner describes how, from puberty onwards, “latent questions” begin rising in the minds of young adults concerning all aspects of life in the world. Steiner says that the teacher must help adolescents articulate these questions—without, however, falling into the trap of answering them—“so that riddles arise in their youthful souls.” (Lecture, “Education for Adolescents,” June 21, 1922)

If riddles do not come to consciousness in the growing teenager, then the soul forces that would normally give rise to these life questions run the risk of being diverted in two directions: toward a lust for the erotic or toward a lust for power. In other words, with puberty, a creative urge awakens in teenagers that can realize itself in both senses of the verb “to conceive”—that is, in the capacity to give birth to abstract ideas as well as the capacity to

create new human life. Starting with this age, we are able to conceive our own thoughts no less than our own offspring. If these burgeoning powers of abstract thinking—a thinking saturated, to be sure, with deep feeling and yearning for ideals—are thwarted, then they may be redirected to one or the other form of lust.

Though they share a common origin, the lust for the erotic and the lust for power manifest themselves in the human soul as opposites. The lust for the erotic may be felt as erupting out of deep and mysterious depths, like a volcano overwhelming the conscious mind with feelings that carry the searing heat of desire:

*From what I’ve tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.*

By contrast, the lust for power may be felt as a powerful intellectual force of cognition descending as though from above, taking hold of our will with an icy, calculating intention born of cold hatred.

*But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.*

Generalizations are risky, but boys are probably more likely to divert this creative intellectual energy into a pursuit of physical eroticism, girls into the pursuit of psychological power. You will more often discover pornographic magazines hidden beneath the beds of the boys, for example, than of the girls, and the legion of X-rated sites on the Internet are far more geared to lure male than female visitors. On the other side of the sexual divide, the sometimes catty and even cruel behavior more typical of young adolescent girls may be understood as an expression of a lust for power.

It is important, though, to remember that both erotic and power lusts originate in the same capacity of soul—namely, in the capacity to conceive. In this context, one may ask how this fundamentally creative capacity can be exercised in a teenager’s school life in such a way that it is neither drawn prematurely into physical (i.e., sexual) activity nor into mental scheming that drives what are sometimes called “power games.”

In this area of concern, Rudolf Steiner points to the redemptive value of beauty for engaging the erotic sense before it is diverted into the sensual and to the value of deeds of altruism in harnessing the lust for power before it is



Acts of altruism, such as doing volunteer work in the community garden of a housing project, can refine the burgeoning energies of adolescence.



Waldorf high school students teaching disadvantaged girls how to knit



The experience of beauty helps the new and powerful impulses of adolescence manifest in a positive form: high school seniors rehearsing for a eurythmy performance.

turned to self-
ish purpose.
Ultimately,
lusts of any
kind stimulate
a craving that
can never
be satisfied.
In contrast,
experiences
of beauty and
altruism yield
nourishment
that is deeply
and lastingly
satisfying.

For insight into the more general latent questions that live just below adolescent consciousness, we may turn to the Waldorf high school curriculum and the riddles it can inspire. In their specifics, these questions—What? Why? How? and Who?—will take on an individual character in the minds and hearts of each teenager who poses them. But in general it is perhaps possible to identify four simple yet archetypal questions that are bound to arise and that the Waldorf high school curriculum is designed to address at the appropriate time in a student's four-year high school career.

Each year of the Waldorf high school curriculum embodies, in broad strokes, an underlying question or theme that helps guide students, not just through their studies of outer phenomena, but through their inner growth as well. These themes and methods are adapted to each specific group of students and take account of the fact that teenagers mature at varying paces—hence the “broad strokes.” And yet, one can identify struggles common to most any teenager. Even though adolescents pass through developmental landscapes at varying speeds, they all nonetheless will cover similar terrain.

Grade Nine

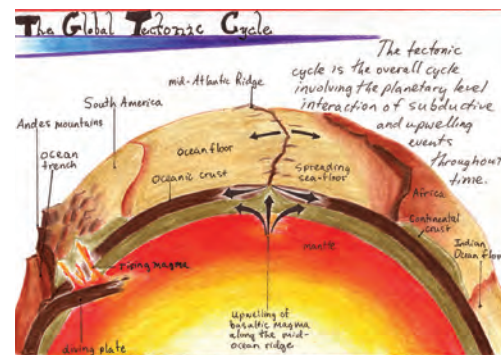
As freshmen plunge into the high school, they are also plunging with new intensity into the materiality of their bodies—with the unfolding of puberty—and into the immateriality of abstract thinking. There is tension in this opposition, often struggle, and occasionally even revolt.

The ninth-grade curriculum is designed with these tremendous developmental changes and struggles in mind. It allows the students to see their inner experiences reflected back to them in outer phenomena. In physics, for instance, students study in thermodynamics the opposition of heat and cold; in chemistry, the expansion

and contraction of gases; in history, the conflicts and the resulting revolutions in the United States, France, Russia, China, and Iran; and in geology, the collision of plate tectonics.

Through the chaos and tension of these struggles, students are summoned to exercise powers of exact observation: in the sciences, to describe and draw precisely what happened in the lab experiments and demonstrations, without adding, from the outset, an overlay of theoretical explanation; in the humanities, to recount clearly a sequence of events or to describe the nature of a character without getting lost in a plethora of details. The objective here is to train in the students powers of exact observation and reflection so that they can experience, in the raging storm of phenomena around them, the steady ballast of their own thinking. Strong powers of wakeful perception form the basis for later years of study, well beyond high school.

One may summarize the content and approach of this freshman curriculum with the underlying question: What? What happened? What's going on here? What did you see and hear?



The study of plate tectonics in the ninth-grade geology block reflects the overarching theme of opposing forces in collision and conflict.

Grade Ten

Emerging from the turmoil of grade nine, the tenth grader may begin to discover a certain balance point between the violent collision of opposites. Physically, the boys may achieve a steadier gait as their legs thicken and catch up with their oversized feet, while the girls may appear more poised and upright. Mentally, the sophomores may begin to bring a certain order to the confusion of their thoughts, a calming midpoint to the turbulence of opposites.

The curriculum responds to this search with subjects that incorporate the comparison and balancing of contrasting opposites: in chemistry, the study of acids and bases; in physics, the principles of mechanics; in earth sciences, the self-regulating processes of weather patterns; in astronomy, the coequality of centripetal and centrifugal forces; in embryology, the interplay of masculine and feminine influences.

Through the study of balance in natural and human phenomena, students can begin to find their own fulcrum. In so doing, they are called to exercise powers of comparison and contrast, weighing contrary phenomena to determine their value and significance, as well as their origins.

Students may discover that in this balancing of opposites, new forms can arise—in clouds and tides, or in planets and solar systems, or in male and female sexuality. This

discovery may in turn prompt the desire to explore the origins of things, to find the source of these forms in the beginnings of the universe or of history or of human language. In other words, the study of ancient times can now be taken up at a deeper level.

One may summarize the themes of this grade with the underlying question: How?

How does this relate to that? How do these contrasting phenomena interrelate? And how did they come about?

Grade Eleven

As adolescents enter the second half of their high school career, generalizations about their development become increasingly difficult. The strokes must grow ever broader. “Sweet sixteen” and beyond, however, is a typical time for both sexes to experience new depths to the inner life of thoughts, feelings, and deeds. Deeper—and more individualized—latent questions may begin to burn. This may be the year in which students feel the urge either to change schools or even to drop out of school altogether. In these inner promptings, a new and urgent voice speaks: “Leave behind what you have been given and get on with your own journey!” Outer statements of growing independence (already visible in earlier years) may also abound—in dress, hairstyles, the pursuit of part-time jobs, and what used to be the most exciting and sometimes premature token of maturity—the driver’s license. [Today, about a third of eligible teenagers forgo a driver’s license, preferring to be chauffeured by parents or getting rides via social media.]

The curriculum for the junior year allows students to cut free to a greater degree from their peers and set off on

their own uncharted course into the invisible recesses of life within. The junior year curriculum could be characterized by this theme of “invisibility”: namely, by the study of those subjects that draw the student into areas not accessible to the experience of our senses. Such a journey requires a new type of thinking—thinking no longer anchored in what our senses give us—as well as a feeling of confidence that this type of thinking will not lead us astray.

In literature, this journey to an invisible source is captured in the main lesson blocks devoted to the Grail legends and to Dante’s *Divine Comedy*. Other subjects, however, call upon similar powers. In chemistry, the students enter the invisible kingdom of the atom (invisible because, by definition, one cannot “see” atoms). In physics, they explore the invisible world of electricity (which we can perceive only in its effects, not in its inherent nature). In history, they relive Medieval and Renaissance times in which men and women set off on individual quests and journeys to destinations unknown (and, in some cases, unknowable). In projective geometry, we follow parallel lines to the point they share in the infinite—a point that can be thought, even though it cannot be seen.

In short, like the horizon that beckoned to Columbus and called him to venture beyond its visible edge, the dimensions of the classroom during the junior year are vastly enlarged to embrace the furthest reaches of the student’s own imagination and interests. In all subjects, the student is launched into more ambitious individual projects and research assignments.

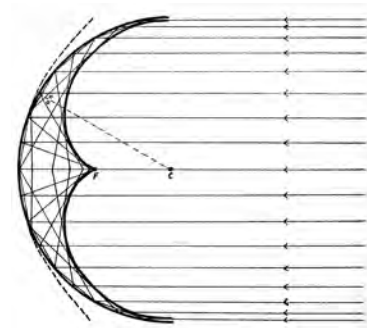
These voyages to the invisible landscapes pose an underlying question intended to strengthen the student’s



In the tenth grade, the focus is on achieving balance and on the complementary nature of opposites, as in the study of acids and bases in chemistry class.



Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), poet and guide to the invisible realms above and below the earthly world



The invisible though real “point at infinity” at which all parallel lines meet, as demonstrated in projective geometry

powers of independent analysis and abstract theorizing. The question is: Why? Why are things this way? Why did the events of history take this or that course? Even deeper “why” questions such as “Why am I here?”—questions about the meaning of life, individual destiny, and social responsibility—may find their way into the classroom at this age.

Grade Twelve

The twelve years of Waldorf Education can be compared to a giant cylindrical tower set in a vast expanse of landscape. One can imagine the children in first grade entering at the ground level of this tower and beginning to climb an interior spiral staircase of eleven turns. At each level (or floor) of the tower, they can look out through a window that gives a partial perspective on the surrounding landscape. Some curricular “windows” are set above one another, at different levels of the spiral staircase. For example, the “windows” for grade seven and for grade eleven look out at the same landscape but from different heights.



Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), a familiar presence in the Waldorf twelfth-grade classroom

Approaching the twelfth-grade level, the seniors push open a trap door in the roof of the tower and step out onto an open turret. Now, for the first time, they can survey the full panorama of the landscape that they previously glimpsed on the way up through eleven preceding perspectives.

In other words, the senior year is intended to be the gradual synthesis of the education—the great stocktaking and preparation for the next stage in learning—and, also, the fully conscious placement of oneself in the center of this panorama. “Point” and “periphery” are the complementary perspectives for this year. The senior curriculum serves both by offering subjects that synthesize many themes—world history, architecture, Faust—and relate these themes to the centrality of the human being. To the same end, the students study zoology and the relationship of the human being to the animal kingdom. They read the Transcendentalists, Russian novelists, such as Dostoyevski, and other great thinkers and writers who have wrestled with the question of our place in the world.

Assignments increasingly call upon the students to integrate what they have studied, to synthesize disparate



Music and the arts accompany students through all four years of the Waldorf high school.

disciplines in an attempt to address the underlying question of the senior curriculum: Who? Who is this being that is called Human? And ultimately—Who stands behind the outer play of events and natural phenomena, integrating them in a synthesizing whole?

In this sense, the curriculum of the twelfth grade not only recapitulates the themes of the four years of high school, but also returns to the place where the Waldorf curriculum began in grade one—with the image of the whole. Now, however, the difference, we can hope, is that the student will truly “know the place for the first time.”

Thus, the Waldorf curriculum in—

Grade nine, by training powers of observation, speaks to the underlying question: **What?**

Grade ten, by training powers of comparison, speaks to the underlying question: **How?**

Grade eleven, by training powers of analysis, speaks to the underlying question: **Why?**

Grade twelve, by training powers of synthesis, speaks to the underlying question: **Who?**

By means of these broad and archetypal questions, high school students are invited to explore the fathomless riddles of their surroundings and of their own existence. This exploration starts in the breadth of the outer world—the world of “What Is”—and culminates in the depths of the inner world—the world of “Who Is.” Ultimately it is these questions that will guide the students in the pursuit of their creative conceptions, both intellectual and sexual. ☉



DOUGLAS GERWIN has been a teacher at college and Waldorf high school levels for over thirty years. He is currently director of the Center for Anthroposophy, a center for Waldorf teacher education, and also executive director of the Research Institute for Waldorf Education. A prolific author, he will soon publish a collection of articles entitled *Trailing Clouds of Glory: Essays on Sexuality and the Education of Youth in Waldorf Schools*.

Waldorf Schools and Government in Canada—A Varied Landscape

BY FLORA SEUL-JACKLEIN and COLLEAGUES

This article was a team effort. Flora Seul-Jacklein gathered, edited, and collated materials from seven Waldorf educators in Canada, listed at the end of the article. Flora is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) and also a mentor at the Halton Waldorf School in Burlington, Ontario.

This article is intended primarily to inform Waldorf parents, teachers, and administrators about Waldorf Education in Canada, and particularly about the relationship of the schools to their provincial governments. Learning about schools in different regions and countries and the work of our distant colleagues is an opportunity to overcome national, or regional, self-preoccupation and to bring into healthy balance what Rudolf Steiner described as the impulses of egoism and love.

Steiner said:

Whereas we grow into our own nation because we are, so to speak, members of it, we [should] learn to know other nations.... Internationalism is that which permeates more and more as we give ourselves to a wide understanding of human nature.

(Lecture, "The Social Future," October 30, 1919)

The school–provincial government relations are quite varied. In some provinces, the Waldorf schools receive substantial aid but have to make certain compromises and devote much time and energy to complying with government regulations. In one province, the school receives no aid but still has to do much to stay in the good graces of the government.

—F.S.-J.

Waldorf Education has a long and distinguished history in Canada. The Toronto Waldorf School was founded in 1968 and currently has about 275 students in grades K–12. The Vancouver Waldorf School was founded the following year and now has a student population of about 330. In each decade since, new Waldorf schools were established, and there are now eighteen Waldorf schools in the country, as well as several initiatives and early childhood centers inspired by Waldorf Education. With eighteen schools in a nation of thirty-six million people, Waldorf Education in Canada has a presence similar to that of Waldorf Education in the United States—about 150 schools in a country of about 300 million.

Education is a provincial responsibility in Canada. Five provinces/territories provide full funding for Roman Catholic schools, which are called “separate” schools but are considered part of the public system. British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan provide two levels of government funding for private schools, ranging from thirty-five to seventy percent of the funding allotted to students in public schools. Manitoba and Québec provide fifty and sixty percent respectively. The provinces of Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the three territories—Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and the Yukon—do not provide any funding for private/independent schools.

British Columbia

The first school was founded in Vancouver in the early seventies. In 1977 independent schools were legally and financially recognized and funded, initially up to thirty percent, currently up to fifty percent. Independent schools are governed by the Independent Schools Act. Within the Ministry of Education, the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (OIIS) administers the Act. The Waldorf schools in the province have a positive relationship with the OIIS. Teachers at BC Waldorf schools need to have a BC teaching certificate. The OIIS has recognized the uniqueness of the Waldorf curriculum and methods by establishing a specific “Independent Schools Waldorf Teacher Certificate.”

Every two years, independent schools are inspected; every six years, an External Evaluation Committee visits schools. They serve to confirm that the schools are meeting all requirements, especially in terms of curriculum documentation and policies and procedures. In many ways, the



The Vancouver school is one of eight Waldorf schools in British Columbia.



The VWS second-grade classroom, bound to elicit from the typical “Amerdorfian” the response, “Oh, Wow! Up there, they are really just like us, after all!”

inspection is similar to an AWSNA accreditation, and AWSNA is exploring whether and how to take this fact into consideration as the Waldorf schools move along the path to full membership in the Association.

As part of the curriculum documentation, K–9 schools must demonstrate that in the core subjects of math, science, social studies, and language arts/English, all the Ministry of Education prescribed learning outcomes (PLOs) are being met. In other subjects, schools are required to either meet Ministry of Education PLOs or create their own and demonstrate how they are being met. In the high school, courses are linked with the Ministry course, and the school must demonstrate how they meet the PLOs. Schools can develop additional Board Authority Approved courses, and the schools are trying to do this with subjects like eurythmy.

Although schools work on these tasks individually, there has been some activity to join forces in cooperating with the government. The schools were able to successfully petition to have noncomputerized standardized testing granted specifically to all Waldorf schools. Currently the possibility of collaboration between OIIS and AWSNA in issuing a joint accreditation for schools is being considered. Waldorf schools are usually members of The Federation of Independent Schools Associations, which advocates and works hard to ensure that independent schools are recognized and fairly treated by the government.

Alberta

The Calgary Waldorf School is thirty years old and until recently the only Waldorf presence in Alberta. “Alberta Education” (the provincial Ministry of Education) has for many decades



Calgary Waldorf School, founded in 1985, is now preschool through grade nine and has 285 students and thirty teachers.

supported private schools, and virtually all independent schools are accredited and partially funded by the province. This funding constitutes one-third of the Calgary Waldorf School’s revenue. The school is a member of the Association of Independent Schools and Colleges of Alberta, which promotes the general welfare of independent schools in Alberta and works officially and successfully with Alberta Education to advocate for and protect the rights of independent schools.

Being a provincially accredited, funded private school helps the Calgary school meet its goals of accessibility, diversity, financial stability, and an excellent compensation and benefits program for teachers and staff. The school receives about CN\$5000 (about US\$4500) per student per year from Alberta Education, for kindergarten through grade nine.

Being accredited and funded by the provincial government involves accountability and compliance with government regulations and creates challenges. These include:

- All teachers must be eligible for Alberta Teacher Certification—the equivalent of a BEd degree. This requirement can make faculty hiring difficult.
- The school must have a teacher named as school principal who is responsible for supervising and signing off on specified Alberta Education requirements.
- Each teacher must complete an annual “Teacher Professional Growth Plan.”
- The Waldorf curriculum must dovetail with the Alberta Programs of Studies. Certain topics not covered within the Waldorf curriculum must be included.
- Students in grades three, six, and nine take the annual Provincial Achievement Tests (PAT).
- Teachers must create “Individualized Program Plans” for students with special learning needs.
- All teachers and parents and all students in grades four through nine need to complete a survey from Alberta Education to rate their satisfaction with their school experience.



Grade-one children from CWS visit a pond near the school on a “catch and release” mission (not provincially funded) aimed at minnows, tadpoles, and various bugs.



Laureen Loree of CWS, one of very few Waldorf “principals” in the world, is also a class teacher.

- School administrators spend significant time complying with Alberta Education reporting requirements.
- Alberta Education representatives may meet with a Waldorf school’s administration and faculty on site to review and monitor outcomes from the surveys and standardized tests.
- Administrative staff attend yearly meetings between Alberta Education and accredited and funded private schools.

Alberta Education allows a private school to request an official exemption for some aspect of government requirements that are antithetical to the core philosophy, mission,

pedagogy, and/or curriculum of the school. The Calgary Waldorf School has an exemption from Alberta Education’s expectation that all schools must have and use computers and related technology in all classrooms from kindergarten on up through the grades.

Ontario

There is no government funding of independent schools, but regulations from the Ministry of Education affect some overall policies and procedures and have an impact on the high school program and increasingly on early childhood programs.

Recent changes in the law require all school programs for children under three years eight months of age to be licensed by the provincial Ministry of Education. This includes adherence to the Day Nurseries Act. As a result of this change, schools are required to create a policy and procedures binder, which includes clear policies regarding topics such as medication administration, sanitary procedures, child abuse, and fire safety. Schools

also need to follow the prescribed teacher/child ratios and have at least one Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) for each class. This last requirement can be a challenge for Waldorf programs which are staffed with experienced Waldorf teachers who do not have their RECE certification. There are also space requirements that may necessitate building modifications for some Waldorf programs. This process is in its early stage, and schools hope that some compromises and accommodations can be achieved with the lobbying support of OFIS (Ontario Federation of Independent Schools) and possibly AWSNA.

Little Lions Waldorf Daycare & Kindergarten in Thunder Bay in Northern Ontario is not attached to a Waldorf school but has been providing day care programs in public schools since 1984. The organization has a long-standing positive relationship with the Ministry Program Advisors that grant the license to operate child care centers and have found ways to balance provincial legislation and Waldorf guidelines. The administrative director is working with local politicians to ensure ongoing funding. Future work will address the Early Learning Framework by the Ministry of Education, which seems to focus more on the needs of children, thus allowing some flexibility and the possibility of bringing the Waldorf philosophy closer to acceptance by the Ministry of Education.



Twelfth graders at TWS in biology class

Toronto Waldorf School’s high school is accredited with the Ontario Ministry of Education to issue provincial college and university entrance credits toward the granting of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Though there have been challenges with policy changes over the last thirty years, creative solutions are possible. The school has been able to find a Ministry course to match virtually all courses that it, as a Waldorf school, wants to offer. Grade-ten standardized literacy tests must be passed by students to get the OSSD, and there is little impact on the curriculum. The recent ministry policy document, “Growing Success,” provides expectations for assessment and evaluation of students that in many ways are in line with a Waldorf approach and has strengthened the school’s work in this area.



Students play soccer in the field next to the main building of the Toronto Waldorf School with its signature cupola.

Québec

École Rudolf Steiner de Montréal was the first private (independent) Waldorf school in Québec. Founded in 1978, by 1988 it had 200 students in kindergarten through eighth grade. Several public schools that are inspired by Waldorf Education were founded in the following years. Les Enfants de la Terre began as an independent school but later became a school within the public school board to receive funding. École Imagine in the Val-David in the Laurentian Mountains, founded in 2013, is the second independent and developing Waldorf school in Québec.

Québec has a different legal system than the rest of Canada (and the United States), and there is a strong impulse to ensure the continuation of French language and culture. The provincial government grants permits for all schools, public or private, for one to five years. Every school in Québec has to abide by the regulations concerning education, including those in the Québec Education Program. This program defines the curriculum and is based on an impulse referred to as “social constructivism.” Thus, independent Waldorf schools have to meet significant government requirements, even though they receive no funds:

- All teachers at independent schools have to meet state qualifications, including having a bachelor’s degree from a Québec university. An additional challenge is to find French-speaking teachers, as is required, who have Waldorf training.
- The Ministry of Education requires that all schools provide numeric grade evaluations for students in grades one to eight three times a year and administer government tests in French and mathematics in grades six and eight.
- With every application for a new permit, the school must prove that it has qualified personnel and adequate financial resources and that it conforms to the Québec Education Program. An official from the Ministry of Education evaluates the school.
- Curriculum content requires constant negotiations. For example, for many years the Montréal school had an understanding with the Ministry that allowed for some flexibility supported by an independent assessment. Officials who assessed the school were teachers who recognized the quality of the teaching. Following a less favorable assessment based on how the school applies the Québec Education Program,



The Montréal Waldorf School is the only francophone Waldorf School in North America.

the school produced a comparative study of the Waldorf curriculum and the Québec program. The study was not well received, and for three consecutive years the permit to operate was granted for only one year. After many conversations with the Ministry, it was agreed that the school hire a consultant to help them acquire better knowledge of the Québec Education Program.

The Varied Landscape

The Waldorf schools all have substantial challenges in dealing with the various provincial governments and with the complex, often changing landscape of regulations and politics. The schools, though, feel fortunate to

receive the government funding they do. It helps them better meet the needs of their students. And while meeting government requirements takes up significant resources, in many cases the schools feel they became stronger through the rigor of the required processes, the conscious review and commitment to the foundation of Waldorf Education, the collaboration with other Waldorf and independent schools, and the relationships built in the larger community. ☺



With a Gallic flourish, the conductor of the MWS’s seventh- and eighth-grade orchestra leads his musicians in a concert performance.



FLORA SEUL-JACKLEIN, with contributors, from west to east: Arnold Grimm (Vancouver Waldorf School, British Columbia); Kathy Brunetta (Vancouver Waldorf School); Cathie Foote (Calgary Waldorf School, Alberta); Michele Andrews (Toronto Waldorf School, Ontario); Dean Hussein (Waldorf Academy, Ontario); Marilyn Grudniski (Little Lions Waldorf Daycare, Ontario); Françoise LaTerreur (École Rudolf Steiner de Montréal, Québec)

Celebrating Monique Grund

BY KIM HOPPER

On a sunny afternoon this past June, the San Francisco Waldorf School, as usual, marked the end of the school year with a festive parade through its neighborhood. This year, Monique Grund, as grand marshal, took her place at the head of the line, flag in hand. Behind her, the children from all classes, kindergarten through grade eight, stood ready, along with parents and teachers. Then out the double doors of the school and around the sunny, tree-lined neighborhood the group marched, trumpets sounding and pots banging, neighbors waving along the way. The parade marked not just the last day of school, but also the end of Monique's thirty-fifth and final year as founding kindergarten teacher in San Francisco. It celebrated too her fifty-seven years of service to Anthroposophy, to Waldorf Education, and to many generations of children and parents.

For the children, the event was a delightful excursion outside. For the adults—fellow teachers, staff, and parents—it was a bittersweet farewell to a beloved teacher and fearless leader, a woman who guided the San Francisco school from a one-classroom kinder-

garten to one of the largest Waldorf schools in North America.

Monique's involvement in Waldorf Education began long before she arrived in California in 1980. She was born as Renée Monique Grund in Breslau (now in Poland), when that city was part of

Germany. Her parents were German, and German was Monique's native language. In 1946, when conditions in postwar Germany were very difficult, she agreed to go to Dornach, Switzerland, to live with two aunts. Both her aunts were anthroposophists. One was a eurythmist and the other an

actress, both active at the Goetheanum. Monique entered the third grade in the Waldorf school in Basel and commuted every day by train from Dornach for the next ten years. Heinz Zimmermann, the future head of the Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum, was one of her classmates.

After graduation from the high school, Monique moved to France and lived with families trying to open a Waldorf school in Chatou, France, near Paris. There she met her mentor René Querido and helped open a school, École Perceval, with a kindergarten and four grades. She spent her days teaching and her evenings in study and training with Waldorf pioneers like Elizabeth Grunelius and Francis Edmunds. Grunelius went on to become an important figure in the development of Waldorf early childhood education in the United States, and Edmunds was later the founder and head of Emerson College, a center for Waldorf teacher education in England.

"I had to take on handwork and music and English and German, and whatever was needed in the first years," recalled Monique in a 2008 interview. "Yet I had incredible Waldorf mentors, including teachers who had known Rudolf Steiner. When I think back to these people that I met, be it in Chatou or the people that I met in Dornach where I was raised, they have been a great, great gift."

Monique spent two decades as a class teacher and language teacher in France. In 1978 she went to California on a one-year sabbatical to advise emerging Waldorf schools. René Querido, who was at that time head of Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks (near Sacramento), convinced Monique that there should be a Waldorf school in San Francisco and that she should be the founding teacher. Monique started a small kindergarten in the city. In just a year, the school added a second kindergarten, and



On Three Kings Day, when every child receives a crown, a child with a birthday on that day receives a special crown.



Wearing sunglasses—to deter paparazzi—Monique Grund leads the San Francisco Waldorf School's end-of-year parade.

the previous year's children became, in 1980, the school's first grade one. By 1988 the school had eight grades, and the first graduation took place in 1989. In 1997 the high school was founded, with eighteen students, two teachers, and an administrative assistant. By then, there were three kindergartens, as well as a nursery and parent-toddler classes.

Monique worked tirelessly to support the growing school, all its children, the festival life, and the community. She mentored class and subject teachers, but remained a kindergarten teacher. She describes early childhood as a time of crucial growth and development, the most important time in the life of each child, a time that requires love, dedication, and devotion. "I felt very strongly, having come with this conviction that I had received in France, that the kindergarten is the root. I felt that the root needed to go strongly, deeply into the soil."

Monique is especially known for her storytelling and puppetry. She was the inspiration for and a founding member of the Magic Lantern Marionette Theater. The group, which includes fellow kindergarten teachers Diane David and Dagmar Eisele, other teachers, and community members, gathers each week to create sets, props, and puppets. The productions are characterized by their beauty, use of color, and attention to detail. Monique, who developed a deep understanding of the importance of speech through her childhood experiences at the Goetheanum, is usually the narrator. A short documentary film, *The Movement Art of Puppetry and Performance: The Story of the Princess Mermaid with Monique Grund*, provides a beautiful, behind-the-scenes look at the latest production. The story, incorporating local sea life, was written by Monique specifically for Bay Area children. Theater professional



Three weeks of Native American stories and classroom decor culminate in a Thanksgiving breakfast with parents. Here the children share their songs.

Michael Garrett and his son, SFWS alumnus John Garrett, made the film. The link to the film is <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/princessmermaid>

The 1994 book *Monique's Kindergarten* also captures aspects of Monique's pedagogical magic. Michael Kenna's photographs pay homage to the beauty and simplicity of her early childhood classroom. With an introduction and an interview with Monique by John Bloom, the book portrays the classroom as a sanctuary for childhood and a place of wonder, reverence, and love.

Through the years, Monique has been dedicated to the early childhood classroom as a living, creative space that evolves to meet children. Asked what she would share with the next generation of teachers, Monique replies:

I would say, enthusiasm, joy, love for one's work, but not emotional love, rather, real love for the curriculum that Rudolf Steiner brought forth based on his anthroposophic insights. Love for the children, how they stand before you. Understanding of the children, who they are . . . Nowadays this potential can be quite hidden with behavior and the lifestyles, but the children look at us and expect us to see beyond that, to understand them, and to meet them with the joy of becoming.

This past October, the San Francisco Waldorf School community celebrated its thirty-fifth anniversary and at the same time honored Monique, her work, her wisdom, and the legacy, which as creative and inspirational leader, she has given us. ☺



At the San Francisco school's 35th anniversary celebration, the founding parents appear onstage. Monique is seated, taking a rest after fifty-seven years of Waldorf teaching.

KIM HOPPER is Director of Outreach and Communications at the San Francisco Waldorf School.



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- Joan Almon writes energetically on the value of risk-taking in early childhood play from her position with the Alliance for Childhood.
- Thomas Fuchs, longtime university researcher in Germany, illuminates the need for human contact in order to develop intelligence.
- Members of the Pedagogical Section Council elucidate their “Core Principles of Waldorf Education”; a high school humanities teacher features the contributions of women throughout history; a kindergarten educator shows how imagination develops in early childhood; and a language teacher in Germany describes how subtleties of translation promote flexible thinking in children..

Several “firsts” at the Research Institute during the past year:

1. Douglas Gerwin was named as the Institute’s first executive director. Previously, David Mitchell had served with Douglas as co-directors of RIWE.
2. RIWE took over AWSNA Publications and reshaped it as Waldorf Publications, positioning it to increase exposure through the publishing of Waldorf practices and research. Patrice Maynard was appointed as RIWE’s first director of publications and development.
3. The international board of RIWE met as an expanded colloquium before its annual meeting to study the uses of technology in schools and in life; the trends in assessment of school children of all ages; and the underlying issues of morality connected to these topics. The colloquium will be repeated in Spring 2015.
4. *Learning-Centered Assessment in Waldorf Elementary School Classrooms*, research undertaken by Helen-Ann Ireland and Sara Ciborski, will be published by Academica in 2015.

Waldorf Publications released this fall four significant books including Douglas Gerwin’s long-awaited collection of essays, *Trailing Clouds of Glory: Human Sexuality and the Education of Youth in Waldorf Schools*; a reader for early grades, *The Sun With Loving Light*, based on Caroline von Heydebrand’s first reader; *The Grail Mysteries and the Seven Liberal Arts* by Frans Lutters; and *Rubikon*, a translated compilation of Steiner’s words on the great moments of change in child development.

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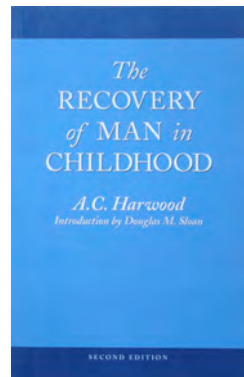
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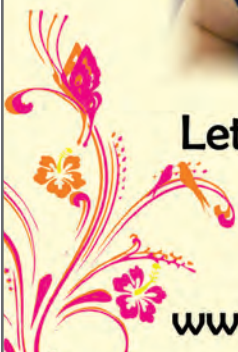
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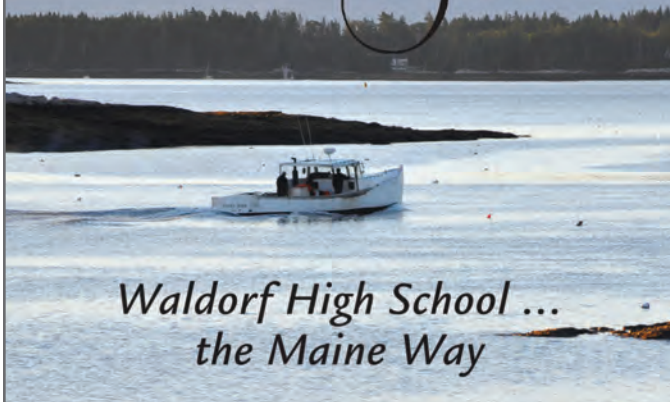
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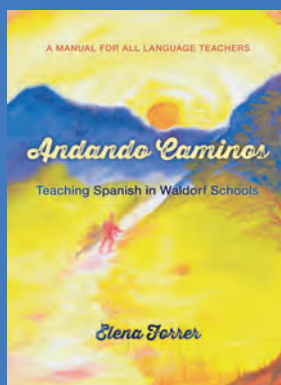
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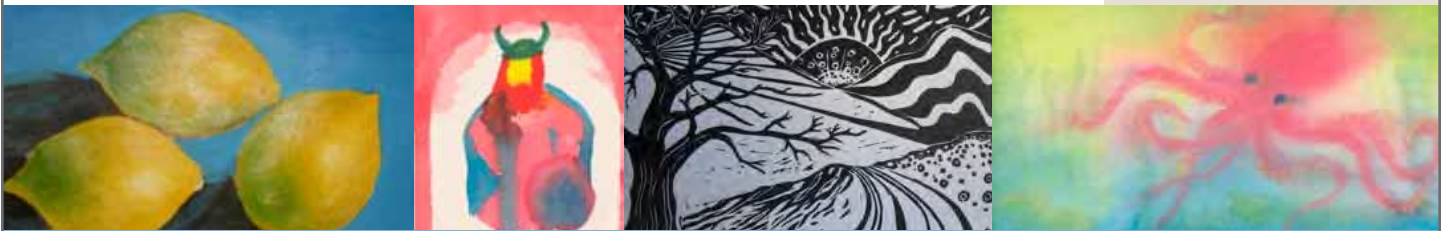


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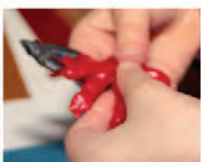
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