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Waldorf
EDUCATION



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Editor's Introduction

Ilan Safit

The Waldorf100 celebrations are raging on. To these celebrations we, at the *Research Institute for Waldorf Education*, have recently made a contribution by completing a wide-ranging survey of Waldorf graduates. Soon to be published as a book, named *Into the World: How Waldorf Graduates Fare After High School*, the survey aimed to capture the salient shared traits of North American graduates who have completed their Waldorf high school education in the past 25 years. An overview of the findings of this extensive study opens the current issue of the *Research Bulletin*, with an introductory article by Douglas Gerwin, who co-authored the study with yours truly and in collaboration with Connie Stokes and Andrew Starzynski.

Of the many lessons to be learned from our study, I would underline here one clear conclusion arising from the sea of data—both verbal and numerical, both anonymous and personal—collected for this project. This conclusion is that Waldorf graduates recognize (and are overwhelmingly appreciative of) the influence their school had in forming the individuals that they are today. By recognizing from a distance of time how and which elements of one's education have contributed to the shaping of one's self, these graduates indicate that they clearly *know themselves*. With such an outcome, the American Waldorf movement should be satisfied that at least half of its aims have been achieved.

Following Douglas' mostly celebratory summary of the observed outcomes of Waldorf education, we return to celebrate its inception in the second part of Nana Göbel's chapter on the first 50 years of Waldorf education in North America. This chapter is taken from Ms. Göbel's comprehensive history, recently published as *Die Waldorfschule und ihre Menschen Weltweit*, and which is currently being prepared for English publication as *The Waldorf School and Its People Worldwide*, in a translation by Jan Kees Saltet. The installment published here, by kind permission from Nana Göbel, starts with the tightening collaboration between veteran and newly-founded Waldorf schools in the second half of the 1960s and the emergence of The Waldorf Schools Conference of North America, which later transformed into AWSNA. With a timeline noting the sprouting of many new schools during the 1970s and 80s, the accommodation of much-needed teacher training

programs, and the names of the various active figures in the American Waldorf movement, this chapter offers a clear moving-picture of the history that formed our present as Waldorf educators in North America.

In a tripartite piece on the wisdom to be learned from conscious observation and from self-conscious science, Craig Holdrege of the Nature Institute offers us an intriguing pairing of Rudolf Steiner with a contemporary German-American philosopher. Under the heading "Grounding through the Sense Experience," Holdrege juxtaposes teachings from one of Rudolf Steiner's better-known lectures and the writing of Albert Borgmann, professor emeritus of philosophy at the University of Montana.

Steiner's seminal 1911 Hannover lecture series, known in English as "The World of the Senses and the World of the Spirit," provides a description for some, for others a prescription of a step-by-step process of investigation of the world around us, an investigation infused by *feeling*—starting with the feeling of wonder—as much as it is guided by intellectual method. In a nutshell and in Steiner's words, translated anew by Craig Holdrege: "Wonder, reverence, wisdom-filled harmony with the phenomena of the world, and surrender to the course of the world—these are the stages through which we have to pass and which must always run parallel with thinking, never deserting it." That we are to learn from the world rather than impose our expectations and the logic of our sciences onto the world is indicated by this last step, where we "surrender" the former to "the facts as they present themselves and let them form the judgment."

Albert Borgmann is a well-known and well-respected voice in the circle of philosophers and academics engaged in questions of technology and its intersections with culture and with nature. He is also carefully attuned to the lessons that we can still learn from nature, though not because it stands in contrast to culture and its various products. In the 1995 article presented here, reprinted by kind permission from Island Press, Borgmann briefly traces the ancient separation of nature from the supernatural or divine to the modern differentiation of nature from the man-made, the artificial. It has become more than problematic, though, to suggest that "true

nature” is wilderness and wilderness is nature uninterrupted by human activity. Such distinctions, Borgmann argues, are hard to hold in an age of an artificially interrupted climate that affects all of nature, just as the distinction between the natural and the artificial has become imperceptible through the ever-advancing capacities of modern technology. Not only do we still have much to learn from nature, Borgmann suggests, perhaps we will learn even more from nature that bears “the traces of human action,” as the latter will reveal our various relationships with and connectedness to the world of nature. Such connectedness and continuity is central to Borgmann’s view, which prescribes that in the world of nature, as well as in the activities of culture, the “eminently real” calls on our attention not only due to its “commanding presence”—its outstanding uniqueness, identity, and dignity—but because this commanding presence is “an embodiment and disclosure of the world it has emerged from.”

In his brief but poignant introduction to these two texts, Holdrege brings together Steiner’s prescription for intellectual yet passionate investigation and Borgmann’s indication how both natural and cultural phenomena reveal whole webs of relations that entangle us within them when we pay the right kind of attention to the reality out of which they emerge and to which we, too, belong.

We turn next to another set of three articles, each addressing a different central aspect in the life of a Waldorf school. In “Engaging the Sense of Well-Being,” Elizabeth Seward explores the architectural style and classroom design of Waldorf schools. Seward aims to describe how the physical environment of these schools and their recognizable designs support human development in its threefold elements of head, heart, and hands.

Seward devotes special attention to Steiner’s indication of 12 human senses and how the Waldorf study-space is designed specifically to support the four basic senses of touch, well-being, movement, and balance. In addition, Seward is able to show something we might start growing accustomed to: that recent research in mainstream education is discovering the pedagogical efficacy of elements used in Waldorf education for 100 years.

Mária Mesterházy, a Waldorf educator based in Budapest, shares her observations from her study of elements in the Waldorf teacher training program that has been operating in Hungary’s Eötvös Loránd University since 1991. In the article “Becoming a Waldorf Teacher,” based on research conducted for her doctoral dissertation, Ms. Mesterházy focuses on a unique component of

the training program—the teacher’s professional autobiography—in which trainees explore in writing the life course and significant experiences that have brought them to the profession and to the *identity* of a teacher, a Waldorf teacher.

Finally, Peter Lawton of the City of Lakes Waldorf School in Minneapolis reports of his school’s experimentation with its governance model. Following a period of healthy enrollment and staff stability, the school’s faculty and administration decided to explore changes in self-governance by forming a schoolwide body they named the Collegium, forming a wider circle around the traditional College of Teachers. The wider Collegium provides the traditional College of Teachers with both the mandate for governing and a collegial oversight over its decisions and procedures. With the model of the Collegium, which meets three times a year and as required, the school was able to draw more colleagues into the responsibility of self-governance without necessarily overburdening them with the demands and tasks of the College.

While this experiment is still in its early stages—the Collegium was established at the beginning of the previous school year—it is presented here as a case study for other Waldorf schools that are grappling with their existing model of school governance. What is of additional value in Peter’s article is that it tells the *history* of this experiment just as much as it offers a possible blueprint for other schools to follow.

Towards the end of this issue, you will find a helpful review by Stephen Sagarin of Betty Staley’s recent book, *Tending the Spark: Lighting the Future for Middle School Students*, of which we plan to print a sample chapter in the next issue of the *Research Bulletin*.

We conclude, as usual, with reports from the Waldorf Online Library, as well as with news regarding new titles coming out from Waldorf Publications and the activities of the Research Institute. An index of all the articles published in the *Bulletin* since its inception to the current issue should keep you informed about the research, ideas, and initiatives we try to make available to Waldorf teachers and the Waldorf community at large in their efforts to learn, work, and grow.

Authors who wish to have articles considered for publication in the *Research Bulletin* should submit them directly to the editor at: theresearchbulletin@gmail.com.

How Waldorf Alumni Fare After Graduating from High School

Douglas Gerwin

In June 1943, the first Waldorf alumni of the North American continent graduated from High Mowing School, a four-year boarding and day school in New Hampshire that had opened its doors the previous September. Since then, some 15,000 students have graduated from Waldorf high schools sprinkled across North America – from Quebec to Georgia along the Atlantic East Coast, from British Columbia to California and Hawaii in the Pacific West, and from sea to shining sea across the continent.

As of this year, out of the roughly 120 Waldorf schools belonging to the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), some 40—or about a third—include the high school grades. Of these schools, five are free-standing educational institutions; the remaining 35 are linked to an elementary Waldorf school, including one in a Camphill community for the handicapped. In addition, there is a small number of public high schools in California belonging to the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education.

For the purpose of the latest survey, which like the previous one a decade ago was conducted by the Research Institute for Waldorf Education, a “graduate” was defined as a student who had completed 12th grade in a Waldorf high school, and the study limited its purview to those who graduated between 1990 and 2017. Nearly half of those who responded to the survey’s online questionnaire were so-called “Waldorf lifers” — i.e., graduates who had attended all 12 years of Waldorf elementary and high school.

Generalizations about education—including this one—are always dangerous, and never more so when describing Waldorf graduates, who by nature represent a very broad spectrum of backgrounds and destinies. That said, RIWE collated their online responses to form a statistical portrait of shared traits suggesting that Waldorf graduates:

- Attend college after high school (98%), of those about a quarter first have a “gap year”

- Feel prepared by their Waldorf high school for college life (95%)
- Complete their initial college degree (92%)
- Earn a bachelor’s degree or higher (88%)
- Say they would recommend Waldorf education to a friend or family member (87%)
- Report that their Waldorf education has influenced their own parenting (85%)
- Study or work in fields of science and technology at similar or higher rates than students from other independent schools
- Feel more strongly, when compared to students from other independent schools, that their education prepared them to:
 - Be open minded
 - Be creative and innovative
 - Empathize with others
 - Think in whole pictures
 - Take leadership roles
 - Develop a meaningful perspective on life

Although Waldorf students have the possibility to pursue unusual post-high-school options related to their education, over 90 percent of Waldorf graduates responding to the survey chose to complete an undergraduate degree, and about half of those who graduated pursued post-graduate studies of some kind.

Overall, more Waldorf graduates major in the sciences, including social sciences, and math (45%) than in the humanities (38%). This statistic dispels the myth that Waldorf alumni shy away from majoring in science and math at the college level. Though some graduates were sharply critical of their math and science skills coming out of high school, a great number of respondents, including the critical ones, reported that their study of science and math in high school stimulated their interest in these subjects; they also often commented that

their Waldorf education prepared them well for taking on the challenge of improving their skills and excelling in these areas. One graduate reported: “I understood science metaphorically. We were given everything we needed to know. Then we had to figure things out for ourselves.”

Another remarked: “I am now taking a biology class and I thought I was going to be terrible at this. I haven’t taken science since high school. Now I am so excited about it. It is just a matter of figuring things out . . . I didn’t like the sciences as much as I liked literature. But now I love science and I am thinking back on my zoology class in high school.”

A trend already apparent in a previous alumni survey ten years ago is confirmed by the latest poll: namely, that more recently graduated Waldorf student are majoring at higher rates in science, technology, engineering, and math—the so-called “STEM” subjects—than earlier Waldorf alumni. The following chart illustrates this trend.

WALDORF SCIENCE MAJORS ON THE RISE	
Percentage of STEM majors (1943-1994)	12%
Percentage of STEM majors (1990-2010)	17%
Percentage of STEM majors (2011-2017)	22%

In short, in recent years, Waldorf graduates take up STEM subjects at virtually the same rate as alumni from other independent schools, of whom 23% major in STEM, according to a recent survey conducted by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS).

Indeed, Waldorf graduates at home and abroad have received major awards in the sciences; most recently the German neuroscientist Thomas Südhof, a Waldorf graduate and now professor at Stanford University, was awarded the Nobel prize for his work in cellular biology. (For examples of celebrated Waldorf graduates worldwide in many walks of life, readers are invited to visit the website www.thewaldorfs.waldorf.net.)

In terms of career, the most popular fields for Waldorf graduates include education (23%), medicine and health care (12%), and various fields of artistic practice (12%). As a whole, 41% of graduates take up professions that are devoted to helping others. These numbers are markedly higher than the percentage of graduates entering such fields from other independent high schools

in the United States, according to the NAIS study. Careers with lower-than-average appeal for Waldorf graduates include finance (about half the national average) and retail (only one-fifth of the national average). Careers involving entrepreneurship draw about the same percentage of Waldorf alumni as graduates from the general population.

Alumni Outreach and the Need for Better Communication

The clearest statistical difference between the Waldorf and NAIS groups concerns alumni philanthropy. A third of longtime graduates from NAIS schools say they contribute to their school’s annual fund, while only half of that portion—15.6%—among longtime Waldorf alumni say the same. And while it is understandable that recent, college-aged graduates are not in a position to make financial contributions, which explains to a certain extent why only 5.7% of recent Waldorf alumni say they contribute to their school’s annual fund, nearly four times as many NAIS alumni, 19.5%, of the same age are already making monetary gifts to their former school.

Given the general gratitude and fondness to their school expressed by most Waldorf graduates participating in the survey, it does not seem that the dramatically lower number of Waldorf alumni making contributions to their school is explained by lack of appreciation or unwillingness to donate. And while dozens of alumni write that they currently have absolutely no financial capacity to make any donations, it seems that there are additional grounds for the difference between NAIS and Waldorf alumni giving. These appear to include an established culture of alumni giving systematically cultivated by NAIS schools through regular outreach and ongoing communication, a practice that appears to be the norm in other independent schools in a way that it is not in Waldorf schools.

Several sets of responses collected in the survey support this impression. Most clearly, when asked when they were last asked to give money to their school, a quarter of the Waldorf alumni said they could not recall, while 14% believed they had never been asked. And while 54% said they had been asked to make a donation within the past year, the number was 76% among NAIS post-college alumni, only 2.2% of whom believed they had never been asked for money.

Furthermore, it is not that Waldorf alumni are averse to making philanthropic contributions, or that none of them is able to afford doing so (though many respondents confess to the latter), but rather that some

appear simply to be uninformed of their school needs and the destination of their potential gifts. One alum wrote, “I have not been asked to donate, and honestly am not sure what the process is for my Waldorf school.” A second added, “I continually have asked where I can help and am almost *never* gotten back to (now on three different development directors), so I assume money is not an issue!” While a third observed, “It is difficult to justify giving to something that already has so much, and charges so much, when others are far more needy.”

Such responses clearly suggest that schools could improve their communication with their former students. One written comment spells out the problem:

The school is not very effective in maintaining a relationship with me, therefore giving to the school does not make it on my radar. I would give what I can (as I do with my college), if I was asked, and if I was kept informed of developments, values and such.

In the context of making donations, only a quarter of alumni said they were “very well” or “well” informed about where their philanthropic gifts go, while three-quarters of them said it was “important” or even “very important” for them to know how their contributions were used. Based on survey responses (see box below), we know now that the majority of Waldorf alumni would like their gifts to support students with financial needs, with a second priority of attracting and retaining the best faculty, followed by making Waldorf education affordable for Waldorf alumni who are not able to pay full tuition.

TOP FIVE PRIORITIES FOR ALLOCATING DONATIONS (POST-COLLEGE WALDORF ALUMNI)

- Creating opportunities for students with financial need (64.9%)
- Attracting and retaining the best faculty (61.2%)
- Making school financially accessible to those who are Waldorf-educated and yet are not able to afford Waldorf school education for their children (40.5%)
- Improving academics (24.5%)
- Assisting students to be college-ready when they graduate (24.5%)

NAIS alumni, by contrast, seem to enjoy better communications with their former schools. In contrast to

Waldorf alumni, 50% of NAIS respondents feel “very well” or “well” informed about the use of their gifts and 68% say the same in regards to their school’s fund-raising priorities in general. The top priorities for NAIS alumni in the use of their gifts are nearly identical to the Waldorf ones, only in a different order of importance—seeing the retention of the best faculty as more important than supporting students with financial needs, which comes in second place. Assisting students to be college-ready by graduation is third on the NAIS alumni list and improving the level of academics is fourth.

The need for schools to improve their alumni outreach is indicated by another decisive figure: a majority of respondents, ranging between 51% and 81%, wrote “not applicable” next to 12 out of 14 alumni services they were asked to evaluate. This suggests that these alumni services—including job boards, online auctions, volunteer opportunities at the school, and alumni lectures at the school or online—are either not offered by the schools or they are not offered in a way that the alumni are aware of them. The only services that receive some recognition were publications, about which 22% of the respondents said they were satisfied with the online alumni newsletters and publications, while 19% said they were satisfied with print publications. While still quite modest, the most positive response to any given alumni service was to the online community, about which 25% of respondents said they were “somewhat satisfied,” which is the middle option between “very satisfied” and “very dissatisfied.”

In short, while alumni tend to maintain personal contacts with former classmates and teachers, they appear to expect that the school will take charge of maintaining a community-wide school–alumni relationship. Being adequately informed about changes and needs in the current school community appears to hold the key to alumni attitudes towards supporting their school.

In Their Own Voices

As part of the RIWE survey, Waldorf graduates were asked to name their greatest gifts, joys, and challenges. Their responses underscored the significance that Waldorf graduates attach to the cultivation of community. Most common responses to the first two categories—gifts and joys—included family, friendships, and community activities. Many graduates explicitly listed their Waldorf education under these headings. Challenges, as one might expect, centered around financial constraints, problems of health, and, for some, a lack of direction in life or career path.

In response to open-ended questions, which invited more expansive narrative replies, an emphasis on

valuing community was repeatedly expressed. In the words of one respondent, “Everything about the way the education is structured influences the capacity to create healthy, balanced relationships.”

Another theme emerging from the RIWE survey was an appreciation by alumni of a certain flexibility in thinking that they attributed to their Waldorf education. Said one graduate: “The multi-disciplinary approach to training your mind to look at something from all sides is extremely valuable. It lends itself to flexibility in thinking, creativity, and confidence and being able to teach yourself something.”

In a similar vein, a post-college Waldorf graduate added: “In my college classes, I found myself asking all of the questions that no one else thought to ask . . . I thought for myself and I like to think that I still do. I thank my Waldorf education for that.”

“It makes you a really well-rounded person,” a further respondent noted. “I had all the regular English, math, science classes and then I also did woodworking and blacksmithing. I learned my times-tables with bean bag games, so I talk about turning theory into practice and how we went to Hermit Island and we had the opportunity to learn *in* the ocean what we were learning *about* the ocean. It is very interactive learning.”

In summing up experience in a Waldorf high school, another post-college graduate concluded:

The level of teaching was largely comparable to college at an Ivy League school. And in addition to excellent teaching, we learned many useful skills – carpentry and so forth . . . that have saved me thousands of dollars in home maintenance costs!

In addition to surveying graduates, the RIWE researchers also solicited reflections from some 75 Waldorf high school teachers. Leed Jackson, a practical arts teacher at the Toronto Waldorf School, wrote:

One of my students, a fourth-year engineer who still knits, was repeatedly given responsibility in a nuclear steam engineering company even before she graduated because she could not only see the overview of the theory but also the practical blue prints and paper layouts. She could see the need for spaces within the technical designs for fork lifts or people to navigate around all of the heavy machinery,

as just one example. She could think and perceive whole to parts.

As in the previous survey, graduates were again asked to describe aspects of their Waldorf education they may have viewed critically as high school students but now perceived differently. By far the most common response was “Eurythmy!” One respondent reported: “I play ice hockey with many people who have had several concussions. I have never had a concussion and am very skilled at avoiding collisions. I attribute this partly to eurythmy and also to outdoor play in lower school.”

Others admitted they had revised their attitudes about Waldorf schools’ restricted use of electronic media, especially during the elementary grades. “I work in videogames,” one respondent noted, “and my limited exposure to media as a child helps me bring new ideas and perspectives to my work.”

When asked whether they would send their own children to a Waldorf school, 56% responded in the affirmative, though quite a few expressed reservations regarding cost and distance to the nearest school, as well as (in some cases) a perceived lack of racial and socio-economic diversity. Among those alumni who are now parents, a resounding 85% said they would recommend Waldorf education to a friend or family member, adding that their Waldorf schooling was influencing the way they were raising their own children — specifically in limiting their children’s exposure to television and digital media, maximizing their time in nature, enriching their lives with the practice of the arts, reading to them at bedtimes, creating regular rhythms in their day, encouraging free play, and focusing on creativity and wonder. In the words of one Waldorf alumni parent: “Waldorf education is the education of the future. It has been my biggest privilege, and I would want my children to experience the same.”

Henry Barnes, that venerable leader of the Waldorf school movement, was fond of saying: “Waldorf education prepares you especially for the second half of life!” In that sense, Waldorf teachers bestow on their children hidden gifts that take many years to mature. Put differently, Waldorf education may require years to show its full worth in the lives of its graduates. Or, in the words of a thoughtful respondent to the alumni survey, “There were so many seeds planted within me that are even now just beginning to break the soil. So many things that teachers told me that I didn’t understand at the time, but now feel that I do.”

The full survey will be published later this year by the Research Institute for Waldorf Education with the title (taken from the opening phrase of the Morning Verse recited by Waldorf students at the start of each day): *Into the World: How Waldorf Graduates Fare After High School*. A PowerPoint summary of this survey has been posted on the websites of the Research Institute (www.waldorfresearchinstitute.org) and the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (www.waldorfeducation.org).

Douglas Gerwin, Ph.D., is executive director of the *Research Institute for Waldorf Education*, executive director of the *Center for Anthroposophy*, and chair of its *Waldorf High School Teacher Education Program*. Douglas has taught history, literature, German, music, and life science at Waldorf high schools and on the college level for nearly 40 years and is a lecturer and mentor to Waldorf high schools across North America. He has been engaged in the survey of Waldorf graduates since 2005 and co-authored its four major reports including the one presented above.



Waldorf Education in the US and Canada 1928-1979 (Part II)

Nana Göbel

This chapter is taken from Nana Göbel's three-volume history of Waldorf education, *Die Waldorfschule und ihre Menschen Weltweit* (The Waldorf School and its People Worldwide). It was translated into English by Jan Kees Saltet and appears here by kind permission of Ms. Göbel. Part I of the chapter appeared in Volume XXIV-1 of the *Research Bulletin*.

The Waldorf Schools Conference of North America

In view of the scarcity of teachers, and also because some recently founded schools were on shaky ground, a conference was held in June 1965. Delegates from the nine oldest schools came from far and near to attend this first general meeting which was held at the High Mowing School. From then on, yearly meetings became a regular practice.¹ The aim of these delegates meetings was to strengthen collaboration between schools and to make an attempt to assist individual schools who needed help. Henry Barnes was pivotal in these attempts to create an Association of Waldorf schools for North America and kept Ernst Weissert in the loop, as was common practice back then.² In 1966, the conference, which still had an informal character, was held in Garden City, and in 1967 at Kimberton Farms. From this point on, what was later called the *Waldorf Schools Conference of North America* organized support for newly founded schools as well as conferences for teachers; the conferences were hosted by a different school each year.

The first teacher conference took place at the Green Meadow School in 1968, focused on working with Rudolf Steiner's course *Balance in Teaching*. In 1969, the meeting was held in Detroit, where the 50th anniversary of Waldorf education was celebrated, with Arne Klingborg from the Anthroposophic Center in Järna, Sweden, as a special guest.

In the autumn of 1969, Henry Barnes took part in the large conference of the German school movement, also on the occasion of the 50th year anniversary. In a letter afterwards, he described what he considered the major concerns of the movement in those years: "Our chief concern was the education of the will, of the moral and religious development of young people

today in the face of a threatening world situation. Such concerns directly lead over to questions of how to build unanimous resolve among colleagues in each school, going far beyond what is usually understood by that, having to do with questions of the esoteric striving of each individual."³ One can assume that such questions were not at the forefront, but were mainly discussed "behind the scenes" of the movement in these years in the United States.

The lack of trained teachers was a challenge on both sides of the Atlantic, so it was imperative that teacher training had to be pursued actively. At that point in time, there were courses at Adelphi College in Garden City, NY, and in Sacramento, CA, but there was no opportunity for training in the middle of the country. This changed when Werner Glas (1929-1991) decided to go to Detroit. In 1967, he started a teacher training program, which initially operated within the Waldorf School. He succeeded in securing academic cooperation with Mercy College (which later merged with the University of Detroit), and became the director of the *Waldorf Teacher Training Institute of Mercy College*.

Werner Glas had a protected upbringing as the son of a well-to-do entrepreneur in Vienna. This changed from one day to the next when the National Socialists marched into Austria. At age 7, he left Vienna in one of the children's train transports organized by the Quakers, traveling together with his older brother Bruno, with the aim to get to England. There he spent two unhappy years in a boarding school with strict rules and little to eat. One Saturday, Werner walked by a theater in a small town close by and saw an announcement of a concert for violin and piano. The pianist's name was Richard Glas from Russia. Werner's mother had always told him that if he would ever see anybody bearing the surname Glas, spelled with one "S," this person would in all likelihood be a relative. And that was indeed the

1 Ekkehard Piening, *Über die Neu-Gründungen in USA*, LR 12, 1976, p. 9.

2 Henry Barnes to Ernst Weißert, 10/27/1966. Archiv BFWS.

3 Henry Barnes to Ernst Weißert, 11/9/1969. Archiv BFWS.

case. Richard Glas invited him for tea in the house of another uncle, the house of Norbert and Maria Glas. They were deeply touched by this child with his large brown eyes who was skin over bones.

Before long they took Werner into their home and soon after sent him to the Waldorf school in Wynstones, Gloucester. His parents survived the war living in Yugoslavia. He went to the *London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art* and became a Shakespearean actor. However, this wasn't fulfilling in the long run. During a conversation with his former class teacher, Margaret Bennell, the latter suggested he become a teacher, but he thought it wouldn't suit him. However, soon after this conversation, the Waldorf School in Edinburgh was in urgent need of a teacher, and Glas answered the call. His success as a teacher led to a long engagement with the Waldorf movement. Francis Edmunds asked him to help build up Waldorf education in Mexico, which he did. In 1961 Glas moved from Mexico to Los Angeles, to the Highland Hall school, and soon got involved in teacher training. During his time in Los Angeles, Werner Glas earned a PhD in order to be qualified to teach at the college level, so he was well prepared for his next step, which was to found the *Waldorf Institute*. In 1967, Glas and his family moved to Detroit to make this possible.

Many students enjoyed the way Glas trained them, because he motivated them to keep on taking steps in their inner development to acquire the necessary inner mobility in soul and spirit, which the artist, in this case the educational artist, needs. Werner Glas saw the changes which were happening in early childhood early on, and he also saw that the standard ways to meet them gave no adequate answers to the new challenges facing the educator. In the middle of the 1970s, he started integrating a kindergarten training at Mercy College. Deeply convinced of the role that Waldorf pedagogy had to play, Werner Glas helped to spread it throughout the United States between 1961 and 1991, and to help in the founding of new schools as well.⁴

Post-60s Rapid Growth

At the end of the 1960s, both parents and teachers had begun experimenting with various forms of education. There were parents who wanted totally free forms of

schooling, without grades or tests or a fixed curriculum. In his 1971 book, *Deschooling Society*, the radical thinker and Catholic priest, Ivan Illich (1926-2002), suggested doing away with the whole institution of schools in favor of a form of learning which would be determined by the conditions of the surrounding civilization, the relationship with nature and the environment, and, of course, humans and their activities. On the one hand, this period gave rise to a call for a radically different approach to education by disregarding societal conventions; on the other hand, there was an increase in state regimentation of school systems.

Henry Barnes:
“Our chief concern was the education of the will, of the moral and religious development of young people today in the face of a threatening world situation.”

Around the same time, the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, a radical shift was taking place. Students demanded wakeful and responsible engagement of the USA in the world instead of destruction of people and states, as witnessed in the Vietnam war. Dialogue was carried out in public. Many discussions surrounded the US involvement in

Vietnam, and, in the controversies, many people became engaged and woke up.

Themes which occupied Waldorf teachers in their conferences tied in with these larger questions of the times. In 1970, at the conference in Garden City, American teachers worked on *Education as a Social Problem*. In June of 1971, the theme of the yearly teachers' conference, which took place in New York, was *The Problem of Evil*. At this conference, with 70 Waldorf teachers in attendance, Henry Barnes gave a fundamental lecture on the theme *Evil and Its Transformation through Education*. During the conference there was further talk about forming an Association of North American Waldorf schools, and Werner Glas, Head of the Waldorf seminar at Mercy College in Detroit, proposed statutes. At the same occasion, teachers appointed Henry Barnes to be the contact person for the Hague Circle, which the European Waldorf schools were forming. In 1972, at the Green Meadow School, there was a conference on the theme, *Education in the Light of the Child*, during which Ekkehard Piening (1941-1989) was confirmed as the chair of the still informal *Association of Waldorf Schools of North America* (AWSNA), with John Brousseau as treasurer. In 1973, the conference was held at Kimberton Farms with the theme *Human Values in Education*.

Up until 1970, the Waldorf movement in the United States grew very slowly. In July of that year there were

4 Jane Wulsin / Virginia Sease, Werner Glas, in Bodo von Plato (editor), *Anthroposophie im 20. Jahrhundert*. 2003, pp. 223f.

nine schools in the United States, according to the global Waldorf school list. Now, however, the pioneering phase had come to an end and the educational impulse of Waldorf had grown deeper roots. Just like in many European countries, the 1970s and 80s saw rapid growth, which resulted in existential questions about teacher training. At the end of the 1970s, there were 22 Waldorf schools in the USA, and by the end of the 1980s the number had grown to 61.

Schools which were founded during these decades were, among others, the Waldorf School of Washington, DC, where Carl Hoffmann was the most experienced teacher,⁵ and the Hawthorne Valley School in Harlemlville, NY,⁶ where coworkers of the Camphill Village in Copake wanted a school for their children and asked Karl Ege for help.

Karl Ege and his wife Arvia McKaye-Ege, an artist who had worked on the Goetheanum when Rudolf Steiner was there, together with her sister Christy Barnes, Henry Barnes' wife, had all been colleagues for many years at the Rudolf Steiner School in New York. Both Karl Ege and Henry Barnes had houses in the country near Hawthorne Valley, and were very familiar with this peaceful, green hill-country. They shared the dream of building up a center for agriculture, art, crafts, and a school in the country. Together with Fentress Gardner, brother of John F. Gardner of Garden City, and Thorn Zay, they bought a 330-acre farm in Hawthorne Valley. Fentress Gardner, who had taken early retirement from the U.S. Army, and his wife, Hede Gardner, started farming in August 1972, but were on the lookout for someone who could take over the management of the farm. They asked the Swiss farmer Christoph Meier and his Dutch wife, Annelien Meier, who both said yes to the venture. They attracted Rudolf Copple, who had originally studied eurythmy and had been a class teacher at the Rudolf Steiner schools of Chatou-Paris and in New York City, to come work at the school.

While Henry Barnes remained in New York for the time being, Rudolf Copple became one of the founding teachers, taking the fourth grade. He later mentored all new teachers. Rudolf Copple was one of the most

beloved class teachers and remained in Hawthorne Valley until his death at age 97. The second teacher to come to Hawthorne Valley was James Pewtherer, who took the first grade and carried the students through to eighth grade. Much later, he moved to Massachusetts, where he taught in the Waldorf school in Hadley. Frances Faust († 1995) took on a combined second and third grade. John Barnes, son of Henry and Christy Barnes, also came to Hawthorne Valley with his wife, Astrid Barnes-Schnell, daughter of Gerhard Schnell, who taught at the Stuttgart Waldorf school until his premature death. She pioneered the first kindergarten and was renowned for her unconventional methods.

This extensive picture of the way the Hawthorne Valley school faculty came together is justified because it was not typical of the way most new schools were founded during the 1970s. This faculty stands out because people came from many different parts of the world, were all deeply connected to the Waldorf impulse, and shared a vision of founding a special place where different professions and disciplines could work together.

Almuth Piening, another German, taught handwork and did the cooking for the *Visiting Students Program*, which hosted primarily children from the New York Rudolf Steiner School, Harry Kretz, her husband, had also been a teacher at the New York Steiner School and the two of them started the *Visiting Students Program* in Hawthorne Valley. Almuth Piening, grew up two hours north-west of Hawthorne Valley, was the sister of Ekkehard Piening, a well-known Waldorf teacher, who inspired people throughout the United States and beyond. Their father, Ludwig Piening († 1969), owned a farm in upstate

New York, where he settled after emigrating from Northern Germany in 1951. Another German, Renate Field, took on the administration, and these Germans constituted something like a well-organized club, which was somewhat intimidating for others because of their high degree of efficiency. Henry Barnes himself waited until his retirement before moving to Hawthorne Valley, where he kept teaching blocks such as history in grade eight, and helped out in many other ways.

The Pine Hill Waldorf School in Wilton, NH, started up in 1972. Through a loan of a friend of the school, the founders acquired 27 acres with a 15-room house, situated very close to one of the oldest Waldorf schools in America, the High Mowing School. Since the latter was a

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⁵ Carl Hoffmann, *Bericht von der Waldorfschule in Washington*, LR 6, 1972, p. 31.

⁶ Interview with Annelien and Christoph Meier, 3/11/2015, in Azua de Compostela, Dominican Republic.

high school, there was a need for an elementary school in the area which would focus on the class teacher age. These two schools wanted to work together closely right from the start. In 1973, further schools were founded in Boston and in Great Barrington, MA.

New Beginnings in a Time of Crisis

In 1974, Joan Condon, together with Diethart and Ina Jähnig, shepherded the first Waldorf school founded in the Rocky Mountains, in Denver, CO, and tried to build up a school in an area where the Divine Light Mission – a short-lived New Age religion hailing from North India – had claimed the territory with its *Unity School*, which purportedly was working with elements of Waldorf pedagogy.⁷ In the 1970s, Denver attracted all manner of devotees of various occult movements, and it wasn't easy to establish work which was based in thought to the degree that anthroposophy is.

Considering that in 1972 the US had a school population of 51.4 million children, ages 6-18, the 11 Waldorf schools registered in May 1973 gave only a very small percentage of the population the opportunity to attend such a school. One had to believe in the seed character of this pedagogy, or, as Werner Glas put it, develop a "homeopathic imagination,"⁸ to send one's children to a Waldorf school. Americans firmly believe in individual development and education and the role these can play for cultural and economic progress, so there is a correspondingly high degree of dissatisfaction in American culture with the quality of public education. Early in the 1970s, a societal split became more and more obvious, as children of low income parents ended up in the worst schools and were housed in poorly equipped buildings. This practice was not intentional; rather it was the result of where people lived, and also worked the other way around: parents' socio-economic circumstances had a direct impact on test results in school. Furthermore, most teachers did not want to teach in inner-city schools, catering to the lowest socio-economic communities, so schools often ended up with teachers who were assigned positions there by education departments; no wonder many teachers tried to

change jobs as soon as the opportunity arose. The high teacher-turnover rate did not allow for much stability in the relationship between children and teachers, with a predictable outcome. What these circumstances led to was decades later confirmed by all major educational studies. A growing number of parents were well aware of the situation. For that reason, it is not surprising that the majority of the founding parents of the Detroit Waldorf school were public school teachers.

[T]he pioneering phase had come to an end and the educational impulse of Waldorf had grown deeper roots. Just like in many European countries, the 1970s and 80s saw rapid growth, which resulted in existential questions about teacher training.

From its inception, the Waldorf school of Detroit wanted to be integrated in the city and do something about its problems. In contrast to many East Coast schools, a third of the students in Detroit were Afro-American. The school cultivated close collaboration with the *Waldorf Institute of Mercy College*.

In 1976, Clopper Almon, professor of economics at the University of Maryland, and John Huber, a banker and former student of the Basel Rudolf Steiner School, took on the chairmanship of the board of the Washington Waldorf School, founded in 1969. Carl Hoffmann, a founding teacher in Washington, reported on the serious study of anthroposophical basic books which was a strong focus of the faculty and commented:

There are only very few people left here who still indulge a feeling some anthroposophists have of wanting to accommodate all manner of occult forms of striving, in an effort to avoid the "arrogance" of anthroposophists who think they have the answer to everything. This is a false form of tolerance. True modesty and a deep feeling of responsibility towards Rudolf Steiner's work can never lead to arrogance. What we need to develop more is delicate tact and true insight – challenges of which there may be a higher degree of awareness among anthroposophists in central Europe than in English-speaking countries. This is the reason why work with spiritual science is pursued so seriously at our school.⁹

The Waldorf movement continued to grow. New schools sprouted in Colorado, in Greeley and in

⁷ Stefan Leber, Bericht über die Sitzung des Haager Kreises 30.5. – 1.6.1977 in Stuttgart. LR 15, 1977, p. 33.

⁸ Werner Glas, *Der Bildungsimpuls Rudolf Steiners im Amerika von 1973*, LR 7, 1973, p. 7.

⁹ Carl Hoffmann, *Bericht von der Washington Waldorfschule*, LR 15, 1977, p. 38.

Colorado Springs. California saw a remarkable number of new foundings: in Potter Valley, San Rafael, Santa Cruz, and Sebastopol. A special school was founded in Chicago in 1972 by the physician Traute Lafrenz-Page, the Esperanza School, which served English and Spanish-speaking children in need of special care.

Traute Page had been a friend of Hans and Sophie Scholl during World War II. She had survived imprisonment by the Gestapo and moved to the US in 1947. With incredible dedication, and demonstrating an extraordinary combination of practicality and devotion, she took care of these special needs children, many of whom were suffering from extreme neglect. Traute Page's approach was characterized by recognizing other people's needs without any sentimentality and applying herself to work with complete dedication. The first thing she did in the mornings was make breakfast for the children, since in the 1970s, many households didn't have enough to eat. Before school began, the children were bathed and massaged, a ritual they eagerly looked forward to. The whole room would fill with the scent of the massage oil and the children felt thoroughly refreshed and seen. Their clothes were washed in another room, and with fresh strength and clean clothes, they were ready for their lessons. No questions were asked about their backgrounds, and most of them came from deprived households in the ghettos of Chicago.

By 1976, the number of schools had grown to 18, seven of which had been founded between 1971 and 1976. In addition, there were 11 kindergartens, 10 of which were founded between 1973 and 1976. Schools like the Esperanza School were not included in this count. At the same time, the lack of trained teachers increased with the founding of every new school, and teachers who had completed one of the three trainings (in Garden City, Los Angeles, or Detroit) were insufficient in number to meet the need. In the culture at large, few people took notice and the Waldorf movement found little recognition.

The Birth of AWSNA

The teachers of the experienced schools work together in the *Waldorf Conference of North America*, inviting colleagues from the new schools to work with them as guests in the internal teacher conferences and at the delegate meetings. This *Waldorf Conference* took the place of the delegates meetings which had been held

regularly since 1965, a change which was initiated by Ekkehard Piening, who had taken over as chairman of the Conference in October 1972. In June 1976, a conference was held at the Highland Hall School in Los Angeles, with 115 participants from 14 schools and the three teacher training centers, the largest number so far. After years of discussion, the *Waldorf Conference of North America* became the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), with Harry Blanchard as the new chairman. From that point onwards, AWSNA meetings were held regularly in January and in June of each year. In addition, there was an internal teachers conference. It was held in Los Angeles in July 1976, on the theme of religion in the schools. Helmut von Kügelgen gave an introduction to the free Christian religion lessons and talked about the children's services connected with them, as well as the teacher meditations.

In 1978, the Association consisted of 14 member schools and three teacher training centers. There were six so-called *sponsored schools*, each guided by a member school, and five so-called *advised schools*, counseled in the initial phase by individual mentors. Nine other schools were not members. Almost all schools, especially those in the cities, faced the problems of a lack of teachers and of high school teaching, which needed to improve in quality. In order to cultivate mutual contact, especially with regards to international representation of Waldorf schools in the Hague Circle, Wim Kuiper, recently retired from the Vrije School in The Hague, traveled the US in the autumn of 1977, visiting schools. At that time, contact between Europe and America had to be actively cultivated for it not to fall by the wayside.

The *Waldorf Institute of Mercy College of Detroit*, built up by Werner

Glas, was officially recognized in 1977 by Mercy College for its basic anthroposophical studies year. From this point onwards, students could earn a Bachelor of Arts degree by completing Anthroposophical Studies.¹⁰ Starting in the academic year 1978/79 the Waldorf Institute was located on the Southfield Campus of the University in order for it to comfortably accommodate all required activities. The Institute's reputation spread, and for the year 1979/80 students from abroad, as well as Americans, enrolled. People came from Holland,

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¹⁰ Hans Gebert and others, *Waldorf Institute of Mercy College of Detroit*, LR 16, 1977, p. 19.

Ghana, Brazil, Venezuela, New Zealand, Switzerland, and Canada, and the Institute enjoyed a cosmopolitan flair. The teachers at the Institute were facing considerable challenges because of the large demand for Waldorf teachers. An additional challenge was the increasing behavioristic worldview prevalent among students. The Waldorf Institute ended up moving to Spring Valley, NY, where, after an interim phase, it continued as Sunbridge College.

In Fair Oaks, near Sacramento, CA, René Querido (1926-2004) built up Rudolf Steiner College, starting in 1976. This training institute was in easy walking distance of the Waldorf School of Sacramento, located outside of the city, on the American River. The site occupies an important place in the history of California, as a place attracting adventurous pioneers during the 1850s Gold Rush. Now a new pioneer spirit of quite a different sort was to reign here. René Querido and Franklin G. Kane took on the responsibility of directing the college. Next to René, Merlyn Querido, Ruth Buch, Jay Sydeman, and a few others took on teaching assignments. With this establishment of the Rudolf Steiner College, students had the opportunity to choose either New York on the East Coast, Detroit in the center, or Sacramento in the West to study Waldorf education.

In addition to internal commemorations of the 50th year anniversary of the Rudolf Steiner School in New York, celebrated at Michaelmas of 1978, the school organized a symposium at Columbia University in May 1979, with contributions from Henry Barnes, John Gardner, and John Davy of Emerson College. A central reason for holding the event at Columbia was that avowed opponents of Waldorf education were teaching at this university. In addition to the symposium, teachers from the Rudolf Steiner School of New York put together a large traveling exhibit, designed primarily by Thorn Zay. It was called *Awakening Intelligence* and was first shown at the *Metropolitan Museum of Art* in New York, after which it traveled to the *Museum of Science* in Boston and the *Department of Health, Education, and Welfare* in Washington. The exhibition featured examples from the fields of history, biology, mathematics, and physics, demonstrating how children open up to different subjects as they grow up.¹¹ It was the largest public outreach effort the Waldorf school movement had staged up to then, showcasing Rudolf Steiner education and how it reflects the developmental stages of childhood).¹²

Early in 1979, the *Waldorf Institute for Liberal Education* at Adelphi College closed its doors. Around the same time, a number of founding teachers of the American Waldorf movement died, among them Bertha Sharp (Highland Hall), Eva Leicht (Green Meadow), Eric Wakefield (Honolulu), Helen Howentstein (Highland Hall), Beulah Emmet (High Mowing) and William Harrer (New York City). It was clear that it was time for a change of guard.

Nana Göbel is co-founder and executive leader of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*, in which capacity she has supported hundreds of Waldorf initiatives throughout the world. A Waldorf school graduate, Ms. Göbel also trained and worked as a banker, co-founded the *European Forum for Freedom in Education*, as well as an organization that provided humanitarian support to children in need in Eastern Europe following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. She has been serving as the general secretary of the *Anthroposophical Society in Germany* from 2003 to 2008. Since 2008 till today she is a member of the *International Forum of Steiner / Waldorf Education* (formerly *Hague Circle*). Her history of Waldorf education, *Die Waldorfschule und ihre Menschen Weltweit* (*The Waldorf School and Its People Worldwide*), from which this chapter is taken, has recently been published in Germany and is currently being translated by Jan Kees Saltet.



Nana Göbel's The Waldorf School and Its People Worldwide

¹¹ Ekkehard Piening, *Zur 50-Jahrfeier der New Yorker Schule*, LR 19, 1979, p. 42.

¹² Ekkehard Piening, *Zur 50-Jahrfeier der New Yorker Schule*, LR 19, 1979, p. 42f.



Grounding through the Sense Experience

Preface to Articles by Rudolf Steiner and Albert Borgmann

Craig Holdrege

We are embedded in a world rich with qualities. Just think of the realm of colors: the vivid and manifold colors of flowers, and all the fine shades of green in plant foliage; the changing blue of the sky during the day, and the nuanced, fleeting reds, oranges, yellows, and even greens at dusk and dawn; the dazzling configurations of colors in butterflies and birds; or, the subtle tones in a winter landscape. The sense world is an open invitation to participate in the creative nature of nature.

For many of us, the experience of this radiance is only given in special moments, such as when a sky-arching rainbow appears at the end of an afternoon thunderstorm, or we witness an ocean sunset with sky and water aglow. That sensory experience becomes dull for us—it is not dull for a young child!—is largely due to our modern habits of thought. We have become habituated to the world in such a way that we “know” what we experience without really experiencing it. We recognize the blue sky (or any other “thing”) and take it for granted; we know it’s blue and that’s that. But have we lived into the blue? Have we dwelled in the scent of a basil leaf? It is our mental habituation that gets in the way of the kind of receptivity that allowed Emerson to write: “It seems as if the day was not wholly profane, in which we have given heed to some natural object.”¹

The distancing from vibrant experience that our inner constitution of thought brings about is of course heightened today through the fact that our lives are increasingly mediated by devices—whether they be cars, smart phones, or televisions. So we have a double hindrance to “get back to the things themselves,” as philosopher Edmund Husserl put it.²

In the articles by Rudolf Steiner and Albert Borgmann that follow, you will find descriptions of ways of connecting more deeply with the sensory world and the wisdom it can reveal.

The article by Steiner—actually selections from two lectures—stands out in his work as a unique description of a method to gain a spiritual grounding in the world through sense experience. He doesn’t say, “just turn off your thoughts and everything will be okay.” He knows how deeply ingrained thought habits are. He describes a series of inner dispositions that we can develop to increase our awareness of thought habits and overcome the dulling and distorting effect that intellectual thought can have. In the process, in his words, “all things in the sense world become new.” It is a treadable path. And it is a remarkably timely one for those of us living and teaching in a culture that tends to disconnect us from the very world that makes our existence possible—a world that needs our attention and care.

Albert Borgmann may not be known to most readers of this journal. Now in his eighties, Borgmann is an emeritus professor of philosophy at the University of Montana and most well known for his insightful writings on technology. In the essay reprinted here, Borgmann inquires into the kinds of experiences that connect us in a meaning-filled way with the world and contrasts them with experiences that may bring excitement, but that remain shallow and don’t allow us to create lasting bonds with the world.

Borgmann writes, “what is eminently real has a commanding presence and a telling and strong continuity with its world.” Exemplary commanding presences are, in Borgmann’s view, natural phenomena—forests, prairies, rivers; and every tree, rock, or cloud. All these features of the world are embedded in and carried by a whole array of relations; that is what he means by a “telling and strong continuity with its world.” Or we can think of John Muir’s words: “When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.”³ Due to this contextual nature, any natural phenomenon is “an embodiment and disclosure of the world it has emerged from.” They are in this sense more than meets the eye because they are revelatory of a larger world of connections. By engaging with such commanding presences, we ourselves can become more rooted in the world.

1 Emerson, Ralph Waldo (1983). *Nature* (Essays, Second Series) in Emerson, R. W. *Essays and Lectures*. New York: Library of America. (This essay was first published in 1844.)

2 Husserl, Edmund (1900/1993). *Logische Untersuchungen* Band II, Teil 1. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, p. 6. English translation: *Logical Investigations* I-II, trans. J. N. Findlay. London: Routledge.

3 Muir, John (2003). *My First Summer in the Sierra* New York: The Modern Library, p. 211. (Muir wrote these words on July 27, 1869.)

Importantly, Borgmann realizes that commanding presences can also be created in human culture through art and craft, through ceremonies, conversation, and more. Just think of what Borgmann calls the “culture of the table.” Members of a family cook a meal, they set the table and light a candle; before they begin to eat they say a grace, and then conversation ensues. This is the formation of a commanding presence. Everywhere where we consciously create such focal experiences, we are allowing our lives to be filled with meaning. I have described elsewhere how fruitful the idea of commanding presences can be in educational practice—when we work to orchestrate situations in which learners engage with commanding presences, with things that are really worth experiencing.⁴

Borgmann wrote his essay in 1995, long before the widespread use of the Internet and the ubiquitous presence of Google, Facebook, and smart phones in human lives. But already then—thinking of television, movies, and videos—he characterized “device culture” with words that only ring truer today: “Whatever is devoid of contextual bonds and hence freely, that is instantaneously and ubiquitously, available is therefore subject to our whims and control and cannot command our respect in its own right.” We often say today that with our devices everything is at our fingertips. But what is this “everything” that is always available and yet often so lacking in contextual bonds? We can really address this question when we’ve immersed ourselves in realities that are full of contextual relations, that are grounded in space and time. As our lives become increasingly mediated by devices, it becomes all the more important to let commanding presences that are rooted in sense experience become our teachers.

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⁴ Holdrege, Craig (2013). *Thinking Like a Plant*. Great Barrington, Mass.: Lindisfarne Books, Chapter 6.

A Path to the Reality of the Sense World¹

Rudolf Steiner

The ancient Greeks said that wonder must be the starting point for healthy human thinking if we hope to reach reality. And what they said still holds true today: All human inquiry must start from wonder. If we want to work our way to truth, we must stand before the universe in wonder. Anyone who comprehends the whole gravity of this statement will say: when we start from wonder—and from nothing other than a feeling of wonder in face of the facts of the world—then it is as if we place a seed in the ground, and then a plant grows up out of it. All knowledge must have wonder as its seed.

It is quite a different matter when we do not proceed from wonder. Take a young person whose teachers have drummed into him some principles, and on that basis he becomes a philosopher. Or perhaps he becomes a philosopher since in the walk of life in which he grew up it is the custom to learn philosophy, and so he comes to it purely by virtue of circumstances. It is also well known that the examination in philosophy is the easiest to pass. In short, there are hundreds and thousands of starting points for the study of philosophy other than wonder. All such starting points lead merely to an engagement with truth that we can compare with making a plant out of papier-mâché and not raising it from seed. The comparison is accurate. For all real knowledge that hopes to deal with the riddles of the world must grow out of the seed of wonder. We may be ever so clever thinkers—and even suffer from a superabundance of intelligence—but if we never pass through the stage of wonder, nothing will come of the effort. We may bring forth a cleverly constructed coupling of ideas, containing nothing that is not correct—but correctness does not necessarily lead to reality. It is absolutely essential that before we begin to think, before we so much as begin to set our thinking in motion, we experience wonder. Thinking that sets to work without the state of wonder remains nothing but a mere play of thought. All true thinking must originate from wonder.

But that is not enough. For the initial wonder will not help us if we are predisposed by our karma to develop

a penetrating mind, and become arrogant and take pleasure in putting all our energy into intellectual performances. Even if wonder has been present, we cannot come to reality if our thinking does no more than merely “think.” Let me emphasize that I am not saying we should become thoughtless and that thinking is harmful. Thinking must continue. But after wonder we must develop another condition, which we best describe as reverence for all that we approach in thinking. Veneration or reverence must follow wonder. Any thinking that is divorced from reverence, that does not behold in a reverent manner what it considers, will not be able to work its way to reality. Thinking must never go dancing through the world in a light-footed way. It must take firm root in the feeling of reverence for the depths of the world once it has passed through wonder.

Here the path of knowledge stands in strong opposition to what is called science today. Suppose you were to say to someone who is standing in the laboratory with test tubes, analyzing and synthesizing substances: “You cannot really hope to investigate truth. You will analyze and synthesize beautifully, but what you have are mere facts. You approach these facts without any piety or reverence. You really should stand before

what occurs in your test tubes with the same pious and reverential feelings that a priest feels standing before the altar.” What would today’s scientists say to you? Probably they would laugh at you. From the standpoint of present-day science one simply cannot see that reverence has anything to do with truth or knowledge. Or, if they do not laugh at you, they may say: “We can feel great enthusiasm for what goes on in our laboratories, but enthusiasm is only a private affair. You can never persuade a reasonable person to believe that enthusiasm should have anything to do with the investigation of truth itself.” You are bound to appear foolish in the eyes of present-day scientists if you venture to say that research and thinking about things should never be divorced from reverence, and that one should not take a step forward in thought without being filled with reverence for the object of one’s inquiry.

But if we attain a certain feeling of reverence, and then want to press forward with mere thought, we would again arrive at nothing essential. We would not get any further. We would make some correct discoveries, and

**All
knowledge
must have
wonder as
its seed.**

1 This text is a compilation of excerpts from two lectures by Rudolf Steiner (Die Welt der Sinne und die Welt des Geistes, CW 134; lectures on December 27 and 28, 1911 in Hannover, Germany; Dornach: Rudolf Steiner Verlag, 1979). Compilation and translation by Craig Holdrege. Translation rights reserved.

because we had gone through these first two stages, our correct knowledge would be imbued with some well-founded perspectives. But we would inevitably fall into uncertainty.

A third disposition must take hold in the soul after we have experienced wonder and reverence. We may describe this third stage as feeling oneself in wisdom-filled harmony with the laws of the world.

And this feeling can be attained only when we have recognized that, from a certain perspective, mere thinking is worthless.

It is not easy to place ourselves into wisdom-filled harmony with reality. If it were, we would not presently be experiencing—nor would we ever have experienced—the temptation that comes through Lucifer. For what we call discriminating between good and evil, acquiring knowledge, or eating from the tree of knowledge, was most assuredly planned to come for humanity by the divine leaders of the world, but at a later time. Where humanity went wrong was in wanting to possess too early the knowledge of good and evil. The only possible outcome was inadequate knowledge, which has the same relation to the true knowledge as a premature birth has to a normal one. The old Gnostics actually used this expression, and we can see now how right they were. They said: Human knowledge is in reality a premature birth, an “ectroma,” because we could not wait until we had undergone all the experiences that could have led us to knowledge. A time should have been allowed to pass during which we developed inner dispositions, and then knowledge would have come. This original sin of humanity is still being committed. For if we were not guilty of this sin, we would care much less how quickly we acquire this or that as truth. We would be concerned instead about how we might grow mature enough to comprehend truth.

It is really essential to be sustained and carried by the consciousness that we cannot reach reality with all our critical judgments. We can make every effort in forming judgments, and errors will still occur. A true judgment can only result when we have attained a certain maturity, when we have waited and the judgment comes to us of its own accord. A judgment we form will have to do with reality when we take pains to make ourselves mature enough for it to come to us, and not when we strive to make a judgment. We can exert ourselves ever so strenuously to form a correct judgment, but

we should never expect to arrive at a competent judgment through such effort. We can hope to come to a true judgment only when we apply due care in making ourselves ever more mature, so that we can receive judgments as revelations that come to us.

It is possible to have quite strange experiences in this connection. A person who judges quickly will naturally think that someone has drowned who has fallen into water, and is pulled out dead. But a person who has become wise, who has grown mature through life experience, will know that general correctness of thought has no significance. Rather, in each single case we need to surrender to the facts as they present themselves and let them form the judgment. You may see the truth of this confirmed in life.

When we have acquired wisdom, we will always reserve judgment. We hold back with judgment even when

we think we might be right. Suppose someone makes a statement today and then two months later says the very opposite. In such a case we can completely exclude ourselves, we have nothing to do with the two facts. And when we look at the two statements and let them make their own impression upon us, we need not contradict either of them, since they contradict each other. The judgment is made by the external world and not by you. Then, and then only, does a wise person make a judgment.

It is an interesting fact that we will never understand how Goethe pursued his study of natural science unless we have this conception of wisdom: let the things themselves do the judging. Goethe made the following interesting comment (you will find it in my introductions to his scientific writings): We should never make judgments or hypotheses concerning external phenomena—the phenomena are the theories and they themselves express their ideas when we have grown mature to receive them in the right way. It is not a matter of sitting down and pressing out of our mind something that we consider correct. Rather, it is a matter of reaching a maturity through which the true judgment can spring to meet us out of the facts themselves. Our thinking should not sit in judgment upon things, but should become an instrument through which the things speak. This is what placing oneself in harmony with the world means.

We may be ever so clever thinkers—and even suffer from a superabundance of intelligence—but if we never pass through the stage of wonder, nothing will come of the effort.

Even when we experience this third stage, we cannot let thinking stand on its own feet. Then comes what is in a sense the very highest state of soul to attain if we want to arrive at truth. And that is the state to which we may give the name devotion or self-surrender. Wonder, reverence, wisdom-filled harmony with the phenomena of the world, and surrender to the course of the world—these are the stages through which we have to pass and which must always run parallel with thinking, never deserting it. Otherwise, thinking arrives at what is merely correct and not at what is true.¹

We can achieve such surrender only when we try resolutely to face up to the inadequacy of mere thought. To stimulate and strengthen within us the mood of surrender we can say to ourselves: Do not expect your thinking to give you knowledge of the truth. You should only expect thinking to educate you. It is extremely important to develop the idea that our thinking educates us. If you make a practice out of this principle you will be able to overcome hurdles in life in wholly new ways—in ways that would have otherwise not been available to you.

I imagine that not many of you have made a thorough study of the philosopher Kant. It is not necessary. I only want here to refer to the fact that in Kant's most important and revolutionary work, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, you will find proofs both for and against a proposition in question. Take, for example, the statement, "the world once had a beginning in time." You will find that Kant puts, perhaps on the other side of the same page, the statement: "The world has always existed, for all eternity." And then he proceeds to give valid proofs for both statements, notwithstanding that the one obviously expresses the very opposite of the other. That is to say, Kant proves in the same manner that the world has had a beginning and that it has had no beginning. He speaks of "antinomies" and wants to show that the human faculty of knowledge is limited, since we are compelled to arrive at such contradictory conclusions. As long as we believe that by thinking and working with concepts—by working through experience in thought—we can come to truth, that is, to an agreement with some objective reality, we are in a sad situation when someone shows us he can prove a particular statement and also prove its opposite.

We may describe this third stage as feeling oneself in wisdom-filled harmony with the laws of the world.

If, however, we have learned that thinking in important matters cannot say anything decisive about reality, and if we have persistently educated ourselves instead to look upon thinking as a means to become wiser—as a means to take in hand our own self-education—then it does not disturb us that we can both prove something and its opposite. For we very soon make the following discovery. The fact that we are not disturbed by reality when we work with concepts is the very reason why we can work with perfect freedom within concepts and ideas, and thereby educate ourselves. If we were perpetually being corrected by reality, then we could not educate ourselves freely in working through concepts. I ask you to give careful consideration to this fact.

What do I mean when I say we are not disturbed? What sort of disturbance could reality cause when we work through concepts? We can picture what such a disturbance would be like if we contrast our human thinking with divine thinking. I mean this purely hypothetically for the moment, though, as we will see later, it need not remain entirely hypothetical. We cannot conceive of divine thinking as having nothing to do with reality. When we try to picture divine thinking, we can only conceive of it—still speaking for now hypothetically—as intervening in reality, as influencing reality. And this leads inevitably to the following conclusion. When as human beings we make a mistake in our thinking, then it is nothing worse than a mistake, a logical mistake. And when we realize that we have made a mistake, we can correct it. By doing this we will have accomplished something for our self-education and grown wiser.

But now take the case of divine thinking. When divine thinking thinks correctly, something happens. And when it thinks falsely, then something is destroyed, is annihilated. So that if we had divine thinking, then with every false concept we should call forth a destructive process, first of all in our soul, then in our life organization, and finally in our physical body. If we had active divine thinking, if our thinking had something to do with reality, then a false concept would stimulate inside us

a drying up process, a hardening process, in some part of our body. We would need to make as few mistakes as possible. Through mistakes our body would dry up and fall to pieces. We actually only maintain ourselves in real existence through the fact that our thinking does not work into reality. Thus we can make mistake after mistake in our thinking. If later we correct these mistakes, we have thereby educated ourselves and grown wiser, and our mistakes have not had horrible effects.

1 The excerpts up to this point are from the lecture on Dec. 27, 1911; the excerpts that follow are from the lecture on the following day (Dec. 28, 1911).

As we strengthen ourselves more and more with the moral force of such a thought, we learn to surrender. We are then in a position not to turn to thinking when we meet and experience the outer world at critical moments of life.

That sounds strange, I know, and seems quite impossible. And nonetheless, although it is impossible in absolute terms, we can make strides. Constituted as we are as human beings, we cannot on every occasion suspend judgment on the things of the world. We have to judge, we have to act in practical life, and in so doing we are not necessarily penetrating the depths of reality. But we should educate ourselves to exercise caution in accepting the truthfulness of our judgments. We should continually look over our own shoulder and remind ourselves that where we apply our keenest intellect, we tread on very uncertain ground and are perpetually susceptible to error.

What we have to do is to cultivate an attitude of mind that says: "Obviously I have to live my life, and this means I must form judgments. I will, therefore, employ my power of judgment in so far as the practice of life makes this necessary. But I will not use it for the recognition of truth. For that I look carefully over my shoulder and consider with some degree of doubt every judgment that I make."

But how are we to arrive at any thought about truth, if not by forming judgments? We indicated yesterday the right attitude of mind: we should let the things speak. In developing a receptive bearing to the things of the world, we let them tell their secrets. A great deal of error would be avoided if we would do this. We have a wonderful example in Goethe. When he wants to investigate truth he does not allow himself to judge, but tries to let the things themselves express their own secrets.

Imagine there are two people, one who judges and the other who lets the things tell their own secrets. If we take the perspective of the one who judges, we see a wolf and describe it. We then find that there are other animals that look like this wolf, and arrive at the general concept "wolf." And then we go on to form the following judgment: since in reality there are many individual wolves, the general concept of "wolf" that I make in my mind—the wolf as such—does not exist.

Only individual wolves exist in the world. The general concept or idea of wolf is nothing real. There you have a striking example of someone who merely judges.

And how about the other person who lets reality speak for itself? How, in this disposition, will we think about the invisible quality of wolf that is in every single wolf and that also characterizes all wolves alike? We will say, let me consider a lamb and compare it with a wolf. I am not going to formulate any judgment on the matter, I am simply going to let the facts speak. And now, imagine that we have the opportunity to see with our own eyes how a wolf eats up a lamb. Then we would say to ourselves, the substance that was previously running around as lamb is now inside the wolf and has been absorbed into the wolf. It's remarkable that precisely

this perception of the facts shows us how real the nature of the wolf is. By following what happens we could be led to the judgment that if a wolf only had lambs to eat, then over time it would consist solely of the material of many lambs. But the wolf never becomes a lamb. The wolf always remains a wolf. That shows quite unmistakably, if we judge the matter rightly, that the material from the lamb is not governed by some unreal concept "wolf." When we let ourselves be taught by the external world of facts, we see—beyond what we have before us as the material substance of the wolf—that the wolf exists as something eminently real, and this highly real wolf

is something we cannot see. That the wolf does not become a lamb, even if it eats nothing but lambs, is due to what transcends the material in the wolf.

It is difficult to draw a sharp line between judging and letting ourselves be taught by reality. When, however, we grasp the difference, and when we employ judgment only for the ends of practical life and have the attitude of allowing ourselves to be taught by the things of the world, then we gradually arrive at the meaning of "surrender." Surrender is a state of mind in which we do not seek to investigate truth out of ourselves. In surrender, we look for truth to come from the revelation that flows out of the things. And we can wait until we are mature enough to receive the revelation. In judging we want to have truth at every step of the way. In surrender we do not work to force entry into truth. Rather, we work to educate ourselves, and then calmly wait until we attain to that stage of maturity at which truth

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flows to us as revelations from the things of the world and merges with us. To work with patience, knowing that patience will bring us further and further in wise self-education — that is the mood of surrender.

And now we can consider the fruits of this surrender. What do we attain when we have gone forward with our thinking from wonder to reverence, then to feeling ourselves in wisdom-filled harmony with reality, and finally to the disposition of surrender? We come at last to this. We can observe plants in all their greenness and in the changing colors of their blossoms. Or we contemplate the blueness of sky and the stars with their golden brilliance. We don't form judgments, but let the things themselves reveal to us what they are. If we have really succeeded in learning to surrender, all things in the sense world become different. The sense world changes and becomes something entirely new. And it is important that we should encounter this newness if we want to gain knowledge of the nature of the sense world.

Imagine that we have developed this feeling, this attitude of surrender, in a rather high degree, and look out over the fresh bright green of a meadow. No individual colors stand out and the whole presents a general appearance of fresh green. If we have really brought the attitude of surrender to a high degree of development, we will feel at the sight of the meadow within us a kind of balance. It is a balance that is quick with life, like a quiet, harmonious, and even flow of water. We cannot help but conjure up this picture before our soul.

Every taste and every smell will call up in us a feeling of inner movement and activity. There is no color and no tone that does not speak to us. Everything says something, and says it in such a way that we feel compelled to give answer with inner movement and activity. We don't answer with a judgment, but with active inner movement. In short, a time comes when the whole world of the senses reveals itself as something we cannot describe with any other word than will.

Everything in the world of the senses is will, strong and powerful currents of will. This is what we need to grasp. When we are able in any high degree to surrender, we discover everywhere in the world of the senses will-at-work. Hence when we have developed even in small measure the ability to surrender, it is hard for us, for example, when we encounter a person wearing some audacious new fashionable color. We cannot help experiencing inner movement and activity in response to what approaches us from outside. We are sensitive to the will in everything. We feel united with the whole

world through this will. The world of the senses becomes like a sea of infinitely differentiated will. And this means that while previously we only felt the world as something spread out around us, it now takes on a certain thickness or depth. We begin to look beyond the surface of things, we begin to hear beyond the surface of things—and what we see and hear is flowing will.

The Nature of Reality and the Reality of Nature

Albert Borgmann

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To speak of “the nature of reality and the reality of nature” is to play on words. More than that, however, it is to have a helpful guide because the words rightly suggest that the ways we consider and transform the structure of reality have a bearing on the power and presence of nature. And the title further implies—or, at any rate, I will draw this inference from it—that the kind of power and presence nature has is intimately connected with the moral quality of human conduct. Accordingly, I will trace the connections between the nature of reality, the reality of nature, and human conduct in today’s radically new, deeply disquieting, but finally hopeful constellation.

Just to provide a backdrop, I begin with the original human condition: the hunting and gathering culture that prevailed for some hundreds of thousands of years. In those days, as far as we know, both the nature of reality and the reality of nature were divine. The world was full of divinities: it was a spiritual plenum. Nature, reality, and divinity were one. The human attitude that corresponded to this unified world was one of piety. Not that people were invariably pious. But it was understood that punishment and misery would be visited upon the impious sooner or later. Here on this continent we are at least vicariously within hailing distance of our original condition thanks to the heritage of the Native Americans. In the world of the Blackfeet, for instance, spirits were everywhere and spoke to humans in dreams and visions, through plants, animals, and the powers of the seasons.¹

To the extent, however, that we have accepted Western Civilization, we are heirs of a different culture. It first began to stir in Ancient Greece. Much of its literature bespeaks the unity of nature (*physis*), reality (*ta onta*), and the divine (*to theion*), a unity the Greeks called beauty and order (*kosmos*). But at the beginning of the sixth century BC, we witness the intellectual departure that eventually led to the fragmentation of the cosmos.

Curiosity about the composition of reality led to the limitation of nature and to the transcendence of the divine.

Thales was the first to displace piety toward the order of reality with curiosity about the composition of reality. Not that the people of the hunting and gathering cultures lacked curiosity. Yet for them curiosity, rather than being an inclusive attitude, was enfolded in piety. Thales, in any event, suggested that all there is consists of water in various stages of condensation and rarefaction. The world, he maintained, consists of a certain kind of stuff. At least for the philosophers, it was no longer a spiritual plenum. Reality, nature, and divinity no longer could be one. Nature, in due course, became a nonhuman region *of and within* reality, divinity a region *above and beyond* reality. Curiosity about the composition of reality led to the limitation of nature and to the transcendence of the divine.

But the development to that stage took its course slowly and subterraneously. The Jewish, Islamic, and Christian Middle Ages achieved a vision of a divinely instituted order of reality. The natural and the supernatural were distinguished

and reconciled through creation and revelation. Nature was created, divinity was not. Divinity needed to be revealed, nature did not. Faith was the dominant human attitude. But its rule was that of a constitutional monarch. Though faith ruled, it had to share some of its authority with reason.

When the medieval order began to collapse toward the end of the fifteenth century, philosophers once more raised the question of the composition of reality. This time they did so not out of curiosity as much as from a reconstructive zeal—from a desire to determine the ultimate components of reality so that, knowing their properties and possibilities, they would be able to construct a world of human liberty and prosperity. In light of this project, nature was seen as the recalcitrant power that kept humans in the bondage of disease and poverty and had to be forced into yielding its secrets and treasures.²

1 See, for example, James Welch, *Fools Crow* (New York: Viking, 1986).

2 Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature* (New York: Harper, 1983).

The domination of nature gathered momentum as natural philosophy developed into physics and physics into chemistry. The increasingly sophisticated and powerful insights into the composition of reality led to the eradication of diseases, the multiplication of agricultural yields, the discovery of novel kinds of energy and materials, and to a life that for the citizens of the advanced industrial countries is in definite ways far freer and richer than it was in premodern circumstances.

If the modern project of controlling reality and dominating nature was to succeed, it had to culminate in a pervasive artificiality and the end of nature. Bill McKibben has given definition and currency to this view. The epochal event for him is the advent of a new atmosphere.³ Until recently we could, when mourning the ravages inflicted on nature by human recklessness, take consolation from the immutable and unreachable forces of the heavens, wind and rain, heat and cold. But with the arrival of acid rain, the greenhouse effect, and the ozone hole, the sky and its works have been deeply affected by the work of humans. We have rendered sun and rain injurious and upset the pattern of the weather and the seasons.

McKibben is surely right in saying that the change of atmosphere marks a closure in the history of nature and humanity. But how significant is the closure? And what are we to learn from it? We can begin to respond by considering the Northern Rockies. They are as yet untouched by acid rain, the greenhouse effect, and the ozone hole, and millions of acres have been set aside as wilderness areas. The federal Wilderness Act of 1964 defines such areas as follows:

A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation;

(3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value!⁴

And yet the imprint of human work on the fauna and flora of the wilderness is inevitable and ubiquitous. Fire suppression has allowed Douglas firs to invade the open stands of mature ponderosa pine. Formerly, periodic low-intensity fires would clear out the understory while leaving the pines with their bare lower trunks and heavy bark unscathed. Soon many of these parklike groves with their golden columns and open canopies will be a thing of the past. The alternative is controlled burns. But such fires would of course not be natural. Naturally occurring fires, on the other hand, need to be stopped when there is a danger that they may spread to inhabited areas.⁵ And to complicate matters further, even those former fires of low intensity may have been set by humans, the aboriginal inhabitants of this continent.

At the same time, noxious weeds like spotted knapweed and leafy spurge that humans have imported from Eurasia are moving into the wilderness. Unchecked they will suppress a variety of native plants over large areas. Eradication and total suppression would be prohibitively expensive. To what extent and by what means should one control the spread of these weeds?

No wilderness area in the Lower 48 states is a self-regulating wildlife system. The number of elk depends on the availability of winter forage, and the latter is often outside the wilderness boundaries or specially managed for feeding. Thus the number and the movement of the elk come to be determined by those areas that are set aside and secured for them. The composition of elk herds as regards age and sex is determined by hunting regulations. Other species such as the fisher, the grizzly, and the wolf were once at home in the wilderness areas. In most cases it will depend on our policies whether or not they will once more be found there.

McKibben is pessimistic about a revival of nature. But the pessimist, unlike the cynic, has some hope, however little.⁶ The goal of McKibben's "humbler world" is still the return of "an independent, eternal, ever-sweet

3 Bill McKibben, *The End of Nature* (New York: Random House, 1989), pp. 3-46.

4 John C. Hendee, George H. Stankey, and Robert C. Lucas, *Wilderness Management* Miscellaneous Publication 1365 (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, 1978), p.82.

5 Hendee et al., *Wilderness Management*, pp. 249-278.

6 McKibben, *The End of Nature*, p. 215.

nature.”⁷ Nature in this sense is mortally wounded because we “have changed the atmosphere, and thus we are changing the weather. By changing the weather, we make every spot on earth man-made and artificial.”⁸ The result that McKibben warns of is this: “The world outdoors will mean much the same thing as the world indoors, the hill the same thing as the house.”⁹ If independence is the mark of the truly natural, then, considering the fate of the wildest parts of this country, we must recognize that a restoration of the atmosphere would not revive nature. Must we surrender to the cynical view that everything is and ever will be artificial?

There is a more hopeful prospect. And it comes into view when we recognize how constricting the common distinction between the natural and artificial is. This distinction is seen entirely from the modern side of the postmodern divide that we are presently approaching. The restriction of the modern point of view is particularly clear from a closer consideration of the natural while the examination of the artificial will begin to open up the postmodern condition. To begin with, nature as McKibben and many environmentalists think of it in its healthy condition is characterized by its independence. It is unaffected by humans. This view sees the arena of reality just as the modern project sees it except that the environmentalists cheer the opponent of the modern attempt at domination. Whereas the proponents of the modern project used to reproach nature for its recalcitrance, the environmentalists had been hoping for its invincibility, and seeing their favorite threatened with defeat, they want to restore at least its independence.

Independence is perhaps the clearest criterion that has been used to define and save nature on the assumption that the world is basically controllable. There are other and perhaps more complex attempts to erect absolute criteria that would delimit and secure the natural environment once and for all. Among these norms are biodiversity, genetic variety, ecosystem, biocentrism, the intrinsic value of nature, and “the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community.”¹⁰

This view of the world is in the thrall of the modern project, not only in its conception of nature but also in its attitude toward the controllable and artificial complement of nature. In contemporary culture, we

appreciate control because it rewards us with the pleasures of consumption. Yet the value of a life devoted to consumption is very much in doubt. Having defined nature as independent and having so removed it from people’s daily commerce with their world, environmentalists have been unable to draw on their understanding of nature to clarify our doubts about consumption. Environmentalists do of course object to the recklessness of consumption and invoke the threat to nature in doing so. In this way nature becomes the source of an entirely cautionary and scolding sort of attitude. Consumption remains the sweetly attractive if reckless center of life.

Granted, McKibben has in addition to his practical concern with human survival a loftier one. He would like to retain his reverence of nature’s unreachable independence or even transcendence. There is for him a close affinity between the independence of nature and the transcendence of God.¹¹ But this childlike awe is being undermined by the apparent end of nature and death of God. When McKibben is faced with the prospect of having to give up this kind of respect, he is deeply dismayed.

While once we humans were as children over against nature in its exceeding force, we are now as young adults, entrusted with the care of parents whom we have surpassed in physical and perhaps in mental power as well. Once they took care of us; now we have to be their caretakers. Accordingly, in the words of Walter Truett Anderson, we have to become “caretakers of a planet, custodians of all its life forms and shapers of its (and our own) future.”¹² McKibben responds with a *cri de coeur*: “This intended rallying cry depresses me more deeply than I can say. That is our destiny? To be ‘caretakers’ of a managed world, ‘custodians’ of all life?”¹³ I am sure many adolescents have cried out similarly when they saw their parents change from haven and refuge to task and burden, and some, terrified like Peter Pan, resolutely refuse to leave the charmed world of childhood. An outright refusal to outgrow the modern period can be seen in the rage that has been aimed at “The Big Lie” of the human restoration of nature.¹⁴ I suggest, however, that we must overcome Peter Pan, accept Peter’s commission—the keys to the kingdom—and, in the spirit of Eric Higgs’s cheerful attitude toward restoration, set out to cross the postmodern divide.¹⁵

7 Ibid., pp.190 and 209.

8 Ibid., p.58.

9 Ibid., p.48.

10 Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), pp. 224-225. For the intrinsic value of nature, see the *Monist*’s special issue on this topic, vol.75, no. 2 (April 1992), with contributions by John O’Neill, Robert Elliot, Tom Regan, Eugene C. Hargrove, Bryan G. Norton, Jim Cheney, Anthony Weston, and Holmes Rolston III.

11 McKibben, *The End of Nature*, pp. 71-84.

12 Quoted in McKibben, *The End of Nature*, p. 214.

13 Ibid.

14 Eric Katz, “The Big Lie: Human Restoration of Nature,” *Research in Philosophy and Technology* 12 (1992):231-241.

15 Eric S. Higgs, “A Quantity of Engaging Work to Be Done: Ecological Restoration and Morality in a Technological Culture,” *Restoration and*

From the despairing modern point of view, the world entire appears to be artificial and controllable. But a more forward-looking approach reveals a rather more complex and contingent world. To see this, imagine yourself immersed in the wintry reality of the Northern Rockies. A powerful way of experiencing it is alpine skiing. In the higher reaches of a ski area, you find yourself in a beautiful and forbidding world, and at seventy-five hundred feet you are the only charismatic megafauna in sight. The bears are hibernating; the cats and ungulates have descended to five or four thousand feet. The trees have been transformed into snow sculptures. You may come across a weasel, scurrying in and out of the snow, or a snowshoe hare flitting from one bush to another. Otherwise the chickadees in the trees and the crows in the air have the high country to themselves, a world extending endlessly, austere in whites and blues and, but for the peaks and ridges, soft and smooth of shape. Skiing down, you dive, bank, swoop, and turn much like the crows overhead. The world's center of gravity has shifted to these high and pristine slopes, and you are the animal that has the skill and grace to appropriate them fully.

But wait. How did you get up here? And what are you carving your turns on as you cruise down the hill? A high-speed chair lift scooped you up, rushed you along, and deposited you gently. Now you are flying down a run that has been cleared of trees and rocks, reshaped by bulldozers, and planted in grass. Underground there are miles of lines for water and compressed air, connected to snow guns that line the side of the run. At the bottom of the hill, a pump house and a compressor building supply water and air that, guided and monitored by computers, are mixed by the guns into the quality and quantity of snow needed at the time. It has taken a \$20 million system with a thousand snow guns to produce the snow at a cost of \$2,700 per acre-foot. But this is not all. An army of snowcats, \$150,000 apiece, has worked all night to groom the slope to the shape of an undulating corduroy-surfaced ballroom floor.¹⁶

Natural snow has become dispensable—or, rather worse at times, a nuisance, as a Vermont marketing director tells us: “It sounds silly, but I hope it doesn’t snow tomorrow. It will just make it difficult for people to drive up. The skiing we’ve got is already

wonderful.”¹⁷ The cost of providing artificial snow, the crucial role that computers play in this (“many of the technological leaps can be traced directly to computers,” says Steve Cohen), and the fact that people may still have problems getting to the winter wonder world all suggest that we should simply and bravely face up to what McKibben has told us is already the case: nature outdoors in essence is no longer distinguishable from the artificial indoors.¹⁸

Let me therefore make this modest proposal: an artificial indoor ski area in downtown Los Angeles. What would it look like? You may have seen in a sporting goods store the moving carpets that are mounted like large tilted conveyor belts and allow a skier to ski down the incline so that the skis sliding down and the carpet moving up roughly balance and, to a stationary observer, the skier stays in place. In addition to boots, skis, and poles, the skier is given a pair of goggles (skiers are used to these) where the lens is replaced by two micro television screens.¹⁹ The rest of the story tells itself. We play on those screens moving scenes of ski slopes that are coordinated with the varying speed and pitch of the conveyor belt carpet.

Everything else is a matter of technological refinement: blowers to simulate the rushing of the wind, a harness to suspend the wayward or crashing skier, and more. And let me briefly extol the virtues of the new kind of skiing, the reduction of gasoline consumption and automobile pollution, the infinite variety of conditions and terrains, the instant, continuous, and wide availability of skiing, and the supreme safety of the sport.

While the modern view of this pervasively artificial situation tends to inspire melancholy, as it has done in McKibben's experience, there is a postmodern reaction that welcomes the disappearance of the dichotomy between the natural and the artificial and indeed all dichotomies. Such a postmodern view revels in the resulting abundance of possibilities and is zealous in declaring all of them to be equally valuable. But there is an alternative and more sober postmodern vision that is concerned to point up crucial distinctions in the contemporary situation. These differences are best described, however, not as degrees of artificiality but as degrees of reality—“reality” taken in the sense of

[N]ature was seen as the recalcitrant power that kept humans in the bondage of disease and poverty and had to be forced into yielding its secrets and treasures.

Management Notes 9 (Winter 1991):97-104. For Peter's commission, see Matthew 16:18-19.

16 Steve Cohen, “High-Tech Snow,” *Ski* (March 1992):28-39.

17 Quoted in Cohen, “High-Tech Snow,” p. 28.

18 McKibben, p.29.

19 Gary Stix, “Headsets: Television Goggles Are the Vision of the Future,” *Scientific American* (March 1993):141.

genuineness, seriousness, or commanding presence, the sense we have in mind when we speak of real gold as opposed to things that merely glitter and of a real person, a mensch, as opposed to a dude.

The philosophical challenge, of course, is to circumscribe this sense of reality in a way clear and precise enough to counter the suspicion of deconstructive postmodernism that advocates of a substantial reality are wistful and sentimental at best and patriarchal and fascist at worst. To fix our attention on a particular instance, how do we explicate the difference between a mountain in the Northern Rockies, covered with natural snow, and a skiorama in Los Angeles?

The difference, I suggest, is this. The mountain possesses a commanding presence and a telling continuity with the surrounding world. The skiorama, to the contrary, provides a disposable experience that is discontinuous with its environment. Consider first the experience of the mountain in winter. The snowy trail you are skiing down tells you about the particular and unsurpassable world you are in. This is January at seventy-five hundred feet. The amount of snow tells you something about the immediate past: Pacific moisture and arctic cold have been colliding and mixing with each other often this winter, but not often enough to produce a snowpack and a runoff this spring that would relieve the drought of these past six years.

The downhill skiing experience in the skiorama, being entirely at your disposal and discontinuous with its environment, tells you nothing about the world at large. It may in fact positively mislead you if you surrender to the sensation of cruising down a snowy slope on a bright winter morning. When the rolling carpet slows down and levels off and you remove your goggles, you are rudely returned to the sweltering midnight of Los Angeles.

Strangely enough, such artificial experiences, while doubtful in retrospect, seem superior to real ones in prospect and while in progress. They are more assuredly available and in greater diversity and, if engineered with care and sophistication, tickle our sensibilities more gratifyingly than real things ever could. This superiority is well captured in the term “hyperreality.” Accordingly, we can now say that today the critical and crucial distinction for nature and humans is not

[W]e can now say that today the critical and crucial distinction for nature and humans is not between the natural and artificial but between the real and hyperreal.

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Though “hyperreality” is not a widely used term, the norm it is intended to capture is a powerful cultural force. It appears to have caught up with the fictional skiorama in Los Angeles. A recent AP story tells us of an “Indoor Mountain: Japanese Build Enclosed Ski Slope Near Tokyo,” and it begins its account with the unmistakable intonation of hyperreality: “It sounds like the perfect ski resort: virgin snow every day, no wind or rain, easy to get to and no long lines for the lift.”²⁰ When it continues with an enumeration of the shortcomings of the indoor ski arena—the lack of mountain scenery and fresh air—it merely points out what obstacles remain on the way to full hyperreality.

“Reality” in the widest of its senses refers to all there is, and to call something real in that sense is to say nothing. But we do in ordinary discourse use “real” in an eminent sense to pick out things and events that are notably serious, genuine, and valuable. One way of explicating the intuition that guides us in such talk is to say that what is eminently real has a commanding presence and a telling and strong continuity with its world. These two traits are connected. Whatever is devoid of contextual bonds and hence freely, that is, instantaneously and ubiquitously, available is therefore subject to our whims and control and cannot command our respect in its own right. Conversely, whatever engages our attention due to its own dignity does so in important part as an embodiment and disclosure of the world it has emerged from.

The distinction between (eminent) reality and hyperreality is not structured and secured by a bright dividing line that allows one to place whatever one comes across unfailingly on one side of it or the other. The distinction is moored by clear cases at the endpoints of a spectrum: wilderness at one end, for example, and videos at the other. In between there are intricate and interesting intermediates. A distinction is helpful if it provides orientation—and a continuum, firmly anchored at its extremes, does this as well as a dichotomy.

Still, for some social critics the real/hyperreal distinction is one without a difference or, at any rate, without a moral difference. By the most widely discussed moral

20 Beth Sutel, “Indoor Mountain,” *Missoulian* (22 June 1993): A8.

standards, hyperreality does no worse and may very well do better than reality. In our example, the hyperreal instance appears to be more socially just, culturally diverse, environmentally benign, and physically healthy. But people of good sense have noticed that as we allow ourselves to slide from the real to the less real and hyperreal, our moral condition is undergoing a crucial change.

In the case of downhill skiing, this change has been well articulated by Lito Tejada-Flores. Contemplating the question whether skiing is better or worse than it was twenty years ago, he concludes:

Skiing has not merely changed randomly under the influence of technology and marketing, it has evolved steadily in one direction. Evolved in three steps from adventure, to sport, to recreation. Maybe I'm being unfair to say this, but I see this evolution as the progressive reduction (and occasional elimination) of levels of challenge in skiing. Skiers have gone from *adventure* (dealing with uncertainty in a wild mountain landscape) to *sport* (all-out physical involvement on known terrain) to *recreation* (the undemanding enjoyment of simple rhythmic movements).²¹

Lito Tejada-Flores has seen that there is a symmetry between reality and humanity—that human nobility declines when the uncertainty of the wild mountain landscape is tamed and its challenge is silenced.

Lito Tejada-Flores has captured the heroic case of mountains and adventures. A child named Lucy has seen that the same decline is to be found in the inconspicuous details of contemporary culture. In a letter to God she writes: "Dear God, do plastic flowers make you mad? I would be if I made the real ones. Lucy."²² Lucy sees what many of us have become blind to: that there is human imperitance in the refusal to care for what is fragile and to delight in what is passing—real flowers. Thus when the natural/artificial distinction is replaced by the real/hyperreal distinction, it is clear that the problem with

consumption is not its sweet recklessness but its debilitating mindlessness.

But we need to grasp more firmly what follows from the postmodern condition for reality, nature, and human conduct. To begin with reality, its character at the close of the modern era is characterized by contingency. Most prosaically the term signals the discovery that reality is far less controllable and predictable than we have thought. We have come to see that physical processes exhibit patterns that are intricate beyond the modern dreams of computability and predictability.²³

In a cultural sense, the contingency of reality means that the world refuses to comply with a vision of order that is fixed by a priori universal standards, be they the independence of nature, the transcendence of God, or the autonomy of humankind. But in neither the physical nor the cultural sense does contingency mean anything like featureless randomness.²⁴ Contingent reality has its own physiognomy, and the numerous and intricate lines that shade and separate off the real from the hyperreal constitute the most characteristic features on the face of the postmodern world.

What bearing does the contingency of reality have on the reality of nature? The principal task today is not to single out nature by some exclusive definition, but to include and appreciate it among the real and eloquent things and practices that are threatened by the hypertrophic overlay of hyperreality. This, of course, does not mean that the distinctiveness of nature should be submerged and lost in the contingency of reality. Something like "plants and animals" is sufficient to point up the natural to a first approximation, and from there it is a matter of distinguishing degrees of reality within nature.

The kind of reality that is akin to nature at its most real consists of the things and practices of athletics, of the arts, and of religion. What real nature today has in common with

these is its powerful presence and a vigorous continuity with the world at large. Like athletics, art, and religion, nature today speaks in manifold and unforethinkable voices and, most important perhaps, in voices that are always responses to our own. And just as we would

Thus when the natural/artificial distinction is replaced by the real/hyperreal distinction, it is clear that the problem with consumption is not its sweet recklessness but its debilitating mindlessness.

21 Lito Tejada-Flores, "Is Skiing Better or Worse Than It Was Twenty Years Ago?" *Powder* (January 1992):57.

22 An apocryphal letter in the tradition of *Children's Letters to God*, ed. Eric Marshall and Stuart Hample (New York: Pocket Books, 1966).

23 James Gleick, *Chaos: Making a New Science* (New York: Viking, 1987).

24 N. Katherine Hayles, *Chaos Bound: Orderly Disorder in Contemporary Literature and Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

not doubt the autonomy of a spouse whose speech recalls the words of his partner, so we should not think of nature as broken simply because everywhere it now shows the traces of human actions.

Nature in this country speaks not only in the ancient voice of the wilderness but in its domestic intonations as well.²⁵ Vicki Hearne has lately reminded us that, although obviously we breed and train dogs and horses, they in turn can instruct and even humble us with their insight, courage, or elegance.²⁶ Nature can be eloquent in parks and gardens and can speak at the very center of our houses and apartments when it is celebrated in the culture of the table.²⁷

What finally follows from the contingency of reality and the eloquence of nature for human conduct? Here too the reply to nature must be seen in the context of the human response to those real things that command our best efforts and orient us within the world at large. What they inspire us to do is to pursue the kind of excellence that culminates in celebration and is warranted by it. Such excellence is not the privilege of the rich or smart. There were times in human history when as a matter of common practice parents would teach their children the skills that issue in festive dining and dancing, in music and in storytelling. The nobility of practices like these is within everyone's reach.

The kinship of art and nature can further serve us as a guide to a clearer understanding of the standards of excellence we should aim at in our dealing with nature. Nature is now entrusted to us much like medieval cathedrals are to Europeans. Cathedrals are constantly abraded by the wear of time and the offenses of technology. To keep the destructive fumes and liquids of industry at bay takes determination. But that is not enough. Are we to let the spires, pinnacles, statues, and crockets erode into featureless remnants of their former glory? And if we remove the originals to safety and replace them with copies, are we content to see the cathedral turn more and more into a modern duplicate of itself? Are we willing to replace old timbers with

steel girders, bell ringers with electric motors, resonant voices with public address systems?

There cannot be universal rules or algorithms for such problems. To each question an answer must be drawn from experience for this particular situation. And yet from the contingency of circumstances and efforts, the cathedral continues to rise in its own right. In this country, where no medieval bequests have come down to us, we have, belatedly and undaunted by the scorn of art historians, erected our own gothic churches. By now they have taken root in our communities and memories and become sacred sites.

The rightness of all this struggling and temporizing is warranted when people gather in cathedrals to celebrate. They may do so in the penumbra of divinity when, as secular citizens, they come to hear an organ concert. Or they do so as true believers when they attend

mass. Music makes piers soar and vaults arch. Naves, transepts, and choirs center worship.

Similarly, every unroaded area needs to be secured, every wilderness attended to, and many an abused stretch of prairie or river restored or built up. Each such task requires its own approach and solution. If there is a general guideline, it would only be this: to save or restore the area's commanding presence and to guard its coherence with its environment and its tradition. And all that labor is warranted when we hike, ski, or canoe through a wild or natural area, real persons in real nature.

Human conduct that is invigorated by reality and devoted to excellence and celebration differs notably from conduct that is dedicated to the production and consumption of hyperreal commodities. Even if the latter pursuit were to live up to the conventional moral norms of ecological prudence and social justice, it would constitute a pyrrhic moral victory, for the result would merely guarantee that the debilitating mindlessness of consumption would be secured for all times and shared equally with all people.

But of course we in the United States are not as prudent as we might be nor nearly as just as we ought to be. Our selfishness here and among nations needs little elaboration. Thus it seems reasonable to suggest that even the single minded proponents of ecological prudence

[J]ust as we would not doubt the autonomy of a spouse whose speech recalls the words of his partner, so we should not think of nature as broken simply because everywhere it now shows the traces of human actions.

25 Gary Snyder, *The Practice of the Wild* (San Francisco: North Point, 1990), and Wendell Berry, *What Are People For?* (San Francisco: North Point, 1990).

26 Vicki Hearne, *Adam's Task: Calling Animals by Name* (New York: Knopf, 1986).

27 Robert Farrar Capon, *The Supper of the Lamb* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1969).

or social justice have reason to pause and wonder whether their causes may not need the invigoration of a more substantial notion of moral excellence. Among the eloquent things that may invigorate and inspire us in this way, nature has a special standing in this country. We are uniquely Nature's Nation.²⁸ Nature in its many voices speaks more powerfully here than in Europe or Japan. If the people of this country learn to listen to those voices more attentively, they may regain that relaxed energy, generosity, and optimism—the grace under pressure—that other nations used to admire in this one.

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28 That this is not a simple or easy fate is clear from Perry Miller's *Nature's Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967).

Engaging the Sense of Well-Being

School and Classroom Design in Waldorf Schools

Elizabeth Seward

In a well-designed classroom, the teacher does not have to do all the “heavy lifting.” Teaching and learning can be supported by the physical and designed environment, which contributes to a clear focal point, simplifies the students’ visual field, and provides an atmosphere of calm that in turn lessens anxiety and improves performance. High value goals also include students’ engagement with learning and teachers’ feeling valued and successful. A sense of well-being prevails in a well-designed and aesthetically appropriate classroom.

The founder of Waldorf Education, Rudolf Steiner, stated on multiple occasions that the school’s physical building enables and assists our karmic connections, that it can influence a person’s future life path and can be the entryway into earthly material life. In short, it “is the foundation for all pedagogical striving” (Beck, p. 49).

School and classroom design in Waldorf or Steiner schools means more than a visual or tactile experience. There is an internationally consistent family resemblance among Waldorf schools, yet each is uniquely designed to serve its specific demographic. In general, a visitor will most likely notice curtains; colorful, uncluttered walls; a tendency to rounded corners; wooden frames around windows and chalkboards; natural materials in furnishings; and will probably report a feeling of welcoming calm. Teachers strive to enliven the ‘feel’ of the room and as recent scholarship is beginning to substantiate, people learn and apprehend with their whole body. The younger the child, the more true this is (see publications by Gladwell, Siegel, McGinn, Claxton).

As a seasoned veteran teacher and mentor, I see teachers burning out at an alarming rate in public schools, and to some, lesser, extent in independent Waldorf schools, while a number of students also struggle. One factor is the physical constitution of the learning environment. There is an urgency to this question, as it is generally accepted that education in the U.S. is at a crisis point. Recent research shows that simple changes in the environment can raise test scores, minimize absenteeism, and positively influence interpersonal behavior. As a teacher with experience in both independent and public charter Waldorf schools, I am eager to share time-tested approaches and design principles

which seem to correlate with higher teacher satisfaction and student success. However, these principles are not yet researched or recorded in easily accessible ways and the literature on Waldorf education has, so far, frequently been largely self-referential or mired in specialized terminology.

My leading research question was to investigate how Waldorf Education and contemporary public school scholarship could maintain a dialogue and be mutually helpful. How can 100 years of Waldorf practices ‘translate’ into a non-Waldorf setting? Underlying Waldorf pedagogy is a highly differentiated view of the senses. Steiner identifies twelve senses that unfold throughout the stages of life, as the primary or lower senses lay a foundation for the later, ‘higher’ senses. The development of these senses is supported by the individual’s interaction with the environment.

Starting Point and End Goal of Studies

The focus of recent empirical studies has largely been on reducing anxiety and raising low test scores. The effect of the physical building has been taken for granted until very recently. One highly significant difference between Waldorf and mainstream research is the conventional reliance on quantitative analysis among academic scholars and a very different methodology among those who write about Waldorf schools, who base their observations and conclusions more on qualitative and intuitive inquiry. A study of research methodology would be valuable, but is a topic too broad for this paper. Still, both Waldorf and conventionally academic authors agree that like a walnut shell, the man-made environment “selects and coerces behavior” (Cotterell, 1984).

Orsinger (2014) is critical of conventional design principles: “Unfortunately, the physical environment of the school has become nearly invisible to teachers and families, in part because it is so familiar; basic school design has not changed in one hundred years” (p. 136). Uipitis states: “School architecture profoundly influences the outcomes of education. For a century and a half, we have built schools that lack adequate natural light, comfortable furniture, inviting entryways, and green spaces” (p. ix). The author forcefully highlights the

urgency of addressing the need for thoughtful planning as the number of newly built and renovated schools will dramatically increase in the course of the early 21st century. Uptis does not mince her words: “If schools are aesthetically, pedagogically, and environmentally deficient, they will sap the life right out of everyone who enters them” (Uptis, p. ix). Waldorf-inspired architecture offers a healing and life-giving alternative.

All authors reviewed in this study, both Waldorf-oriented and those who are not, agree on the priority that form must follow function, and conclude that each building will therefore necessarily be different from all others. It is the difference in perceptual framework and conceptual understanding between mainstream and Waldorf authors which makes dialogue challenging, and it is dialogue which points out the challenges and offers opportunities for clarification.

In each case, however, the unifying principle is the close association of the pedagogy and its ‘clothing’ in architectural forms. As the walnut shell both encloses and reveals (and forms) the nut within, the architecture/physical building of the school also participates in the successful realization of the pedagogy and offers a broader public statement about human-centered and developmentally-oriented education.

A Matter of Urgency

Public schools, including many Waldorf charter schools, are urgently in need of care and maintenance, and many studies have proven the negative impact of a sub-standard physical environment on students’ test scores and sense of well-being. Over half of public schools in 2013/14 were in dire need of basic maintenance (Berglund, 2016). Windowless classrooms correlate with lower test scores (Li and Sullivan, 2016). Noise (road noise, flight paths, A/C and heating) negatively impacts school performance. Extremes of temperature are linked to lower achievement. Lower air quality correlates with decreased student attendance and impacts teacher performance (Cheryan et al, 2014).

The built environment delivers a silent but powerful message, yet more than only through its state of disrepair, the visual and aesthetic environment influences students at a deeper level: views of green landscaping boost test scores (Li and Sullivan, 2016); open-plan classrooms increase anxiety in middle and

high school students with lower conceptual/maturity levels (Cotterell, 1984), yet roomier classrooms, wider hallways, and the availability of space to congregate address the needs of growing middle school students (Baker, 1997). Logical, unambiguous pathways support spatial orientation; easy access to unenclosed faculty work areas decreases anxiety levels in students; a view of green space from the classroom window can optimize students’ recovery from stressful experiences (Li and Sullivan, 2016).

[In Waldorf schools] form follows function, which means that the school building informs, protects, and shapes the activity within, which is teaching and learning according to the developmental levels of the students.

In this paper, ‘design’ encompasses the entire classroom environment from the architecture to the placement of desks and color schemes, and ‘learning’ is understood to mean cognitive, emotional, social and spiritual development. Many authors differentiate structural and symbolic features of the built environment. Structural features are more like the ‘factory installed hardware’, such as the floorplan, building access, the shape and size of rooms; symbolic features are more like the ‘after-market installed software’, such as arrangement of furniture, wall décor, and wall color, window treatments, etc.

From a Taoist perspective, the important thing about a cup is the empty space within, just as is the space within any vessel. Schools are vessels wherein teaching and learning take place; the shape and form of these man-made environments will shape and form the activity of teaching and learning. The physical environment can either support or hamper and hinder the work of educators and students. It is vital to pay attention to the future citizens held by the vessel of the classroom and school – an attention motivated by the understanding that education is both product and producer of civilization.

The Goal of Waldorf Education

Waldorf schools were founded in 1919, in the aftermath of WWI to educate the whole human being in such a way as to overcome the divisiveness of nationality, race, and religion. They are non-religious and non-denominational, yet they acknowledge and nurture the inner (or spiritual) development of the children as well as their academic, social, and emotional growth.

The Waldorf curriculum is built around the unfolding of various ‘layers’ of the human being, and this is reflected in and supported by the metamorphosis of the physical

form of classrooms. In early childhood, the growth and mastery of the physical body is paramount; in grades 1-8, feeling, healthy habits, and a sense for beauty are in the forefront; in the high school, analytic and reflective thinking comes to the fore.

The Senses as a Portal for Learning

The most commonly held model of the avenues of perception and orientation is that of the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell). However, both scholarship and popular awareness now accept that a more differentiated model of the senses gives a clearer and more complete picture of the way a human being interacts with and makes sense of his/ her surroundings. In a keynote speech at IVLA 2016,¹ Constance Classen insisted that reducing pathways of perception to the “five senses” was oversimplified, reductionist, and misleading. Gladwell, Siegel, McGinn, and others agree that multiple differentiated (sensory and other) pathways reflect more accurately the pathways of learning.

Teachers are familiar with Gardner’s (1983) multiple intelligences as pathways for learning (these are primarily sensory modalities): musical–rhythmic, visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kines-
thetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, exis-
tential, and moral. In recent years an additional sense has been added: the social sense.

Steiner, around 100 years ago, developed a schema of 12 even more highly differentiated senses. As an individual human being grows, the senses also grow and refine their function, so the lower or most basic senses provide a foundation for later, or higher senses. The sense of touch, for example, metamorphoses into the sense for the ‘ego’ or personhood of another. Just as through the sense of touch, the child learns the boundary between self and non-self and learns what is ‘real’ and tangible and what is imaginary, he/she also develops a ‘feel’ for authenticity.

The first four, or ‘lower’ senses form a basis for the healthy development of the others and will metamor-
phose into the higher and more specifically human senses as the individual matures. The sense of touch develops into a sense for authenticity and for the personhood of another human being; the sense of life/well-being develops into the sense of awareness of thought or healthy conceptual understanding; the sense of self-movement develops into the sense of coherent speech; and the sense of balance will aid the individual in sensing his/her own place in the world and

develop into the ability to retain a sense of self while assimilating and incorporating what another has to say through the sense of hearing.

THE 12 SENSES ACCORDING TO RUDOLF STEINER	
HIGHER SENSES	Thought
	Word/ speech
	Hearing
	Warmth
	Sight
	Taste
LOWER SENSES	Smell
	Balance
	Self-movement
	Life/ Well-being
METAMORPHOSIS	Touch
	The sense of the ego/ personhood of the other

The Principles of Waldorf Design

Waldorf Schools bear a global family resemblance to each other. Once identified, the Waldorf look is easily recognized. Although each school is fiercely independent and autonomous, the schools also manifest a common style. Some of the key characteristics are rounded corners on windows, clearly noticeable doorways and entrances, subtly colored walls, a low occurrence of rectilinear forms, a homey atmosphere, and the preponderance of natural materials and wooden furnishings. There are likely to be curtains at the windows and curtains covering the chalkboards in the early grades, elaborate chalkboard drawings, uncluttered walls displaying children’s and classical art, and a dedicated space for natural artifacts. Light usually comes from natural sources, supplemented by unobtrusive lighting when needed. The atmosphere is welcoming, comfortable and ‘homey’.

1 International Visual Literacy Association conference. Montreal, October 2016.

Three main principles govern the design of Waldorf schools:

- Symmetry/ Asymmetry
- Balance
- Metamorphosis

In general, form follows function, which means that the school building informs, protects, and shapes the activity within, which is teaching and learning according to the developmental levels of the students (cognitive, affective/social, and physical, as well as the inner 'spiritual' being).

Architectural forms and spaces should arise organically from these inner functions as well as from more external considerations such as geographical location. To authentically relate to and nourish these inner dimensions of human experience, Steiner argued, a building should present an environment that will express the human being's inner being in external plastic forms. Sculptural forms with dynamism and organic movement speak better to the human psyche than do the static or geometrical forms of most previous architecture and design. Hard, psychologically opaque, or merely intellectually conceived forms can stir semiconscious feelings of alienation in their users; they are not experienced as physically or psychologically "user-friendly" (Adams, p. 28). "A more organic architecture offers greater support to the organically related, mobile, and flexible thought-processes that Waldorf teachers hope to develop in their students. But, most essentially, the application of these ideas would involve progressive changes in the floor plans, ceiling designs, and overall shapes of classrooms as students advance through the grades and through different developmental phases" (Adams, p. 29).

Fences and Entrances

The first sight of a school at the beginning of every school day can make a profound impression on a child. Locked and gated multiple chain-link fences or a landscaped and fragrant passage will afford each child a different sense of place and of human scale. Orsinger (2014) states:

An ugly, broken, old fence surrounding a school indicates that the school community does not have the power, initiative, or desire to create an attractive, welcoming boundary; and this realization suggests that there are probably far more difficult things that the school community also lacks the ability or willingness to change. The ugly, confining, broken

state of such a fence confronts each child and encourages ugly, broken behavior. The fence models and elicits disrespect, lack of care, and disengagement. These fences subliminally teach of, encourage, and perpetuate broken people, broken communities, and a broken democracy. (p. 269)

On the other hand, using local materials, or 'green' building technology will signal respect and recognition of place, ecology, and community.

In the transition into the school, it is imperative to avoid confusion: Which way does the door open? Which door to use? Which door belongs to which classroom? The doorway is a threshold, and marks a transition into the learning space, a moment of consciousness as a transition from one 'state' to another. Picturing how brashly a teenager enters the classroom, how college students slide into the room, and how toddlers cling to their parent's legs shows that this threshold means something different along the developmental scale. Doorways and entrances can reflect and support transitions and prepare the student for the activity within. The vertical character of a doorway can be emphasized through various design elements. This encourages an overall sense of uprightness in the classroom and discourages too much horizontal focus.



According to Adams (2005), the doorway should be clearly marked and recognizable. The entrances to the school and the classroom should be unambiguous and set a tone for learning as well as being crucial to a sense of security and a sense of place. In a well-designed Waldorf school, the "doorways to each classroom feature organically-designed frames whose flared bases express their solid foundations. The angularly curved tops reflect the natural human experience of a curved sphere above—whether we think of this as our own

head or the sky. Both the shape of the doorway and the type of wood used change as students' progress through the classrooms of different grades, moving from rounded to more angular and wakeful forms" (p. 30). The transition into the learning space can also be signaled by color.

Durach (date unknown) writes that doorways can offer an opportunity to experience reverence, a central principle of Waldorf education. He suggests: "We can use purely architectural methods without painting proverbs on the wall. For instance, the ceiling could be slightly inclined towards the door. We can surround the door with a form speaking to the child's feelings." Turning the handle offers a moment of conscious choice, and it could be designed in such a way that the child notices implicitly that he/she is entering a special place. Durach continues: "Moreover, the child should leave the school every day differently from the way he entered it." Children are different when they leave school at the end of the day, however small the increment, because of what they have learned and experienced that day. There is a continual ontological shift throughout the process of education which transforms the inner being of the individual. Education in this sense is not simply the process of amassing facts.

School Buildings: A Sense of Belonging

Waldorf education is one of several movements developed in the early 20th century, including Montessori and Reggio Emilia schools, which are all finely tuned to children's senses and the physical environment, as well as to a sense of welcoming community. Orsinger (2014) elaborates: Rudolf Steiner confirms that the "'Physical environment' must be understood in the widest sense imaginable. It includes not just what happens around children in the material sense, but everything that occurs in their environment, everything that can be perceived by their senses, that can work on the inner powers of children from the surrounding physical space" (p. 178). This includes a 'feel' for space, as Siegel (2010) would describe it, and also includes the tone of interaction with peers and with teachers and the inner disposition of the adults. Siegel describes the mirror neuron system, the "root of empathy," where "at the most complex level, mirror neurons help us understand the nature of culture and how our shared behaviors bind us together, mind to mind" (pp. 59-60). Waldorf, Montessori, and Reggio Emilia schools all recognize the community impulse and the fact that school and classroom design both demonstrate and effect the pedagogical approach. More than providing four walls and a roof, school buildings are in themselves a force for social change.

Floorplans: Self-Movement and Balance

As children learn to socialize and interact with their peers and build community in a classroom and in a school, the welcoming 'gesture' of the school entrance and the physical arrangement of the classrooms can make or break the success of this vital social learning.

The arrangement of the floorplan and accessibility to resources will signal a sense of purposefulness and integrity of design where form and content meet. Johnson (2010) even compared some school buildings to "windowless prisons" (p. 11). A classroom serves as a symbol of the prevailing educational philosophy. At its worst, it can be a standardized, mechanistic, non-human-centered application of Henry Ford's efficiency model with long, dark hallways and cookie cutter classrooms, filled to capacity with desks in straight lines. Beck advocates for a noticeable center or hub to the arrangement of classrooms, as an orientation point and also as a focal point to integrate the disparate elements (p. 49). This is reassuring: all is in order, there is an organizing principle at the core.

Cotterell (1984) calls attention to the need for legibility in the environmental cues (such as entrances, designated purposes for the rooms, ease of access) and cautions against an overload or 'underload' of easily interpreted cues (p. 457). Blundell Jones (1999) writes:

The organization of a building reflects and determines social relationships, and . . . the qualities of space and light in a classroom affect the learning of children. It [makes] a positive image of the kind of world in which they wanted to live... [suggesting a] legible hierarchy of formality; . . . all rooms have individual characters, which both differentiate them from one another and prevent repetition. That the building consists of a society of rooms is as evident in the external form as it is in the plan.

The building is both a silent model and formative force for healthy and respectful social interaction.

Metamorphosis is a driving motif in the Waldorf curriculum and a key design principle. Children grow and transform throughout their school years, and so must the physical environment accompany and support them. First graders are not small twelfth graders. Werner Seyfert, among other anthroposophical architects, has worked out a progression of classroom footprints that develop according to the age of the child. Adams addresses this issue when he writes:

The progression of rooms begins with the simply whole, unitary, roundish spaces of the kindergarten and preschool, reflecting and welcoming the children's experience of the world during those years. Not only the entire room, but the windows, doors, ceiling, and furnishings can have a rounded or curved form. That which is softer, more rounded, and more unified in the preschool and early elementary years will gradually become firmer, more articulated, and more angular as students advance through their schooling. (p. 29)

Raab (1982) pleads for a 'gesture' in school architecture that will help to balance and counteract the apathetic 'couch potato' phenomenon so common in our present culture. He recognizes the need for a welcoming gesture in the entrance; a sense of "confident repose" in the body of the building; a well-balanced sturdiness in the walls; a dynamic in the floor plan which strengthens and liberates the observer, and does not make him/her uncertain and insecure; and a feeling that the ceiling and roof close off and shelter the building, at the same time connecting it to surrounding nature (p. 196). In addition, Raab writes, the proportions of a classroom are more important than the shape (square, rectangular, etc.) and in reflecting the human being should be balanced and symmetrical, without being a mathematical mirror-image (p. 199).

Durach suggests a differentiation in the grouping of the classrooms; the youngest grades (perhaps 1-3) are finding their way into the school, while the oldest (high school) are anticipating leaving. The intermediate grades (say, 4-8) are the stable heart of the school. This can be made visible in the grouping of the classrooms and the degree of symmetry within the rooms themselves (rounded, welcoming in the lower grades; more symmetrical and 'settled' in the middle; controlled asymmetry in the high school). Riedel explains: Kindergarten and younger grades classrooms are rounder in form, recollecting the archetypal nest form found in nature. As the children grow, the forms of and in the classrooms metamorphose into more angular shapes. This language of form, he maintains, affects the room occupants and can even be an agent of healing as the outer form of

the room affects the bodily sensations of its occupants (pp. 43-44).

Rischke (1985) describes the importance of awareness about the degree of asymmetry in a classroom. If the room is heavily asymmetrical, the occupants will need to bring their formative forces to bear in order to achieve a sense of balance and equilibrium (p. 51). Older students are more able to do this, and it is beneficial for them to engage in this way. Younger students, however, need the support and calm of a more symmetrical room, so they can use their formative forces on their own physical bodies and on their bodily sense of well-being.

First grade brings with it a progression from the Dionysian (circle gesture) to the Apollonian (more conventional arrangement of desks facing the teacher). The children are developing from a primary need to move and be as one whole organic group before about age seven, to the need (as articulated in Waldorf pedagogy) for the guidance of a loving authority of one main adult teacher through the elementary school years. A classroom which widens itself out towards the teacher through a slight divergence of the longitudinal wall, will affect the children spatially in such a way that they open themselves to the teacher. If the ceiling ascends in the same direction, then this spatial gesture induces attention. The children look up to the teacher. Both gestures awaken the children. Classrooms generally retain a focal point towards a chalkboard and the teacher, with movable furniture and flexible room planning becoming more important in recent years. Recognizing the link between gross motor movement and brain development, several Waldorf schools are now adopting the "Movable Classroom" which allows the space and furnishings to be used for multiple purposes: large and small movements.²

Durach offers a link to social development, encouraged by the experience of an asymmetrical floorplan: "In the symmetrical, [the child] experiences, without effort, a static balance; in asymmetry, he produces this balance through his own activity, thus establishing a dynamic equilibrium. This interplay of the statically given and the dynamically achieved symbolizes, in architectural form, the child's

Indications for school and classroom design are all based on Steiner's premise that spirit is always present in the material world, and that education is an incarnational process, supporting the developing child in finding his or her home and place of agency in the world.

2 For a succinct description, see <http://www.pinehill.org/movableclassroom>

experiences in the school community: on the one hand, things come to meet him, while, on the other hand, he must contribute something to the life around him.” This mirrors the developmental stages: the young child is cared for, whereas the adolescent is expected to grow into responsibility.

Durach further suggests that the basic rectangular shape of a classroom may be modified with significant effect on the children: “...if we depart from the rectangle—which is undoubtedly correct in the right place—we achieve effects that could be called dynamic.” They “induce movement.” This movement is not uncontrolled thrashing around, but in contrast to the ‘couch potato’, this movement is an inner quickening and awakening of interest and activity.

Hallways, Windows, Walls, Light, Color

Hallways support a sense of movement and balance, while long, straight hallways are de-personalized, aimless, and seemingly endless. A welcoming entrance and an easy-to-navigate floorplan can lead to a sense of being in the right place. The use of color or distinguishing architectural details can draw the eye to the entrance of a building and avoid confusing or ambiguous signals. Windowless classrooms and disorienting, undifferentiated hallways can lead to a sense of alienation and disconnection.

Sufficient light is vital, and Waldorf schools tend to differentiate between indoor and outdoor light. Cheryan et al (2014) conclude that students exposed to more daylight in their classrooms perform better than students exposed to less natural light. In a study involving more than 2,000 classrooms in California, Washington, and Colorado, students who were exposed to a larger amount of daylight in their classroom had higher math and reading test scores than students who were exposed to less daylight in their classroom (Cheryan et al, p. 2).

Walls are vessels, but should not be “prison walls.” Color can help with unambiguous environmental cues, relating to function: highlighting the entrance to the classroom or the beginning of a stairway. In Waldorf schools, specific colors are indicated for each grade, and *Lazure*, a technique of layering color developed by Rudolf Steiner, allows colored walls to ‘breathe’ and avoid the feeling of an impenetrable boundary, giving soul space.

In public school settings, classroom interiors can be overloaded by stimulation of wall décor, as described by Tarr (2004). She describes a “cacophony of imagery”

with an apparent lack of guidance or purpose in terms of display or aesthetics. She argues for empty space to allow the eyes to rest, and to allow the wall display to be more prominent. Fisher (2014) describes a study demonstrating how the more distracting the classroom’s wall décor is, the more time is spent off-task.

Waldorf classrooms are decorated with simplicity, rarely displaying posters or charts. Even the chalkboards are usually covered with a curtain when not in use and chosen areas are revealed at appropriate times in the lesson. A covered chalkboard can offer the restful eye-space advocated by Fisher and Tarr. Natural materials are used whenever possible for furnishings and classroom materials, nourishing the senses of touch and life.

The Interplay of Spirit and Matter

These indications for school and classroom design are all based on Steiner’s premise that spirit is always present in the material world, and that education is an incarnational process, supporting the developing child in finding his or her home and place of agency in the world. This is the pivotal point for school architecture and design. Teachers strive to ‘ensoul’ the classroom, because the goal of Waldorf teachers is to acknowledge the children for their own unique gifts and to help them realize their full potential as individuals. Such potential arises from the child’s spiritual inner being and his or her full panoply of senses as portals for meeting and making sense of the world.

Seek the truly practical material life
But seek it so that it does not numb you to the spirit.
Seek the spirit
But seek it, not in passion for the super-sensible,
But seek it because you wish to apply it selflessly in
the practical world, in the practical life.

Turn to the ancient principle:
Matter is never without spirit
And spirit is never without matter
In such a way that we say
We will do all things in the light of the spirit,
And we will so seek that light of the spirit
That it evokes warmth for us
in our practical activities.

Rudolf Steiner



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Becoming a Waldorf Teacher

A Narrative Research on Waldorf Teachers' Professional Identity Formation

Mária Mesterházy

When the question is posed in a Waldorf school's College of Teachers: "What does it mean to be a teacher?" – people fall silent for a minute. In the meaningful silence gazes turn inwards in search for answers. When members of the college start talking, they do not formulate definitions, nor do they lay down rules on definitive tasks of teaching. They do not give intellectual interpretations anymore. They tell stories—stories that reflect their teacher identity, like this one:

Some weeks ago, my class was deeply involved in calculating math exercises in their textbooks. I was standing in front of them, I was watching them and I thought: who are these children? What do they want from me? Do they simply want to learn to count, to read and to write? But there was something much more in the wind. Their thoughts broke out and I could almost touch [the sensation] that all of them were preparing for something. I felt like someone who was watching eggs and was waiting, who knew and was waiting for chicks to hatch. And one day eggs start cracking and the tension of waiting is growing. Teaching is serving. I serve myself and I lead children entrusted to me to achieve their goals, to unfold their personalities, to learn about the world in a way which enriches them with answers and experiences they need at that moment.

(M., 38-year-old class teacher)

This quoted reflection – a detail from one of the 90 teacher-autobiographies examined in my research – shows how a teacher tries to formulate her concept of being a teacher. It contains a description of a meaningful moment in a teacher's professional career, supplemented by personal interpretations regarding the then-and-there experience, and it alludes to the moral virtues that the teacher values the most: patience, the helping role of the educator, and the continuous development of the teacher. This story also reflects on the intuitive-cathartic identification process. One of the most shocking identity stories I have ever heard was told by a colleague of mine:

I had a terrible car accident when I was 33. My husband and two of my three children died. A

week after the accident I lay in the hospital. I was unable to move at all, because my leg was broken and prostheses had to be implanted into my hip. One of my roommates, a gentle old lady came to my bed, looked at me kindly and asked: "You are a teacher, aren't you, dear? I can see it on your face."

This story tells us that a teacher-identity is rooted in those layers of the human being that have manifest effects in the physical body.

According to Steiner's findings in *The Study of Man*, human thinking is an activity of three components: conclusion, judgment, and concept. Conclusions belong to our fully awake life, while judgments sink into the depths of the dreaming human soul. About concepts Steiner writes: "We must realize that when we form a concept it goes down into the profoundest depths of man's being; regarding the matter spiritually, it goes down into the sleeping soul [...]; the sleeping soul works right into the very forms of the body" (Steiner, 2002). Thus, according to Steiner, forming a concept has an effect on one's physical body. What the old lady recognized in my colleague's face, in the story quoted above, is the concept of identity, the identity of a teacher, living deep in the human being and manifesting at the level of the physical body. In Steiner's terms, the teacher concept affects from the depths of the will sphere of the human soul.

The teaching profession is not just a social category; it is a living, changeable and growing concept, in which the different layers of personal life events are condensed from childhood into the present. The concept living deep in the sleeping soul is reflected in our physical body, even if we do not think about it consciously. Its effect manifests itself in the way we behave among children, the role we attribute to ourselves as teachers, or in what and how we teach. Is it possible to shape or build the teacher concept working, living in us in a conscious way? How can the practice of a Waldorf Teacher Training Program contribute to it? In this essay, in light of the above questions, I investigate the identity-stories of teachers studying at Waldorf Teacher Training Program at Eötvös Loránd University, in Budapest.

Background and Main Questions of This Study

This year, the impulse of the Waldorf centenary sheds light on how Waldorf education comes to fruition in the widest variety in different cultures around the world. Events, conferences, festivals give us the chance to meet with Waldorf educators from different countries. The stories of Chinese, Indian, Filipino, or South American Waldorf teachers invoke the deepest human and Michaelic aspects of our pedagogy. In the last three decades – a 33-year rhythm of development – Waldorf education has crossed the borders of western culture and is becoming a worldwide movement.

This process raises demanding questions in the field of teacher training, including the urgent need to find new methodologies to work with this growing and diverse movement. Our times give us the task to understand and convey living concepts in Waldorf education that are able to overarch many varieties of cultural differences and to create, like a radiant sun, the most colorful cultural diversity from a single source. With this emerges an additional difficult question: How can we realize Waldorf education within the framework of the twenty first century while preserving its anthroposophical background? According to Alain Denjean, these are the biggest challenges of the fourth generation of Waldorf educators (Denjean, 2017). The Waldorf 100 impulse sets us the task of balancing between renewal and fidelity.

My study is an attempt to answer these questions in the field of teacher training by focusing on the formation of the concept of “teacher” and using the special method of working with teacher-autobiographies. The practice of writing autobiographies has a two-decade tradition at the Waldorf Teacher Postgraduate Training Program at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. In this article, I would like to share the results of my analysis of 90 autobiographies, selected from the existing 271 autobiographies written by trainees at the end of their program. The study shared in this paper is part of my PhD research, titled *Emotional Elements of Waldorf Teachers’ Identity Formation*, recently completed in this particular and important year of Waldorf 100.

The themes I would like to present here are focused on three main questions or points:

1. How do we interpret a Waldorf teacher-identity in the light of Waldorf’s anthroposophical background?
2. What is the methodology of working with teacher identity in the practice of Waldorf Teacher Postgraduate Training Program at Eötvös Loránd University? What are the main steps and critical points?
3. What are the characteristics of Waldorf teachers’ identity formation?

Professional Identity

The story of identity concept is in some way the cultural reflection of the human soul’s struggle for self-understanding in the age of the consciousness soul.

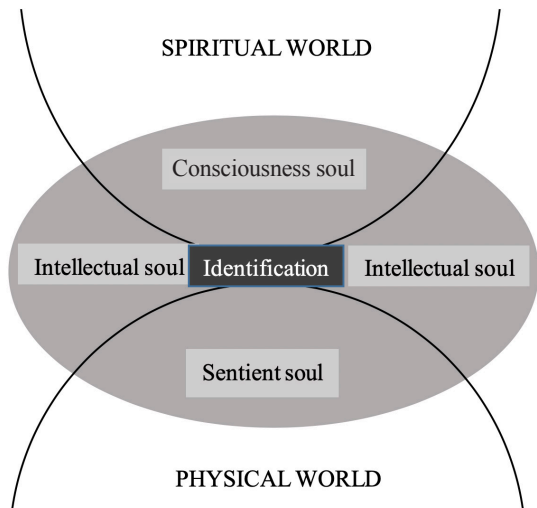
Nowadays, identity is a popular topic, a kind of concept “in fashion.” The word ‘identity’ etymologically derives from the Latin word ‘idem’, which means ‘sameness’. It is a thrilling, at times paradoxical concept that has been and still is explored in a variety of fields such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, and anthropology, and it has great social and political importance. Interestingly, while western culture often seems devoted to the creation of personal identity, in eastern cultures, especially in Buddhism, the goal is to escape

the illusions of identity (Rudd, 2015). It could be symptomatic that in the philosophical field the question of identity arises in the era of empirical scientific thinking, when experience becomes central.

Literature provides us with many images considering identity. One of the most expressive ones we find in Henrik Ibsen’s 1867 play, *Peer Gynt* (Ibsen, 2003). The old Peer presents the process of finding his inner “I” as an attempt to peel an onion, offered here as a symbol of the human effort to find the eternal seed of “I”:

Why, you old soothsayer-humbag!
no Kaiser are you; you are nought but an onion.
I am going to peel you now, my good Peer!
You won’t escape either by begging or howling.
There lies the outermost layer, all torn;
that’s the shipwrecked man on the jolly-boat’s keel.
Here’s the passenger layer, scanty and thin; —
and yet in its taste there’s a tang of Peer Gynt [...]
What an enormous number of swathings!
Isn’t the kernel soon coming to light?

The different identity categories in human life pervade each other. A person can be a woman, a mother, a left hander, a Hungarian, a theater fan, a choleric, and a teacher all in one. These categories can be differentiated: Some of them have (1) *natural* sources and are bound in a deeper way to the physical state, like sex, family, or nationality. Other categories (2) can reflect a *social status* as in one's job. Some of them are based more (3) on *personality* like one's temperament. Finally, there are several identity categories that come (4) from personal *interest* and affinity like one's hobby (Gee, 2000). Professional identity plays a specific role in human life. It depends less on our physical characteristics, it is rather built on our spiritual and cognitive skills and principally on our personal interest. In earlier times, a career choice was much more connected to family and tradition, while today career choices, at least for the middle and upper classes in developed countries, are a matter of free choice in a person's early 20s, when the independent human "I" enters into the life of young adults. Profession is the expression of the human "I" becoming free. In many ways, career, today, is a tool of self-expression (Csíkszentmihályi & Schneider, 2000; Phelan, & Kinsella, 2009). Profession is the area of human life where a genuine life task, the inner purpose of one's current earthly life, can be properly formed. The way in which the personal task, destiny, and inner traits and motivations meet in one's profession determines one's personal well-being deeply.



Identity is not a mere intellectual activity, but much more a thinking-feeling-willing process of the human soul that tries to understand its own story. This is a double-sided activity evoking memories from the past and demanding an understanding of the present (Korthagen, 2004). This is why identity expresses itself first of all in the form of storytelling. We are the story

we tell about us, or as Steiner puts, the story that has shaped us by experience and destiny:

Anyone who studies himself in his fortieth year, and in the search for his soul nature refuses to be content with an unreal, abstract conception of the "I," may well say to himself, "I am, indeed, nothing more nor less than what I have become through life's experiences, through what has happened to me by reason of destiny up to the present."
(Steiner, 1997)

It is very important that the teacher concept living in us does not function only as a force coming from the deep, but that we should evoke and reflect on our original impulses, give account of the changes we have gone through and recreate our identity.

Methodology for Working with Autobiographies in the Waldorf Teacher Postgraduate Training Program

The movement of Waldorf Education has a rich tradition and is flourishing in present-day Hungary. More than 45 schools and 70 kindergartens are operating in this European Union member country with 10 million inhabitants, where new Waldorf schools are founded every year. The Waldorf teacher training program at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) was founded in 1991 when—after the collapse of communism—the Waldorf movement was reborn in Hungary. By now, 271 Waldorf teachers have written their professional autobiographies titled *Pedagogical ars poetica*. The Waldorf teacher training program is run within the Special Needs Education Program of ELTE, which is the most prestigious and popular university in the country. The program is accredited by the state but it is fully independent while aligned with the curriculum and methodology of Waldorf education. The current research covers mainly practicing Waldorf teachers (most of them class teachers), and their average age is 40.5 years.

Teacher trainers carry out conscious work during the first two semesters in order to prepare the students for writing professional autobiographies in the third semester that are obligatory elements of the *assessment portfolio* compiled at the end of their studies. Writing autobiographies is supported by two preceding tasks during the first and second semesters of the training program: (1) guided observation of a child, and (2) guided composition of a biography (artistic or documentary style). Both the child observation and the biography

work support the skills of making contextual meaning and accumulating biographical knowledge.

The task created by the former head of the teacher training program, Zsuzsa Mesterházi,¹ has the title “My pedagogical *ars poetica*.” The Latin term *ars poetica* refers to the laws of poetry, and by extension of art in general, and it is often used to allude to the credo of an artist and his/her beliefs about the task of art. Mesterházi writes:

All *ars poetica* strive for grasping the essence. Its source is the condensed imperative of the impermanent personal experiences. *Ars poetica* is fully individual, cannot be copied. Pedagogical *ars poetica* reveals the author’s pedagogical identity and his or her essential thoughts, emotions and intentions regarding education.

(Z. Mesterházi, 2014)

Writing one’s own *pedagogical ars poetica* is not a mere biographical work, but an artistic process, generating a remembering-selecting-condensing process, which nourishes reflective skills and self-knowledge. Seven initial questions or aspects are recommended for consideration:

1. Why did I choose to become a teacher?
2. What kind of pedagogical role models do I have?
3. Whose educational writings influenced me?
4. What are my educational strengths and weaknesses?
5. An outstanding educational/teaching experience.
6. What is the essence of education for me?
7. What are my questions about Waldorf education?

While the sequence of questions helps the inventory-condensing process, trainees have freedom to refashion the sequence when answering these questions.

In the last semester of the training, a course is dedicated to support the writing of autobiographies. The work focuses on the process of remembrance and the

rhythm of human life, and guided group-work is done to process the professional life course. Trainees have about three months to complete the task and have personal consultation available to them.

The semester concludes with an edited volume containing the *pedagogical ars poetica* composition of all the trainees. And while a list of participating writers is included in this volume, they are not identified as authors of their own *pedagogical ars poetica* compositions, which appear anonymously. Of course, there is a possibility that participating writers recognize each other, but this is natural in a learning community that has spent two years together. Trainees can choose not to publish their piece, though that rarely happens. The opportunity to read other writings opens the door for the discovery of a deeper interest towards each other; it also supports self-understanding. At the graduation ceremony, trainees receive a printed volume of this collection as a present and a memento of their studies at the Waldorf teacher training program. These autobiographical compositions do not receive a grade, yet they are kept as a treasure to be shared by the community.

Seven Questions

The most important part of the methodology of the *pedagogical ars poetica* is constituted by the seven questions quoted in the previous section. The significance of timely and well posed questions is well illustrated by the story of Parzival, which is well known among Waldorf teachers. When we ask a question, we provide an open space for the respondent. We turn to them with interest and at the same time give the freedom to word their answer.

The seven questions asked for the elaboration of the *pedagogical ars poetica* are sequential. They offer various aspects and entry points to respondents to get acquainted with their own teacher concept and explore it step by step. Respondents can freely decide to what depth and in what manner they would like to pursue this task. The personal life story is only the starting point of this sequence, which encompasses so much more. The first three questions refer to the past: going through the life stories (1st question), recollecting experiences related to pedagogical models (2nd question), and exploring the sources of pedagogical beliefs and knowledge (3rd question). Questions 4, 5, and 6 call attention to the present: the enumeration of virtues and faults supports self-knowledge, the selection of an own story fosters the concentrated consideration of life experiences, which is followed by the elaboration of one’s own pedagogical theory. The seventh question contributes to the framing of a future vision.

1 Zsuzsa Mesterházi (b. 1936) is professor emerita at Eötvös Loránd University. She was Director General of Bárczi Gusztáv College of Special Needs Education from 1998 to 2001 and Organizer and Director of the Waldorf Teacher Postgraduate Training Program at ELTE from 1991 to 2014. She is former secretary of the Hungarian Anthroposophical Society. She is also the author’s aunt.

These pieces are very unique, their style is typically colloquial, confessional, at times even artistic, but at the same time, they do have a specific structure. Most of the time, writing starts with casting an account. In the first part a storytelling or narrating form dominates. In the second phase a reflective-introspective voice emerges. At the end section, a summing up and theoretical approach dominates. And a forward-looking gesture closes the work. One class teacher, the above quoted “M,” begins her story through reflection:

Why did I choose to become a teacher?
What does it mean, to be a teacher? Why
do I procrastinate to prepare this writing?
... Innumerable questions are swirling in my
head about myself and the causes of being
here. Sometimes I stop and look around on my
life: I see my children, my husband, my home,
the school where I work, and I wonder how
I got so far? I am satisfied with my life, I feel
that I am on the right track. However, I have
a stronger feeling that I had been guided onto
this path by protective hands, by a lot of pain,
tears, astonishment, and recognition.

M writes about her former experiences as a student in school that prompted a strong preconception against an educational career. Then, she describes an event, of the kind categorized as a *critical incident* (Kelchtermans, 2009), in which an interaction with a young child helped her make the decision to become a teacher. She describes the supporting ambience of the teacher training course and speaks about her crisis as a beginner teacher at her first workplace. Finally, she writes how she found Waldorf education through her daughter and how she decided to become a Waldorf teacher: “I wanted to become a member of a community in which people think about life the way I do,” M. writes. In her narrative, she represents the *meaningful* stages of the stream of life events that together form an inner coherence; the reader can perceive this living-creating process as the writer recognizes her inner development behind the story:

Why did I become a teacher? With such a
past, my experiences, so much suffering and
pleasure behind me, I had no other choice. In
my childhood I went through a lot of things,
which seemed to be mere suffering back
then, but have become meaningful by now.
Maybe I can do it differently. Maybe I can
help some children so that they can grow up
in a healthier and more balanced way [...]. My
journey has not come to an end. I feel the call

of new experiences in the distance, but I am
not mature enough for it, I have to learn a lot.

Looking broadly at a selection of 90 such autobiographical reflections, I was able to compile a list of recurring themes included in the writings. Half of the themes concern the stories and experiences of the teacher’s own career. One third touch on past experiences of the teacher as a child and a student during the school years. 16% address stories from the authors’ private lives. The distribution of themes shows that in the building of a teacher concept, experiences undergone as a student are nearly as important as the ones coming from one’s teaching career. Additionally, childhood and family rearing and the shocking experience of giving birth and nurturing one own’s child also play a determining role. These themes constitute the building blocks of the professional autobiography.

School episodes, periods and persons	n	33%
Kindergarten	11	
Primary school	158	
Secondary school	126	
Higher education	122	
Personal episodes, periods and persons	n	16%
Family (childhood)	126	
Family (adulthood)	15	
Birth of one’s own child	69	
Career episodes, periods and persons	n	51%
Commitment to teacher profession in childhood	87	
Career choice	40	
Interest in other professions	39	
Career in other professions	48	
Identification	51	
Job search	52	
Beginner years	122	
Professionalization	130	
Commitment to Waldorf education	79	
All episodes	1275	

The second guiding question, on one’s pedagogical role models, launches a different kind of reflection about the profession. The trainees are encouraged here to take into account those personalities that have affected

the formation of their teacher concept, whether in good or bad ways. Authors draw dramatic portraits of likeable or obnoxious teachers or other role models like family members, masters, or idols. In their portrayals, authors emphasize character markers that they identify with and take account of the impact, often in the form of strong effects that still influence the present. The typical effect of a negative role model is often expressed by the sentence: “I decided not to be like him,” while positive role models are described as inducing deep, nourishing effects. M., for example, writes about her adoptive grandmother as a role model:

She was wonderful, an angel! She wore clean clothes and an apron on her plump body [...] She wore glasses on her naughty eyes and always smiled. [...] And her fragrance! Vanilla cake, unique, very delicate and calming and embracing! [...] Her being, her love has equipped me and has fed me during all my childhood and all the time.

The third question, referring to books that influenced the teacher-trainee, pushes the thinking on teacher-self into a theoretical level and very often invokes moral values:

Among the novels I would mention from my adolescence there are the writings of Dostoevsky and from my adulthood I would mention Carl Gustav Jung. I do not mention them because of their educational aspect, but because of their moral aspect – but even the moral issue is strongly present in the educational field. Because the educator provides a good or bad role model to the pupil and at the same time educational situations raise quite concrete moral problems. In the case of Dostoevsky (especially in *Crime and Punishment*) the fact that one cannot and should not change his/her personality, people have their own, innate morality. Rules that one cannot break even if somebody else does.

(D., Class teacher)

These first three questions help trainees survey their past. In turn, the next one – focusing on educational strengths and weaknesses – directs attention to the present. Introspection gives a chance to take into account treasures one collected throughout life (strengths), while reviewing weaknesses in general often reveals the need for change. The question of professional identity does not only deal with “Who am I as a teacher?” but also with “Who do I want to become

in my teaching career?” (Korthagen, 2004). In my research I collected all the traits, competencies, action tendencies, and skills that trainees mentioned in their self-evaluations. I classified these character markers into seven categories, which I recommend should be studied further, as they could deepen the insight into Waldorf teachers’ hidden professional lives and the areas in which they could be supported.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Emotional character markers (135)	
Enthusiasm (21)	Emotion Regulation (20)
Patience (20)	Patience (14)
Empathy (19)	Sensitivity In Communication (8)
Humor (16)	Humor (4)
Emotion Regulation (5)	Kindness And Love Worthiness (2)
Kindness and Love Worthiness (4)	
Sensitivity In Communication (2)	
Identity (134)	
Development (28)	Self-Confidence (17)
Balance (8)	Overload (15)
Sincerity (8)	Uncertainty (14)
Authenticity (7)	Consciousness (4)
Consciousness (7)	Development (2)
Optimism (5)	Balance (2)
Identity (9)	Love for the Profession (1)
Love for the Profession (6)	
Intuitive Skills (1)	
Relationship Character Markers (93)	
Care and Attention (20)	Acceptance (8)
Relationship	Relationship Consciousness (6)
Consciousness (19)	Care And Attention (4)
Acceptance (15)	Respecting Student Autonomy (1)
Giving Assistance (13)	
Giving Trust and Safety (6)	
Initiating Conversation With Students (1)	

Social Consciousness (76)	
Problem Solving (18)	Keeping Developmental Phases In Consideration (7)
Flexibility (18)	Problem Solving (4)
Creation Of A Friendly Environment (5)	Flexibility (4)
Community Building (9)	Community Building (1)
Social Sensitivity (8)	
Keeping Developmental Phases In Consideration (2)	
Moral Character Markers (69)	
Consistency and Order (25)	Consistency and Order (14)
Conscientiousness (14)	Strictness (4)
Perseverance (5)	Injustice (1)
Strictness (3)	Lack of Conscientiousness (1)
Modesty (2)	
Management Of Learning Process (58)	
Creativity (6)	Time Management (11)
Innovativeness (5)	Distancing (9)
Time Management (5)	Procrastination (7)
Courage and Coping (3)	Experience (2)
Experience (2)	Leadership (2)
Leadership (2)	Courage and Coping (2)
Practicality (1)	
Workload (1)	
Preparedness and Knowledge (8)	Cognitive Skills (6)
Artistic Skills (5)	Artistic Skills (5)
Versatility (5)	Lack Of Preparedness (3)
	Versatility (1)
Motivation (22)	
Motivation (21)	Motivation (1)

The fifth and sixth questions, referring to an outstanding educational/teaching experience and to the essence of education, deepen professional consciousness both in terms of practical and theoretical knowledge. To highlight the difference, I cite two responses from the same author.

The outstanding experience is addressed here:

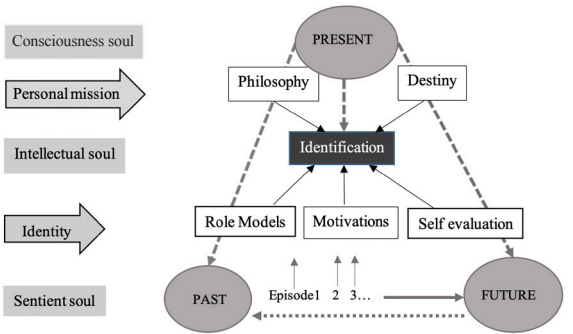
A boy came to me to take extra lessons. [...] In fifth grade the main topic was jumping as a will activity. I managed to teach him to jump from up high, so incarnation processes gained momentum. The zenith happened at the high jump at the 'Olympics'. [...] As he landed, I would never forget his joyful unearthly face, as though he had received a part of his 'self' right there.

Here is the response to the personal educational theory:

Right mediation, incarnation. Remembrance: I should not forget that once I was a child myself. I have to understand the child: what s/he does and why? (Even when s/he is being disciplined). The teacher has to reckon teaching as a process. Consciousness: to be able to transfer past experiences and knowledge filled with my emotions in a way that those can become the future for the children!

(K., Physical Education teacher)

Question the questions—this is the last final instruction for the autobiographical reflection. We know from Parzival that a question is not a mere formality but a moral quality and also a human developmental stage (W. J. Stein, 2001). Posing questions is a competence deeply connected to the consciousness soul and it can produce even more important knowledge when one is working in a college preparing Waldorf teachers. Formulating a question also gives the chance to turn doubt and criticism into curiosity: an impulse for the future. Questions open up new ways for teacher trainees and give an opportunity to form their visions.



Models of Teacher Identity

Every identity story explores a unique and personal path of professionalization. Reading the stories, one

encounters variety of moods, atmospheres, findings, contexts, meetings, turning points, struggles, accidents, and a colorful and dramatic tissue of human life that is woven by inner motivations and external life events. Below is a summary of observations derived from the 90 autobiographies studied.

Teacher-identity has four basic levels:

1. On the first level there are micro-episodes, selected from life events. This is the story told linearly.
2. Representation of career motivations, characterization of pedagogical role models, and self-evaluations are at a higher perspective. They are independent from the temporal coherence of the life story.
3. Philosophy and beliefs about destiny are also manifested and make intersections with other aspects of life. Trainees look for explanations by summarizing micro-episodes and inserting the career motivations, role models, and self-evaluations into a higher level of context.
4. The meaning-making-“I” builds the identity story from the perspective or level of the present. Identification is the heart of all the stories, as the teacher recognizes a connection between personal mission and profession. Four scales from level to level manifest the soul activities of the sentient, intellectual, and consciousness soul.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, I offer a brief summary of some benefits of the task that teacher-autobiography-writing plays in the framework of teacher training. First of all, the way of thinking demanded by this task strays from an everyday logic of cause and effect and can raise the mind of the author to the level of etheric-heart thinking. At the same time, it could nurture a sensitivity to the transformative character of the human life course. It lays the foundation for a wider ability of overview that is a necessary skill for a Waldorf teacher in planning a curriculum and observing the individual development of children. It could result in positive thinking and optimism through recognizing the deeper contexts of destiny. Through self-knowledge it could open up a wider consciousness about personal life tasks implemented in one's professional field. Work with our own teacher-biography is an open and free opportunity for self-controlled development.

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The Collegium

A Case Study in Pedagogical Governance

Peter Lawton

The Collegium is the name City of Lakes Waldorf School gave to a council of teachers and administrative staff members working within a new model of pedagogical governance. In this model, the Collegium circumscribes a wider circle of leadership around the traditional College of Teachers.

As a *college* (Latin for a group of colleagues, a partnership) of teachers forms a circle at the heart of a Waldorf school, guiding the school's pedagogical and social mission (Trostli, 2011; Pewtherer, 2011), its members are not alone. In addition to guidance from the spiritual world, standing close behind the college members are colleagues who share their level of commitment and intention. If a college of teachers takes a step inward into a circle—a circle in which these individual teachers and staff members align and attune their own personal intentions and destinies with those of each other and with the larger mission of the school (Pewtherer, 2011)—its members step in from a larger circle of other similarly dedicated teachers and staff members. In my school, we've recognized and named this outer circle of the Collegium, and further defined and codified many of colleagues of responsibilities. Although our College of Teachers continues to fulfill critical leadership and management functions, it shares responsibility with the larger Collegium, which empowers, supports, guides, informs, and affirms the work of the College.

Collegium membership criteria are the same as those of our school's College of Teachers, so, in the coarsest terms, the Collegium is a circle of College- and would-be-College-members. Collegium members are self-selected and meet certain inner/dispositional and outer/experiential criteria that readers will recognize as being similar to the requirements of many colleges of teachers (for recent descriptions of the College of Teachers see the articles by Beaven and Trostli). Membership criteria for the Collegium include a commitment to the school and to Waldorf education, a commitment to working collaboratively, fidelity to a path of inner development, an openness to spiritual realities and insights, and a minimum of two years of service to the school. Although most organizational and managerial analogies fall short, the Collegium members may be compared to senior partners, major stakeholders, or

employee-owners in other contexts. The Collegium forms a larger circle deeply connected to the mission and destiny of the school and encompassing the College of Teachers.

Because our school believes the College needs an earthly, institutional mandate in addition to the inner call to serve felt by its members—the *spiritual mandate*, you could say—we've given the larger Collegium the authority and responsibility of selecting and mandating, or empowering the College of Teachers each school year. All Collegium members are eligible for service on the College, which is selected by consensus from within the ranks of the Collegium. The College in turn is responsible for instructional leadership and the day-to-day management of the school's pedagogical mission. Now beginning its second year of existence, our Collegium currently numbers about 25, roughly half the school's employees and a group much larger than the seven to ten individuals typically serving on the College of Teachers.

While both the Collegium and College are governed by a democratic spirit honoring the voices of all members, their managerial process of decision-making by consensus is not what we typically associate with the familiar models of democratic governance. The Collegium and College arrive at decisions and agreements communally; they don't vote. Following more closely a republican rather than a liberal-democratic model of governance (not to be confused with the two major American political parties; see also Ernst, 2019), the consensus process is characterized by a spirit of solidarity akin to what one might observe in a council of elders. Members represent not only their self-interest or the interest of their constituent groups, but the interests of the whole community and the school's larger mission.

In addition to selecting and mandating a newly constituted College of Teachers each year, the Collegium further informs and affirms major pedagogical changes, and maintains a process through which College decisions may be appealed. The responsibility to affirm major changes and hear appeals is both an acknowledgement of the responsibility of Collegium members to stay committed and intentional in their relationship

to the wider school and its mission, and of the College's responsibility to include major stakeholders in important pedagogical decisions (Pewtherer, 2011). Prior to the establishment of the Collegium, the College of Teachers self-selected itself each school year; there was no institutional requirement of the College to include faculty and/or other employee stakeholders in major pedagogical decisions; and there was no institutional mechanism to question or appeal College decisions.

The present article examines the background and impetus behind changing the school's pedagogical governance structure through a consensual process whereby the Collegium and the new structure were envisioned and affirmed by all the employees of the school. It further explores a description of some of the Collegium's roles and responsibilities, as well as some of its structural elements, such as the appeals process. The article concludes with a look at some initial successes, ongoing challenges, and outstanding questions.

It perhaps goes without saying that what is offered here is not intended to be prescriptive, nor is it explored from a fully objective point of view, as the author works at City of Lakes and has participated in the new governance envisioning process. This individual case is offered in hopes that in the description of the structural changes made by our school, and of the cultural and relational context surrounding these changes, others working in similar settings will earn new insights into their own schools' governance and leadership models.

Background and Impetus for Change

Currently in its thirty-first year, City of Lakes Waldorf School is a private, independent elementary school (pre-k through grade eight) serving the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. The impetus arising several years ago to explore new governance models was proactive, that is, it was not a response to any particular crisis. On the contrary, this initiative came at the heels of an extended period of healthy enrollment and staff stability. The inspiration for change arose in our school's College of Teachers in response to ongoing challenges experienced both within, and in relation to, the College. The College traditionally consisted of a small, self-selected group of teachers and administrative staff members responsible for strategic and ongoing pedagogical decisions, such as those involving school programs, staffing, professional development, etc.

Some of the challenges traditionally experienced by our College can be reasonably interpreted as those inherent in any horizontal, collaborative governance structure, such as the twin syndromes of 'where-does-this-go?' and 'who's-in-charge?'

Other challenges are simply part of the natural order, faced *even* by vertical, hierarchical governance structures. These include lack of time, money, resources, etc. However, several of the challenges facing the College fell under an entirely different heading, and an uncomfortable one at that. These included what College members perceived as a lack of engagement and participation on the part of those colleagues rarely or never serving on the College, and what non-College members (and many newer and/or younger colleagues) perceived to be in-group or out-group status. These two relational challenges had real, practical implications. The first was a resource problem: there were simply not enough hands on deck. The second created a morale problem. Other challenges are explored in subsequent sections.

Even though the College was self-selected and open to membership from any colleague meeting the criteria and willing to make the time commitment, there were nonetheless negative forces at play discouraging participation. Two popular working theories explained the problem. The first was psychological or temperamental. Some people are leaders, others followers. Some have extra energy, some don't. Etc. (This theory, by the way, was espoused not only by members of the "in" group, but of the "out" group as well. In the initial envisioning conversations that ultimately lead to the Collegium, one colleague—a self-identified "out-group" member—said College membership was fine for those who had the time; she just didn't.)

The other theory explaining the lack of participation and engagement was cultural. Organizational culture, as in the larger society, is adaptive at first, but aspects of culture may become fixed, immutable, and possibly even maladaptive as organizations grow and change. Unexamined habits, unspoken norms, not what is said but the *way* things are said, subtle body language—these are but a few of the implicit elements of culture. Other aspects of culture concern underlying assumptions and values. Some organizational values are self-generated, but others encroach upon them from the wider culture. A seeming example of an unconscious but operative value working in our school is the assumption that it's better to have *someone* in charge, be it an individual or small group, and that the ability to get things done varies inversely with the size of the decision-making group. I'm not suggesting there isn't some truth to this view; I'm suggesting that while it is widely applied, it is often unexamined. For better and for worse, this seems to be one of my school's and our nation's (Holdrege, 2019) managerial default settings.

Through the year-long process of collectively envisioning the Collegium and throughout its first year of existence, it became apparent that while there were certainly temperamental and cultural influences at play, the twin challenges of lack of participation and poor morale were not only related: they were partly structural in nature. The challenges were structural in the sense that our organizational forms—the codified ways in which we conducted business—did not support inclusion and transparency of process. Everyone was *for* inclusion and transparency. Yet, whenever there was a particularly strong impulse to include a larger group, there was no structure or vessel within which to place that impulse. A process for including and being transparent had to be invented anew each time. Other structural factors are analyzed in subsequent sections.

Before diving into the Collegium further and exploring its genesis, it may be important to clarify that the governance changes examined in this article encompass only the pedagogical realm. Traditionally in Waldorf schools, the College of Teachers is one of two decision-making bodies, the other being the Board of Trustees. Composed of a select group of faculty and staff, the College is responsible for the school's pedagogical decisions, and as such bears the defining mission of the school. Because Waldorf schools have a deeper mission for social renewal, the College may be said to carry the school's spiritual mission as well (Trostli, 2012). The Board of Trustees, composed of parents and other community members as well as school staff, is responsible for legal and financial decisions (Beaven, 2012). Of course, there are more or less gray areas where pedagogical (cultural), financial (economic), and legal (political) concerns conflate (McAlicie, 2009). The current case focuses solely on pedagogical governance—areas and activities traditionally falling under the purview of the College of Teachers.

The Envisioning and Affirmation Process

Because of the longstanding belief that the College's dual challenge of participation and morale was in part cultural, the College decided to try and build a solution from the ground up through a democratic/consensual process involving all school employees (coworkers). Firstly, the College understood that any process intended to address the two challenges had to take place outside the governance structure extant at the time, which in some part was responsible for the problematic dynamic in the first place. Secondly, College members understood that the exploratory process itself should exemplify the ideals they hoped any new governance form might engender. The College came up with an initial plan for... coming up with a plan. The rough outline

stated: (1) Seek universal acknowledgement of the problem. (2) Seek unanimous consent to explore new pedagogical governance models. (3) Select through consensus a small working group/task force to facilitate a year-long envisioning and affirmation process involving all coworkers. (4) Try not to freak out—understand that any proposed changes would have to be unanimously approved, including by the current College of Teachers (who were understandably anxious and cautious). (5) See what happens.

The seeds of what would grow into the Collegium were planted at the school's first in-service day in the fall of 2017. In the spirit of acknowledging the participation and morale problems, the College posed a question to all coworkers: "Who mandates the College of Teachers?" The conversation that ensued was one of the most illuminating and remarkable of the entire envisioning process. Conducted as a talking circle, wherein each coworker had the opportunity to speak in successive go-arounds, responses ranged from left to right of the political gamut. The response from the left suggested: 'It doesn't matter who mandates the College. The College wields unfair power, and that power should be distributed equally. Blow the whole thing up!' The response from the right insinuated: 'The (ever mysterious) *School* mandates the College, and thank God there are people willing to step up and do this work. Now shut up about it!' More illuminating was the revelation that a significant number of coworkers had only the vaguest notions of what the College was, or the nature of its work, or the processes by which it works, let alone a working understanding of terms like "mandates."

This was a huge wake-up moment for the College. Members soon realized that the participation and morale challenges were in part managerial, concerning professional development and organizational leadership, two of the College's areas of responsibility. The problem was due in part to the school's failure to train its various staff members about the governance structure within which they worked. This professional development and leadership shortfall had real, institutional repercussions. After all, coworkers need to be trained and mentored not only in their own areas of expertise, such as teaching Spanish or running a capital campaign, but also in governance, especially when working within a collaborative leadership model. This governance component may be doubly important given the paucity of trained Waldorf teachers entering the workforce and the fact that experienced teachers are less available to provide College leadership as they spend more time in classrooms mentoring new teachers (Soule & Stewart,

2016). Without being trained in governance and collaborative leadership models, some coworkers may not self-select or volunteer for something as mysterious and intimidating as College leadership. In this sense, low participation/engagement may be interpreted as a professional development challenge, as much as a cultural or temperamental challenge. It also may be interpreted as a structural problem, as there need to be structures or organizational forms which *embody* the governance-and-collaborative-leadership-training gesture. Organizational forms that provide governance and leadership training as part of their ongoing mission, as part of their normal ways of conducting business, will arguably be more effective than any discrete “training sessions.”

At the conclusion of several more exploratory conversations, it seemed coworkers had reached a better understanding of our school’s extant governance structure. They arrived at a tacit acceptance of the existing organization and role of the College as a small, empowered working group of the leaner, default management style mentioned above. The suggestion of a different direction was a real possibility in those initial meetings, and the new direction moved away from the College, small-mandated-group model and towards a flatter, whole-group model involving all the coworkers equally. Still, that suggestion never arose.

I can imagine readers already asking at this point: Why add another institutional layer of complexity with the creation of the Collegium? Why not just grow the College from 10 members to 25? Or why not just make decisions in the larger coworker circle? I cannot provide school-wide answers because those questions never came up. I can, however, articulate a rationale. Firstly, it’s not immediately obvious that growing the College would be any less institutionally complex than creating another layer. Secondly, I can reiterate the strong, long-standing confidence among our school employees in the power of delegating and mandating and the need to seek input and affirmation from larger, constituent groups, notwithstanding, a belief that smaller groups work more efficiently and effectively.

In addition to tacit acceptance of the existing, small-group College organization, there was general agreement that the College should work under a legitimate and living mandate from the school. Furthermore, the coworkers agreed that in our existing governance model there was no mechanism to provide that

mandate. They unanimously decided to pursue a process of envisioning a new governance model and proceeded to select, by consensus, a small task force to facilitate the envisioning and, should it come to it, the affirmation process. The answer to the question “Who mandates the College?” was left unanswered, at least for the moment.

The ensuing envisioning process involved regular conversations within the larger coworker group as well as in smaller constituent groups; back and forth communications and wordsmithing between the task force, College, and coworkers; and many one-on-one conversations. Early on in the process, a conception of a Collegium—this larger group of committed stakeholders selecting and mandating the College—emerged. Several contentious issues also quickly came up. The biggest point of contention was membership. “Who,” in other words, “would be eligible to serve on the Collegium?” Two other questions solicited heated debate,

both related to the Collegium’s role and responsibility of selecting and mandating the College. The first was, “What role, if any, should the Collegium take in pedagogical decisions made by the College?” And the second was, “Should there be an appeals process by which College decisions could be appealed to a larger group?” Through a seven-month, deliberative process involving all the coworkers, the task force ironed out answers to these and other questions. They defined and refined language and terms, made compromises, assuaged egos, and in the last week of the 2017-2018 school year, the City of Lakes Waldorf School’s coworkers affirmed and approved a new governance model.

Collegium Roles, Responsibilities, and Structures

The final, approved Collegium and College of Teachers mandate¹ spelled out specific roles and responsibilities, and outlined membership criteria for both the Collegium and College. It also outlined various processes, including the consensus decision-making process; the process by which the College of Teachers is selected; and the process by which the Collegium affirms major pedagogical changes. The mandate further described Collegium and College appeals processes.

The Collegium’s first and foremost role and responsibility is to select and mandate a College of Teachers.

1. The entire Collegium and College of Teachers mandate may be found at clws.org/collegium

The Collegium forms a larger circle deeply connected to the mission and destiny of the school, encompassing the College of Teachers.

Here is the answer to the question, “Who mandates the College of Teachers?” The Collegium—a larger circle of committed stakeholders—mandates the College. A more in-depth explanation and rationale is provided below. Once the College is selected and mandated, the Collegium meets at least three times per year, in the fall, winter, and spring, and additionally as needed to review College goals and priorities and to provide input and affirmation on proposed major pedagogical changes. In addition to offering guidance to the College on yearly direction, priorities, and goals, the Collegium provides input and affirmation on *major* pedagogical changes that relate to the overall mission or direction of the school. As part of its ongoing management duties, the College is responsible for organizing and facilitating processes for gathering input and affirmation from the Collegium on proposed major changes. Major pedagogical changes include but are not limited to significant programmatic changes, amendments to the school’s governance structure, major physical changes to the building or grounds, etc.

Here, in the Collegium’s role of affirming (and in its *responsibility* to affirm) is the formerly non-existent institutional requirement to include faculty and staff stakeholders in major pedagogical decisions. Here also lies the mechanism by which it happens. Both the College and Collegium are active participants in the process. The College is responsible for instructional leadership and the day-to-day management of the school’s pedagogical mission (Pewtherer, 2011). This responsibility includes seeking input and affirmation from the Collegium on major decisions. The Collegium in turn is responsible for staying informed of and engaged in major questions or decisions that are in the works. If the overloaded, overworked College members struggle with how to include the larger group or view that inclusion as a burdensome, bureaucratic box to check, then the Collegium must step in and provide leadership and organizational assistance. Similarly, if the Collegium appears to respond with a glazed over, this-doesn’t-concern-me look, if members are not reading preparatory materials or answering emails, then the College must likewise provide more leadership and direction.

Collegium membership criteria—the most heated topic of debate in the envisioning process—were decided in a pretty straightforward compromise between Left and Right, between those who would welcome all coworkers, conceivably even new employees with no

former Waldorf and/or collaborative leadership experience, and those who would insist upon more outward proficiencies, such as years of experience, training, or other bona fides. In addition to the inner/dispositional qualities mentioned earlier, such as commitments to the school, to Waldorf education, to a path of inner development, and to a spirit of collaboration, coworkers agreed to the outer/experiential qualities of two full years of employment, serving in a role subject to yearly review and a tenured status. The latter, in our school, means that in addition to two years of employment, the employee is not subject to any improvement or disciplinary plans.

[T]he twin challenges of lack of participation and poor morale were not only related: they were partly structural in nature.

In the end, coworkers agreed the final Collegium membership criteria exemplified the shared intention to convey

(1) a welcoming and inclusive gesture, and (2) a clear and conscientious path to membership. Interestingly, conversations intended to answer the practical question, “Who should be on the Collegium?” deepened and informed answers to the question that started the whole envisioning process: “Who mandates the College?”

The School is in great measure a pedagogy. That pedagogy is embodied, made manifest, by the employees of the School—the teachers and the administrative staff—and the work they do. In one basic but important sense, the School is the employees, students, and parents *all working together*. But just as we, as individuals, are more than our work, so is the School. Just as we embody a being with a unique destiny, so the School has a being and a unique destiny. This is not just a pedagogical mission, but a societal or moral mission (Troostli, 2011). The School has a developmental mission: to transform itself while helping to transform the world. While the School, on one level, is the daily work embodied by those who perform the work, on an even higher level the School is *intention*, embodied by those who, working together and in shared commitment (Smit, 2011), align their own personal intentions and destinies, their own personal development, with that of the School and its larger mission (Pewtherer, 2011). In another sense, these employees are part of a larger, karmic motion. In Waldorf parlance they *carry* or embody the School. This is the level of commitment asked of Collegium and College members, and it provides the rationale for our belief that the Collegium has the natural authority and responsibility to mandate the College.

Finally, the Collegium mandate described transparent Collegium and College appeals processes—procedures by which one coworker or group of coworkers may appeal directly to the College one of its decisions (or the decision of one of its mandated committees) or, in the event of a matter of grave concern, appeal a College decision to the Collegium. Appeals heard by the College include those related to decisions made in the course of its day-to-day management of the school's educational programs. These may concern the allotment of professional development funds or other resources, the yearly schedule, space use concerns, mentorship and evaluation (including probationary or improvement plans), the hiring and dismissal of teachers, etc. Appeals heard by the Collegium regard major, systemic governance concerns only. Major governance concerns may include those involving the College's adherence to school governance policies or norms, conflicts of interest, the misuse of authority, etc.

Collegium appeals are managed and facilitated by an ad hoc investigative team consisting of three to five impartial members of the Collegium, Board of Trustees, and members of various school committees as needed, such as the teacher development committee or human resources committee. Both the College and appellant(s) are given an opportunity to weigh in on the make-up of the investigative team and every reasonable attempt is made to form an objective, unbiased appeals team. The team conducts an investigation, and if this team feels there is evidence to support the appeal, it shares findings and makes recommendations to the Collegium, who ultimately rule on the appeal.

Initial Successes, Ongoing Challenges, Outstanding Questions

Beginning now our school's second year of its new governance structure, the Collegium has successfully selected its second composition of the College of Teachers. As part of the College selection process, Collegium members publicly share their intentions for committee work in the coming school year, including their willingness (or inability) to serve on the College of Teachers. The mood is fairly formal and participants are expected to speak openly and honestly and to provide thoughtful reasons for their participation or lack thereof. The selection process may also involve nominations. From all indications the selection process seems to have inspired confidence not only in younger and/or newer coworkers but in seasoned colleagues as well. For a novice, it is very powerful and encouraging to hear more experienced colleague speak your name publicly and say they would love to see you step up into a leadership role, to say they see leadership qualities

in you. Likewise, it is gratifying for those with more leadership experience to hear others publicly acknowledge their service, thank them, and say their continued leadership is valued. It is further important at an institutional level to recognize and acknowledge, as our newly minted College mandate does, the importance of ensuring a balance between novice and experienced members.

One of the major goals of the whole Collegium endeavor was to encourage more participation at the College and leadership level. Last year's College included three rookies. Two out of the three new College members said they doubted they would have ended up on the College had it not been for the Collegium selection process. "The process," wrote one, "changed a nebulous, somewhat intimidating, unclear process of how one gets on the College [into an] explicit, diplomatic, transparent [process] with clear qualifying factors." The third rookie was encouraged to join the College in a more traditional manner from "behind the scenes," although she felt emboldened and encouraged by the Collegium selection process. Two of last year's rookie College members continued their service this year, and were joined by another first-year College member. Several other would-be, College members expressed their interest and willingness to join in the coming years as the need for more novice College members arises. So far, it looks like the Collegium has been an initial success in terms of encouraging more participation in the College and/or enthusiasm in its work.

While one of the explicit goals of the Collegium was to encourage more participation at the College and leadership level, a related implicit goal regarded professional development—to provide a training ground for leadership and coaching for how things get done. This leadership training is modeled on the workings of the Collegium itself and in its activities, such as in the consensual process of selecting the College. In the interest of providing more training in collaborative leadership, the Collegium conducted several studies in its first year, including studies of the consensus decision-making process and the committee reporting process.

One of the Collegium's late-spring, early-summer responsibilities is hearing formal year-end reports from the College and its mandated committees, such as the teacher development, educational support, and festival committees. At the Collegium level, the purpose of the reporting process is twofold. In the interest of providing guidance to the College on yearly direction, priorities, and goals, the reporting process offers Collegium members the opportunity to stay abreast of these, as

they take place on the committee level, and to identify major themes and challenges. But in terms of leadership training, hearing the reports also entails a larger study of how committees function, or, sometimes, how they don't.

Committee reports have been presented at various times in our school's history to the smaller College or the larger coworker circle. Past committee reports to the coworkers often seemed like an afterthought, a ceremonial piece. Engagement and analysis seemed perfunctory. In contrast, past reporting to the College often entailed the appropriate level of engagement and analysis, but it did not include many of the major stakeholders in the school—those who might be serving on the College in the near future and/or whose areas of expertise would make their input important. It remains the College's responsibility to mandate and guide work at the committee level; however, the formality and seriousness of committee reporting at the Collegium level, coupled with the inclusion of the larger group of stakeholders, may make the Collegium the most appropriate and effective venue for meta-analyses of committee work. One of the larger themes identified by Collegium members at the conclusion of last spring's year-end reports involved inconsistencies in how committee chairs were gaining input and participation from their respective groups; this is a good example of the institutional-level-analysis that the committee reporting process is intended to provide. In addition to increasing participation in the College, hearing formal committee reports in the Collegium promises to be another initial success.

After its first year, the Collegium has yet to inform or affirm a major pedagogical change. Arguably, there have been no major changes to affirm so far, but there certainly are many major questions to address and possible decisions in the works. The College has yet to bring those questions to the Collegium in any formal way, while the Collegium has so far failed to offer proactive leadership. A portion of our first-year Collegium meetings were given to open discussions of what from the items on the College's agenda should be taken up for consideration by the Collegium. These would be seen as items involving a major change or a pioneering impulse that warrant input from the Collegium. Examples of topics that may result in a major change or new direction currently being discussed on the College and throughout the school include the possibility of a helping class, a process for integrating the school's approach to media and technology, and a search for new models for the orchestra program. One of the Collegium's goals for this year is to work more closely

with the College to help identify topics for Collegium input and assist the College in organizing and facilitating those conversations.

The Collegium also has yet to facilitate an appeal of a previous decision. However, as interesting as it would be to witness an appeal from a governance and process standpoint, and as informative as it would be to the effort to improve the appeals process, we are perfectly content never to hear an appeal. Still, we know schools can face existential threats from within in the form of breakdown in the collegial realm—breakdown that carries the very real possibility of damage to the school. To a certain extent, this possibility exists only in the absence of a larger, communal process for resolving major conflicts. Whether ours is such a process, we don't know yet. But we hope the mere existence of a process will mitigate the threat of a major cleavage.

Outstanding questions relate to the intersection between the Collegium, College, teachers, and the critical function of teacher mentorship/evaluation. Currently the teacher development committee is mandated by the College to organize and manage the training, mentoring, and evaluation of teachers. While the College is now selected through a transparent, consensual process, the teacher development committee (like all committees) continues to be self-selected. Two of the committee's three responsibilities—mentoring and evaluating—can lead directly to the dismissal of a teacher. With regard to such a critical and vulnerable area of concern, the question is: How will the school assure that processes are fair and transparent? Whatever the answers, the Collegium will be intimately involved in the questioning process.

Other questions concern the job review process and the relationship between the Collegium/College and the administrative staff, including the administrative director and faculty chair, who by virtue of their positions are standing members of the Collegium and College. Regular review is a requirement for serving on the Collegium, and currently there is no review process for the faculty chair, nor is there a regular or established process for reviewing the administrative director and members of their administrative staff. Additionally, while class teachers (early childhood and grades) are subject to regular reviews, there are many inconsistencies in the way subject/specialist teachers and teachers' assistants are reviewed. Although the remedy here seems pretty straightforward, and although there is universal acknowledgement of the need to conduct formal job reviews, the challenge remains: reviews require huge investments in time, resources, and people

power. Given the critical importance of regular review, and the fact that it is a requirement for membership on the Collegium and College, perhaps the Collegium can (or should) provide more leadership and/or on-the-ground administrative assistance.

The democratic/collaborative governance model by which pedagogical questions are discussed and decisions are made not only creates an atmosphere and process in which employees can develop personally and grow together, it creates living and responsive classrooms. The collaborative process enlivens the school. Collaboration is not just a good managerial model; it enhances the pedagogy. A question that relates to collaboration and the work of the Collegium, but falls outside its pedagogical purview, is the larger question of how collaboration lives in the school's financial, legal, and administrative realms. Unlike the case with teachers, the affirmation and appeals processes are available to administrative staff only in relation to their work on the College or in any of the pedagogical committees; these processes are not guaranteed to the staff in the context of their duties in admissions, development, accounting, and other administrative or clerical tasks. For example, a teacher has input into the process by which teachers are evaluated; teacher evaluation is managed by a team of peers (the teacher development committee); and teachers may appeal their placement on a probationary plan. An administrative staff member, on the other hand, is not granted similar affirmation and appeals processes. While the board does work through a consensual process similar to that of the Collegium, College, and the pedagogical committees, administrative staff members work under a more traditional, hierarchical structure, under the leadership of the board and administrative director. This is not to suggest that the board and administrative director do not seek input, allow for questioning, or encourage team spirit as any good managers would; it is a recognition that the governance structure of the school's administration is that of manager-and-team, as opposed to self-managing team or college. A broader question, and one the gesture of the Collegium brings into sharper focus, asks: Can and should the school extend collaborative models and structures to encompass work in the administrative realm?

As suggested earlier, the Collegium is not first and foremost a form, but a *gesture*, an *attitude*, an *intention*. The Collegium represents an intention that College members have always carried. The intention is to accept—along with the help of spiritual forces streaming from the future—personal and communal responsibility for the future of the school and the vibrancy of its

mission. So far in the process, school morale seems to be running high and colleagues are hopeful. A spirit of possibility and *esprit de corps* pervades the Collegium and College. Lightning in a bottle?

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Bridging the Vulnerability Gap

A Review of Betty Staley's *Tending the Spark*

Stephen Sagarin

Betty Staley's new book, *Tending the Spark: Lighting the Future for Middle School Students* (Waldorf Publications, 2019), is important for understanding the healthy development of a critical period in youth and how teachers and parents can assist this development. It is particularly important if Waldorf schools lose students in increasing numbers during middle school, or if students get to the end of middle school and announce that they are "done" with Waldorf, that they've had "enough" Steiner. In visiting more than a dozen Waldorf schools in the past year, I observed that such middle school attrition is all too common.

The health of a Waldorf school's middle school is a key to the health of the whole school. If the school doesn't have a high school, the middle school represents the goal, the culmination of the school's endeavors. If the school does have a high school, the middle school is the necessary bridge to it. A Waldorf high school relies on a strong, well-enrolled middle school, and that includes converting willing 8th grade graduates into eager 9th graders. Without healthy, happy middle school students, the school itself cannot be fully healthy.

Here is where Betty Staley's book comes in: it takes a large step toward helping teachers and parents to ensure the health and happiness of middle school students and, therefore, the well-being of middle schools. And there is little doubt that these students need our help. As Staley writes in the Introduction: "[I]t feels as if we are in the midst of ... a battle with powerful negative forces specifically aimed at this age group—through sexualization and violence in movies, overload of internet information, video games, cell phones, and commercials..."

What challenges particularly this age group is well summed up in a concept around which the book is centered: a "vulnerability gap" in the lives of young persons between the onset of puberty, beginning around age 11, and the maturity that comes with adolescence, forebrain development, and the "civilizing mind," beginning around age 15. Their physical bodies

are preparing for the possibility of procreation and the emotional depths that comes with that, yet their emotional lives are still immature. As the gulf between these changes has widened over the past century or so, it has become increasingly challenging for teachers, parents, and young persons themselves to bridge this gap. Staley's book sensitively and intelligently addresses how we may assist the healthful development of persons roughly between the ages of 11 and 15.

Primary here is the idea of genuine protection—protection from digital addiction, unfiltered Internet content, and the many other social and technological influences for which students of this age are not well defended.

The health of a Waldorf school's middle school is a key to the health of the whole school.

"Protection" opens a space within which healthy development may occur, and, in this context, Staley emphasizes the necessity to address, maintain, and encourage young persons' idealism. Here, she recommends three distinct avenues. First, adults should strive

to be genuine role models. Teachers and parents can also introduce heroes—not in old-school, hagiographic ignorance of the fact that we are all human and have our faults and fallibilities, but in a mode that recognizes the achievements of individuals worth emulating, while emphasizing the challenges that many have had, faced, and overcome.

Second, we assist students in making it through the vulnerability gap with stories and narratives. We make sense of our existence through storytelling and the construction of narratives. (That these are inevitably partial and even flawed does not detract from their value.) Hearing, reading, writing, and telling stories, their own and others, immerse students in worlds of meaning that help them make sense of their own maturing experience.

And, third, we guide students through this period by engaging them in service to others. Research shows that middle school students are acutely aware of moral and ethical questions and dilemmas, and beginning to engage with the moral world in a practical way is helpful to them.

Staley has chapters on “The World of Middle School Boys” and “The World of Middle School Girls,” a binary view that might not sit comfortably with some readers in a society in which more and more individuals let us know that they don’t fit either of these two boxes, or these boxes alone. Still, using the categories of “masculine” and “feminine” to describe the polarity within which each one of us exists provides a useful explanatory scheme. And, developmentally, hormonally, emotionally, the tension between these poles is often experienced and expressed more extremely in this period.



I’ve said the book is a large step in the right direction, and I’ll add three more small ones, based on my own experience as both a middle school and high school teacher. First, I wonder if Staley has underestimated the range of the vulnerability gap. In my experience, students don’t begin to leave this gap, so to speak, until around age 17, following a (potential) crisis of individuation around age 16.

Second, although the need for protection is real, so is the gradual work of emancipation, the work of liberation. We can no longer rely on a mature mind, a civilized mind, to develop and guide a young person without teachers’ and parents’ efforts to assist with liberation or maturation in the face of pressures from advertisers and demagogues that aim to maintain us as immature consumers and pawns.

Third, although it is implicit throughout Staley’s book, we should make explicit the principle that work with middle school (and high school) students involves setting appropriate intellectual, emotional, and physical

challenges. Without a sense that they can meet hard challenges and, with appropriate support, succeed, students will not be effectively assisted by the tools of role models, stories, and service.

These considerations can remind us that our concepts of “middle school” and “high school” are historical artifacts. Other nations structure schools differently. In Australia, for instance, lower school ends after grade 6, and upper school begins in grade 7. (Australian Waldorf schools usually receive a variance from the state so that class teachers remain with their classes through grade 7.) Developmental stages and individual manifestations of them exist separately from the divisions we impose through law, custom, and history.

Regardless of the grades and schools in which young persons find themselves, however, or into which we put them, these students deserve our conscious attention as parents and teachers to assist them in their growth and development. Staley’s book carefully, conscientiously, and clearly sets us on a path to doing this.

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Report from the Research Institute for Waldorf Education and Waldorf Publications



Patrice Maynard

Director of Publications and Development

Big news for both RIWE and Waldorf Publications is the completion of the Survey of Waldorf Graduates, analyzed and compared with data from the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and, in some cases, data from U.S. government statistics on employment and education. The final, completed work has been submitted for publication and is likely to be issued in book form during this season of Waldorf100, celebrating a century of success in the Waldorf educational movement. The final report and the book have an intriguing title: *Into the World: How Waldorf Graduates Fare after High School*. A summary of this research is featured in this issue of the *Research Bulletin*. Each AWSNA-recognized Waldorf school in North America will receive a copy of the book, once published, through their Book Bank participation. Keep an eye out for its final published glory!

Another contribution to Waldorf100 from RIWE was just completed in its “Screen-Free September” project with participants from around the world. Our first participant came from Croatia. In the European Union, Eliant, a group campaigning to eliminate screens from the lives of children, and Witten University in Germany asked to help through a pre-and post-survey of our “Screen Free-ers” to add to their ongoing study of the impact of screens on the lives of children and adults. At the offices of Waldorf Publications, we instituted practices—in a business that prints, ships, edits, tracks, and depends upon the Internet for all its work—to limit our screen usage by an hour-and-a-half during the day and after hours. No one used a screen for work from home after 4 p.m. each weekday and on weekends. We noticed that moods improved, days went more quickly, and we all felt squeezed by not having enough time for all that we do. Consciousness of how very much time we spend online was made abundantly clear. We still are processing the experience for decisions about “life after Screen-Free September.”

Douglas Gerwin, Executive Director of RIWE, was part of the Waldorf100 celebrations in Stuttgart on September 7, the very day the first Waldorf school celebrated its official opening. He then went on to Berlin for an international festival of Waldorf education that brought to the German capital performing troupes of Waldorf students from as far away as Australia, China, Japan,

and Namibia. Thousands joined both celebrations which started early each day and continued late into the night. The Lord Mayor of Stuttgart, addressing the Waldorf assembly in his city, spoke of Waldorf education as the “yeast” that could serve to leaven the whole of education in his country.

Also at the Stuttgart event were authors of some of the key books produced by Waldorf Publications of late, in addition to the *Into the World* contribution. Among them was Sophia Christine Murphy, granddaughter of Emil Molt, the founder of the first Waldorf school who, in collaboration with Rudolf Steiner, built up the first school. She took with her copies of her new book from Waldorf Publications, *Emil & Berta*, based on the diaries of her grandfather and her own recollections of gratitude for the very existence of Waldorf education. Nana Göbel, Executive Director of the *Freunde der Erziehungskunst*, was present both in Stuttgart and Berlin, where her offices are located. Her new book, describing the colorful history of these 100 first years of Waldorf education, has been published in German and is in the process of being translated into English by Jan Kees Saltet under the auspices of Waldorf Publications. Volume I of this epic history should be available by the end of the year.

Jan Kees Saltet has also translated twelve brief essays by Tomas Zdravil, a leader of the Waldorf teacher training seminar in Stuttgart, who took it upon himself to create living vignettes of the very first Waldorf teachers. Compiled now in book form, these biographical sketches catch the spirit of the first Waldorf school and the enormity of the task these heroic first teachers accepted when they answered, “Yes,” to Rudolf Steiner’s request to teach in his revolutionary new school located in a converted restaurant on the Uhlandshöhe bluff overlooking the center of Stuttgart.

Next in line for research projects is a new survey, this time of Waldorf school parents. The purpose of this survey, to identify the power of Waldorf education to influence parental changes in lifestyle, family practices, personal philosophy, worldview, approach to technology, and vacationing choices.

Report from the Online Waldorf Library

Marianne Alsop
OWL site Administrator

The RIWE's springtime colloquium, held in Amherst last May in conjunction with the Institute's annual board of trustees meeting, focused on the health-bearing strength of observational science as antidote to the effect of excessive usage. Craig and Henrike Holdrege of the Nature Institute led the expanded RIWE board group, including John Barnes of Adonis Press and Melanie Reiser of AWSNA. We investigated our own powers of observation and sensory acumen through exercises and discussed these in light of directives given by Rudolf Steiner concerning the path to reality (not illusion) and the need to allow phenomena to speak to us before we project what we know onto them. John Barnes presented a glimpse into his newly published edition of Wolfgang Schad's long-awaited, two volume *Understanding Mammals* (Adonis Press, 2018). And Douglas Sloan, RIWE board member *emeritus*, offered a summary of his compelling book on Darwinism and our relationship to animals, *The Redemption of the Animals* (SteinerBooks, 2016). Douglas's call for consciousness concerning our animal brethren informed with compassion our discussions. Schad's revised book will be featured in an extended workshop led by Mark Riegner from Prescott College at AWSNA's Waldorf100 teachers conference in June 2020.

The Online Waldorf Library continues to be a positive and effective resource for those interested in Waldorf education in countries all over the world. Our 2018 data indicates 198,500 visitors to the OWL. Although site visits from English-speaking countries predominate, Spanish-speaking site visitors are on the increase. Interestingly, in 2018 the OWL saw the same number of site visits from Kenya as from Switzerland... 393 visits from each country! Djibouti accounted for just one site visitor and the United States for 47,000.

We are fortunate to be able to offer an ever-expanding number of eBooks, available in PDF format, which can be accessed by downloading free software from Adobe Reader.

eBooks added since the Fall of 2018, in English, include:

- *Dancing Hand—Trotting Pony* by Wilma Ellersiek
- *Research Institute for Waldorf Education issue on Technology*
- *The World of Fairy Tales* by Daniel Udo de Haas
- *Walking with Our Children* by Nancy Blanning
- *The Mood of the Fifth*, edited by Nancy Foster
- *Merrily We Sing* by Ilian Willwerth
- *Toymaking* by Gun Lee Blue
- *Love as the Source of Education: The Life Work of Helmut von Kügelgen*, edited by Susan Howard

eBooks added in Spanish include:

- *Creando un Círculo de Liderazgo Espiritual Colaborativo*, edited by Roberto Trostli
- *El Desarrollo infantil Los primeros siete años*, WECAN, Gateways Series #3
- *Una bienvenida cálida y apacible: Niños de cero a tres años*, WECAN, Gateways Series #5

New articles in Spanish are posted every month and can be accessed from the Home page and clicking on *Artículos en Español*.

As always, back issues of the *Research Bulletin, Gateways* (Waldorf Early Childhood Assn.), *Pedagogical Section/Rundbrief* and a number of other international publications are available online in our Journals section.

The Online Waldorf Library welcomes your questions and we are happy to help you with your research projects.

**Visit the Online Waldorf Library at
www.waldorflibrary.org**

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About the Research Institute for Waldorf Education

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

The Research Institute supports projects dealing with essential contemporary educational issues such as computers and the effects of media on children, alternatives to standardized testing, physical health and psychological well-being of students, science teaching with a phenomenological approach, the role of the arts in education, and the philosophical underpinnings of Waldorf education.

As a sponsor of colloquia and conferences, the Research Institute brings together educators, psychologists, physicians, and social scientists for discussions on current issues related to education. RIWE publishes a *Research Bulletin* twice a year and prepares educational resources, including collections of eBooks and articles (a growing number of them newly translated into Spanish). Many of these publications are available without charge on the website of the Online Waldorf Library (OWL), a virtual library created and managed by the Research Institute: www.waldorflibrary.org.

In 2013 the Research Institute took over the publications arm of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) and re-branded it as Waldorf Publications. It includes resources for teachers and administrators, readers and children's books, collections of plays and poetry, science materials and kits, science and math newsletters, inspirational essays, proceedings of colloquia, and a range of publicity materials about Waldorf education. It also carries books published by the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN) and the Pedagogical Section Council (PSC) of the School for Spiritual Science, as well as AWSNA's twice-yearly magazine *Renewal*.

As an initiative working on behalf of the Waldorf movement, the Research Institute receives support and guidance from the PSC and financial support through the following organizations:

- Astoria-Stiftung
- Foundation for Rudolf Steiner Books
- Freunde der Erziehungskunst
- Grace Charitable Foundation
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- Waldorf Curriculum Fund
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AL: Alabama Waldorf School **AK:** Anchorage Waldorf School **AZ:** Tucson Waldorf School **CA:** Bay Area Center for Waldorf Teacher Training · Berkeley Rose Waldorf School · Camellia Waldorf School · Cedar Springs Waldorf School · Davis Waldorf School · East Bay Waldorf School · Highland Hall Waldorf School · Live Oak Waldorf School · Maple Village Waldorf School · Marin Waldorf School · Pasadena Waldorf School · Sacramento Waldorf School · San Francisco Waldorf School · Sanderling Waldorf School · Santa Cruz Waldorf School · Sierra Waldorf School · Summerfield Waldorf School & Farm · Valley Waldorf City School · Waldorf Institute of Southern California · Waldorf School of Mendocino County · Waldorf School of Orange County · Waldorf School of San Diego · Waldorf School of Santa Barbara · Waldorf School of the Peninsula · Westside Waldorf School **CO:** Boulder Valley Waldorf School · Denver Waldorf School · Shining Mountain Waldorf School · Tara Performing Arts High School · Waldorf School on the Roaring Fork **CT:** Housatonic Valley Waldorf School **FL:** Heart Pine School · Sea Star School · Suncoast Waldorf School **GA:** Academe of the Oaks · Waldorf School of Atlanta **HI:** Haleakala Waldorf School · Honolulu Waldorf School · Malamalama Waldorf School **ID:** Sandpoint Waldorf School **IL:** Arcturus Rudolf Steiner Education Program · Chicago Waldorf School · Da Vinci Waldorf School · Four Winds Waldorf School · Urban Prairie Waldorf School **KS:** Prairie Moon Waldorf School **KY:** Waldorf School of Louisville **LA:** Waldorf School of New Orleans **MA:** Ashwood Waldorf School · The Bay School · Maine Coast Waldorf School · Seacoast Waldorf School **MD:** Waldorf School of Baltimore · Washington Waldorf School **MA:** Berkshire Waldorf High School · Great Barrington Rudolf Steiner School · Hartsbrook School · Waldorf High School of Massachusetts Bay · Waldorf School of Cape Cod · The Waldorf School of Lexington · Waldorf School at Moraine Farm **MI:** Detroit Waldorf School · Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor **MN:** City of Lakes Waldorf School · Minnesota Waldorf School **MO:** The Waldorf School of St. Louis **NV:** Nevada Sage Waldorf School **NH:** Center for Anthroposophy · High Mowing School · Monadnock Waldorf School · White Mountain Waldorf School **NJ:** Waldorf School of Princeton **NM:** Santa Fe Waldorf School **NY:** Alkion Center · Aurora Waldorf School · Brooklyn Waldorf School · Green Meadow Waldorf School · Hawthorne Valley School · Ithaca Waldorf School · Lakeside School at Black Kettle Farm · Mountain Laurel Waldorf School · The Otto Specht School · Primrose Hill School · Rudolf Steiner School of New York City · Sunbridge Institute · Waldorf School of Garden City · Waldorf School of Saratoga Springs **NC:** Emerson Waldorf School **OH:** Cincinnati Waldorf School · Spring Garden Waldorf School **OR:** Cedarwood Waldorf School · Corvallis Waldorf School · Eugene Waldorf School · Portland Waldorf School · Shining Star Waldorf School · The Siskiyou School · Swallowtail Waldorf School and Farm · Waldorf School of Bend · Waldorf Teacher Education Eugene **PA:** Camphill Special School · Kimberton Waldorf School · River Valley Waldorf School · Susquehanna Waldorf School · Waldorf School of Philadelphia · Waldorf School of Pittsburgh **PR:** Escuela Micael **RI:** Meadowbrook Waldorf School **SD:** Lakota Waldorf School **TN:** Linden Waldorf School **TX:** Austin Waldorf School **VT:** Lake Champlain Waldorf School · Orchard Valley Waldorf School · Upper Valley Waldorf School **VA:** Charlottesville Waldorf School · Potomac Crescent Waldorf School · Richmond Waldorf School **WA:** Bright Water School · Madrona School · Olympia Waldorf School · Seattle Waldorf School · Sound Circle Center · Sunfield Waldorf School & Biodynamic Farm · Tacoma Waldorf School · Whatcom Hills Waldorf School · Whidbey Island Waldorf School **WI:** Great Lakes Waldorf Institute · The Madison Waldorf School · Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School · Prairie Hill Waldorf School · Tamarack Waldorf School · Youth Initiative High School ·

Canada

ALBERTA: Calgary Waldorf School · Waldorf Independent School of Edmonton **BRITISH COLUMBIA:** Cedar Bridge School · Kelowna Waldorf School · Nelson Waldorf School · Saltwater School · Squamish Waldorf School · Sunrise Waldorf School · Vancouver Waldorf School · West Coast Institute for Studies in Anthroposophy · Whistler Waldorf School **NOVA SCOTIA:** South Shore Waldorf School **ONTARIO:** Halton Waldorf School · London Waldorf School · Mulberry Waldorf School · Rudolf Steiner Centre Toronto · Toronto Waldorf School · Trillium Waldorf School · Waldorf Academy **QUÉBEC:** École Imagine · École Rudolf Steiner de Montréal · Institut Rudolf Steiner au Québec ·

México

AGUA SCALIENTES: Colegio Waldorf Amanecer **GUANAJUATO:** Colegio Yeccan Waldorf **JALISCO:** Waldorf de Guadalajara **MORELOS:** Centro de Desarrollo Antroposofico · Escuela Waldorf de Cuernavaca **OAXACA:** Papalotes Oaxaca · Papalotes Puerto Escondido **PUEBLA:** Escuela Raíces Iniciativa Waldorf Puebla **QUERÉTARO:** Escuela Libre Lila K'erendarhu **QUINTANA ROO:** Ak Lu'um Waldorf School · Del Mar Waldorf Initiative Cancun · Ximbal · Iniciativa Waldorf Cancun **STATE of MÉXICO:** Colegio Inlakesh ·

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