A CRITIQUE OF SCHOOLING

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PROLOGUE

John Dewey (1910), in his essay on "The Influence of Darwinism on Philosophy", wrote:

"... the conviction persists - though history shows it to be a hallucination - that all the questions that the human mind has asked are questions that can be answered in terms of the alternatives that the questions themselves present. But in fact, intellectual progress usually occurs through sheer abandonment of questions together with both of the alternatives they assume - an abandonment that results from their decreasing vitality and change of urgent interest. We do not solve them: we get over them. Old questions are solved by disappearing, evaporating, while new questions corresponding to the changed attitude of endeavour and preference take their place."

One of the questions which is gaining urgency and interest at the present time is that of the desirability of our current system of schooling. The discussion in the chapters which follow considers some of the criticisms made and glances at change which might escape these. Education, at either a theoretical or a more practical level, is not at a stage where categorical positions can be assumed. There are a vast number of factors which preclude simple answers. As Dewey says, the problems and tentative solutions of today are unlikely to retain pertinence tomorrow. Answers to the questions "why include this or that in schooling?" and "why conduct schooling in this way or that?" are tentative, dynamic, always incomplete. Despite this, a position does need to be assumed, some contents and some systems do need to be adopted. Because of the complexity of justification in a fairly finite situation and the variables that influence it, there are a number of equally justifiable (or equally unjustifiable) ways of reacting. Men construe the universe

differently and construct different structures of schooling in accord with their perspective to meet an objectively (sic) similar situation. Therefore the only fruitful and honest kind of schooling system is one which nurtures hetereogeneity.

Theories of schooling are concerned with how a learner is to come to know. They must adopt some definition of what it means "to know", as well as some resolutioh of questions concerning (1) the relation between knowing and doing and (2) the structure of knowledge. (Hedegard, 1967, p. 4). These are epistemological questions. Thus, theories of schooling presuppose epistemological positions. As this is so, any theory of schooling rests upon the resolution of some metaphysical issues. In particular a theory of schooling must postulate that knowledge of these things is desirable because knowledge of these things is conducive to certain desirable outcomes. The desirability asserted is justifiable on metaphysical, aesthetic, or ethical grounds. Such grounds are debatable and opposite conclusions are possible and supportable. This lack of absolutism leads on logically to a lack of absolutism in schooling. In a highly diverse and complex society metaphysical, aestetic, and ethical criteria are likewise complex and diverse. It follows that schooling should reflect this. Any system of a monolithic, invariant kind is inappropriate.

One of the ambiguities which must be lived with in education is that we just do not know the answers to many basic questions. How does learning occur? How can learning be facilitated? Are social organisations such as schools related to learning? Do children learn best with or without the help of adults? What might "learn best" mean

anyway?   Thus, arguments for (and against) change in education are still
hypotheses, are still embedded in belief about metaphysical, aesthetic,
ethical, and other subjective choices.   It is therefore the case that
advocates for or against certain systems of schooling are in fact saying
"this or that is different and I prefer them".

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CHAPTER ONE

At one time compulsory schooling was a social gain.   On the
one hand children were released from economic exploitation and servitude.
On the other they were to be released from the bondage of ignorance, and
initiated into the lush areas of knowledge which had been previously
reserved for a privileged few.   Social change does occur, however, and
changes in society and people can render formerly useful social arrange-
ments inappropriate.   The simple message contained in the discussion
below is that 'schooling', as currently conceived and implemented is a
pernicious anachronism.   The shadow of schooling has, according to a
number of commentators, cast an unhealthy darkness over increasing
numbers of persons.   Schooling, to them, produces the alienated, the
intellectually rigid, the inadequate, the non-self-actualising, the
fearful, the recipients of 'trained incapacity'.

Farber (1969)[1] presents a passionate portrayal of the plight
of the pupil within the jaws of schooling.   He asserts that schooling
does not liberate, rather it encapsulates and represses.   To him
schooling does not keep abreast of social change, it tenaciously and
viciously attempts to press children into moulds which are no longer
appropriate.   Also, it is not only the outmoded content and objectives
which are alone corrosive, but the mode of functioning too.

> "School is where you let the dying society put its trip on
> you.   Our schools may seem useful: to make children into
> doctors, sociologists, engineers - to discover things.
> But they're poisonous as well.   They exploit and enslave
> students; they petrify society; they make democracy

unlikely.   It's not <u>what</u> you're taught that does the harm
but <u>how</u> you're taught.   Our schools teach you by pushing
you around, by stealing your will and your sense of power,
by making timid, square apathetic slaves out of you -
authority addicts."(2)

Farber's contention does seem to fit the New Zealand scene with
considerable veracity.   From pre-school to the tertiary level our
schooling does seem to achieve this.   The organisation of schooling,
its administration, its content, its selection procedures, its rewards
and incentives are indeed strongly biased in favour of those pupils who
become 'hooked' on authority.

Farber's depiction of the character of the venue for schooling
sounds all too familiar:

"The medium in school truly is the message.   And the message
is, above all, coercive.   You're forced to attend.   The
subjects are required.   You <u>have</u> to do homework.   You
must observe school rules.   And throughout, you're bullied
into docility and submissiveness ... what we do learn very
well, thanks to the method, is to accept choices that have
been made for us.   Which rule they make you follow is less
important than the fact that there are rules. ... I no
longer dismiss such rules as merely pointless.   The very
point of such rules is their pointlessness..."(3)

This description could well be of the free, compulsory, and
secular creature which purveys 'schooling' in New Zealand.   Rules and
prohibitions abound in our schools.   Schooling almost deifies "thou
shalt not".   Children must not eat sweets, wear jewellery, use certain
words or expressions, talk about many topics, display many emotions,
wear clothing of their own choice, decide upon the length or style of
their own hair, skirt, or trousers, choose to attend or not attend
classes which may or may not interest them.   Such rules and the many
others which permeate every thread of schooling's garb could only have,

as Farber suggests, the objective of conformity to choices which others
make.   Standardisation of those whom it exists to serve (sic) seems to
be clearly one of the most urgent concerns of current schooling.   Farber
points to the standardising function:

> "It would be well if we stopped lying about what compulsory
> schooling does for our children.   It temporarily imprisons
> them; it standardises them.   If that's what we want we
> should admit it."(4)

Surely such an admission would be tragic.   Yet Farber's claim
does have about it a disturbing aura of validity.   There does seem to be
still an assumption that 'truth' is to be 'hammered home' through school-
ing, and together with this the belief that any deviation from the 'truth'
is 'error'.   But, "Learning is not something that is done to you."(5)

Farber's The Student as Nigger is strongly, emotively critical
of schooling.   He adopts the view that schooling is primarily effica-
cious in achieving a mode of operating and outcomes which he abhors.
His criticisms seem to be based upon a philosophical-ethical position
which is individualistic, conceives of ideal 'schooling' as a process
which should foster diversity, uniqueness, autonomy, and pleasure in
persons.   This orientation, (to 'do ones own thing') appears to be coming
to permeate many aspects of contemporary society.   It is an orientation,
a philosophical frame of reference which if adopted and applied to
'schooling' in New Zealand must lead to conclusions similar to Farber's
about America.   His criticisms are so basic, so devastating, that agree-
ment with them does not lead to the conclusion that 'schooling' is in need
of repair and over-haul.   Rather it leads to a search for an entirely
new creation, to a 'schooling' which so radically departs from its

ancestor as to be not recognisably one of the same species.

John Holt (1964) has written about schooling in a fashion very similar to Farber. He is especially distressed by the amount of failure which he alleges is experienced by children as they are subjected to schooling.

"Most children in school fail. For a great many this
failure is avowed and absolute."(6)

"They fail because they are afraid, bored, and confused."(7)

Holt is critical of the irrelevant and narrow content of schooling:

"They are bored because the things they are given and told
to do in school are so trivial and so dull."(8)

Like Farber, Holt contends that schooling is carried out in an undesirable atmosphere of fear and tyranny. Waller's 'tribal mentality' seems to both of these writers to be still a very salient feature of schooling. Holt makes the horrifying assertion that:

"Even in the kindest and gentlest of schools children are
afraid, many of them a great deal of the time. This is
a hard fact of life to deal with."(9)

It certainly is a hard fact. Very difficult to condone as being humanly, educationally, ethically, or in any other way justifiable. Similarly it is difficult to feel that any system of 'schooling' which operates thus is worthy of continuance. One of the least desirable of the outcomes of such schooling is pointed out by Holt. He argues that children adapt to this kind of schooling by not thinking, by not responding in an intelligent way to their environment. Instead, they protect themselves by doing the trivial and obeying pointless rules.

Holt's suggestion is that the excessive degree of insecurity which schooling engenders causes children to become greatly concerned with their own safety. They become motivated toward producing those responses which offer the least possibility of threat.

> "Kids in school seem to use a fairly consistent strategy. Even the good students use it all the time; and everybody uses it when they feel under pressure. One way of describing this strategy is that it is answer-centred rather than problem-centred."(10)

> "... our tell 'em and test 'em way of teaching leaves most students increasingly confused, aware that their academic success rests on shaky foundations, and convinced that school is mainly a place where you follow meaningless procedures to get meaningless answers to meaningless questions."(11)

Holt agrees with Farber's condemnation of the dishonesty of much of schooling.

> "We are above all, dishonest about our feelings, and it is this sense of dishonesty of feeling that makes the atmosphere of so many schools unpleasant."(12)

Dexter (1964) is another who denigrates current schooling. He contends that schooling creates 'stupidity'. Like Farber and Holt, he also argues that many features of schooling are undesirable and harmful to children. He is particularly critical of the pressure on all children to exhibit 'normal' characteristics. He questions the compulsory nature of schooling. He finds schooling to contain a large number of deficiencies, and sees the need to search for alternative venues.

> "... there has been an overemphasis in our society on certain forms of 'normal' intellectual achievement or, at the very least, there is a considerable cost in human happiness and efficiency to be debited against the positive values we owe to widespread compulsory education."(13)

"Why and how does it happen that we place such emphasis upon
schooling and 'normal intellectual achievement?' So much
emphasis indeed that we force a great many people who
clearly find it difficult, painful, and unrewarding - to
sit through years of schooling."(14)

Dexter, too, suggests that schooling places pupils in the
undesirable position of having to learn the strategy of giving appro-
priate and acceptable responses, rather than exploring things in a
manner meaningful to them. The pupils, he says, learn to take pains and
not to be treated as stupid. To avoid this they learn to pay attention
to what the teacher wants, and to give the teacher the desired answers,
regardless of whether they understand why the teacher regards them as
right.

Dexter suggests that schooling is an aspect of society which is
almost beyond scrutiny and criticism.

"To suggest that schooling is not universally valuable,
that it may even at its best as we know it, do a good deal
of harm to some people is to raise questions about one of
the most profoundly held beliefs of society."(15)

Despite the difficulties contained in subjecting schooling to the inquiry
and dissection which he suggests, Dexter is as convinced as Farber and
Holt that such inquiry and dissection is of critical importance. The
similarity of the perspectives of these three writers is striking. The
insistent message common to them is that schooling as it now exists is
something of a monstrosity, and should be exterminated, or at most
permitted to exist only in some appropriate mutant form.

Furth (1970) a leading interpreter of Piaget's theories, also
finds present schooling to be inadequate. He argues for schooling which
will (unlike present schooling) provide conditions which optimise

children's thinking abilities.   Furth is convinced that the curricula, methods and organisations of current schooling are inadequate.   He does not consider that the deficiencies can be righted merely by minor changes or revisions.

> "Indisputably, what we need is something better, something radically different."(16)

> "We need a new philosophy that does not ameliorate or add to new structures.   We must start from the ground up in a professional, rational manner and ask ourselves what kind of school is psychologically and socially suitable for children of today."(17)

Furth is especially critical of the way in which the schooling he attacks fails to provide the kinds of stimulation and environment suited to the intrinsic functioning of children's knowing processes.

> "Here is the essence of the tragedy.   Our schooling does not merely affect the intellect in an adverse manner by leaving it undernourished;   more important it fails to use the motivational forces which are present in any five and six year old child."(18)

Adams and Biddle (1970) approach the 'realities' of teaching with the circumspection and methodology deemed seemly by 'science'. Despite this their evaluative biases sometimes show.   It is interesting to find that their more orthodox empirically-based approach leads them toward very similar conclusions to the more hortative writers cited above. Adams and Biddle also report that schooling seems to entail the use of trivia for the suppression of individuality.

> "Once within the boundaries of the classroom the 'unnatural-ness' of the social situation is apparent.   For here in unbalanced distribution are a number of children often neatly confined within a limited age range, and one adult who asserts power far beyond the limits that reason might (democratically) lead one to expect."(19)

The confinement, compulsorily, of such a large percentage of children for years in this non-democratic situation is surely a grave defect of contemprary schooling.   Not only is our society a democratic one by tradition, but there is in current society, a strong surge toward accep- tance of individuality.   Schooling which runs counter to this trend is not only inappropriate, but dangerous.   Adams and Biddle are not impressed with the outcomes of schooling, as they found them.

> "We have here a system - characterised by some confusion
> - which tries bravely to be 'all things to all pupils'
> but which often only succeeds in stressing examinable
> results which are subsequently, and sometimes naively
> equated with 'education'."(20)

Like all of the writers above, Adams and Biddle are perturbed by the constrictiveness, the suppression in schooling.   They found that idiosyncratic individualism is frowned upon, and that the social behavi- ours allowed to be manifest in the classroom are very limited.

> "What constitutes approved social behaviour in the classroom?
> An observer might be excused if he imagined that quietness
> and orderly behaviour were predominant values."(21)

> "Assuming then, that quietness, orderly behaviour, waiting
> and teacher dominance appear to be values reflected in
> today's classroom, what ideal conditions would permit
> education rather than training to be pursued?"(22)

Is schooling to be concerned with education or with training? R.S. Peters (1967) and Freyberg (1967) argue that education occurs in open-ended rather than closed systems.   The suggestion that 'schooling' should be concerned with 'education' rather than 'training' is, in the view of this writer, entirely persuasive.   It is thus very disturbing to find that schooling functions in a manner which at the very least makes education unlikely.

There seem to be sufficient grounds upon which to postulate a large discrepancy, a gap. This gap reveals a very great disparity between the ritualised incantations (respect for individuality, honesty, tolerance of diversity and multi-possibility) of the 'educationists' - and the tradition-bound autocratic, rigid, answer-centred practices of schooling. At least two reactions are possible in the face of this gaping dictotomy. Firstly, it could be argued that the incantations of the educationists are ill-founded and of dubious merit, whilst the practices of schooling are worthwhile and valid. Secondly, it could be argued that the educationists' incantations are viable, valid and valuable, that a schooling which so clearly functions in opposition to them is not only de-educational but undesirable and unworthy of continuance. The latter seems more probable.

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Apart from the external criticism already levelled at 'schooling' there are internal criticisms which it has to face. Frymier (1969) argues that changes instigated within schooling have not been shown to have produced any significant difference in outcome. He groups his review of previous attempts at change under the headings of:

(1)   Content Hypotheses
(2)   Organisational Hypotheses
(3)   Methodological Hypotheses.

He asks:

"Granting that these many changes have occurred, have they
made any difference?   Were the changes significant in
any way?"(23)

and answers:

> "One can only conclude that many of the hypotheses for
> educational change have failed."(24)

In his view at least the four suggestions below may be advanced
to account for these failures.

(1)   The wrong questions were asked.

(2)   The wrong variables were manipulated.

(3)   The wrong assumptions were made.

(4)   The total system has a fundamental flaw.

He opts for the fourth.

> "What is said here is quite straightforward: the educational
> system must be changed."(25)

Frymier argues that schooling is inadequate because incomplete.
Conceptually, he says, schooling is missing a vital element.   He alleges
that there is no formal or informally constituted group to judge the
effectiveness of the system at all:

> "The evaluating phase of the education system is simply
> a void --- The result is stagnation, confusion, and chaotic
> efforts all rolled into one --- the fact of the matter is
> that education is based upon untested postulates rather
> than testable hypotheses."(26)

Frymier points to systemic defects in schooling, and like the
writers above suggests that there is a need for new schooling systems.
He, too, expresses concern at the limited attention given to the needs of
children:

> "Many of the decisions which occur in education do not relate
> to students at all.   Rather they pertain to 'teacher
> welfare' or 'administrative authority' or 'school-board
> prerogative' or 'decreased cost of operation' or some other
> concern.   It cannot be assumed that the basic purpose of

education is to help students to learn. ..."(27)

Stephens (1967) is more relaxed and less vituperative in his evaluation of schooling. He argues that schooling may simply be redundant - an appendage to the learning of children which is traditional, not pertinent. He ascribes the constancy of children's achievement under diverse conditions of schooling to inherent and spontaneous tendencies to learn and understand.

> "The essential features of education may reside not in the programme itself but in a few primitive forces which always accompany the programme. These processes, like those involved in the germination of seeds, are so humble and automatic that they demand little attention. Yet they may provide the basic mechanisms on which all educational activities depend."(28)

Stephens quotes an extensive amount of research which points to the constancy of schooling. He supports his contention by discussing research on variations of facilities, administration, attendance, television versus classroom instruction, independent study, size of class, amount of time spent on study, ability grouping. His impressive array of evidence lends persuasive force to his view that the outcome of schooling is constant. The ubiquity of schooling and the belief in its importance makes Stephens contention that schooling may be adventitious to learning highly provocative. The need for current schooling, or any other, to be of demonstrable value if it is to be justified, is one of the basic issues raised. Stephens himself notes the deficiencies here:

> "Regarding the essential underlying mechanisms of schooling, however, we even lack serious speculation, to say nothing of effective evidence."(29)

Researchers into the area of teacher 'effectiveness' seem to

have reached the conclusion that 'effectiveness' is too elusive a creature to be ensnared.   It would seem reasonable to expect that if schooling were an important variable in learning, variations in schooling would produce differences.   As yet this does not seem to be shown to be so. Flanders (1963) observes that:

> "The scientific study of teaching is so immature that, at this time, a particular pattern of teaching cannot be advocated as the most successful."(30)

> Biddle and Ellena (1963) likewise:

> "... the problem of teacher effectiveness is so complex that no one today knows what The Competent Teacher is ..."(31)

> Gage (1968):

> "Research on teaching has yielded relatively few solid and useable results ... until very recently the assumption that teachers were helpful or even necessary for many important kinds of learning that society wanted to promote went unchallenged."(32)

Internally, then, schooling is not able to produce proof of its own efficacy.

SUMMARY:

This chapter has set out the basic thesis of this critical examination of 'schooling'.   The assertions of Farber, Holt, Furth, Dexter and Adams and Biddle were briefly indicated to set out some of the grounds upon which schooling can be criticised.   In the latter section, the views of Frymier on the systemic inadequacy, and of Stephens on the probable redundancy of schooling, indicate criticism of a different kind.

The lack of anything conclusive about the effectiveness of schooling adds fuel to the critical blaze.   Some tentative assertions emerge:

1. Schooling has an, as yet, unproven role in the attainment of its own goals.

2. Schooling could be an unnecessary structure which leaves undisturbed some basic, inherent learning propensity.

3. Commentators view with alarm the outcomes which they see emanating from schooling.

4. The process of schooling is in need of searching analysis and review.

5. Such analysis would probably find current schooling to be inappropriate and deserving of reconstruction.

6. The schooling/education of people needs to be re-cast within venues of some radically new kind.

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CHAPTER TWO

Few would be likely to object to the suggestion that the
optimum cognitive development of children should be one of the central
outcomes of schooling.   In the discussion below the viewpoint that
schooling of the current kind is unlikely to achieve this outcome is
advanced.

Piaget's approach to the nature of knowledge and its develop-
ment is widely accepted and of increasing import to educational theory.
As Furth (1969) describes, Piaget has adopted an inter-actional or
constructivist theory of knowing.   Biological growth and the development
of intelligence are not something added to some given organism, knowledge
is not injected from the outside, but corresponds to the nature of the
organism.

> "A reaction of an organism is, therefore, not merely a
> response to an outside stimulation, but is always and at
> all levels the response of the underlying structure within
> the organism."(1)

Thus, for Piaget, behaviour at all levels is characterised by
construction.   A significant part of this construction derives from the
intrinsic structures of the behaving organism.   This structuring aspect
is what is meant by knowing behaviour.   Thus each individual is an open,
active, self-regulating system, and intellectual activity is activity in
the creative sense of the term.

> "Piaget insists on the simple statement that thinking _is_
> action and not merely for action."(2)

Knowing is an active, not a passive matter:

"Knowledge does not merely derive from the taking in of
external data; the organism in interacting with the
environment transforms or constructs external reality
into an object of knowledge."(3)

"The term 'adaptation' introduces at once the fruitful
notion that organism and environment are two inter-
locking systems."(4)

If knowing is an open, active, self-regulating process; if
thinking is action and intellectual activity creative activity; if
knowledge does not derive from the passive ingestion of external data -
what of schooling? Piaget's theory of knowledge places the evolution of
knowledge very much under the control of the knower. Thus schooling
would seem to need to be carried out in a manner which recognises this
aspect of knowing; that is, a schooling which recognises the active,
constructing, idiosyncratic nature of knowing. As has been suggested
above, though, schooling does not seem to recognise this at all.
Instead an acceptance of a position which is the converse of Piaget's
appears to prevail. Knowledge is regarded as an ingestion of data
external to the knower.

Furth (1970) is particularly critical of the early emphasis
upon formal, highly symbolic activities. Specifically, he alleges that
pressures upon children to read and write interfere with the development
of their thinking.

"A school that in the earliest grades focuses primarily
on reading cannot also focus on thinking. It must choose
to foster one or the other. Historically it has chosen
reading."(5)

"Piaget's theory of operative intelligence suggests that
reading verbal material cannot be a challenging operative
activity until the child's intelligence is close to formal
operations intelligence."(6)

Furth advocates a 'school for thinking'; a type of schooling which, unlike the present system, would optimise the self-regulating, open-ended and creative aspects of the knowing process.

"... the purpose of the school for thinking, therefore, is to provide the setting in which the child's natural intelligence can develop to the fullest."(7)

This type of schooling would avoid the 'pouring in' orientation of present schooling, even as far as value-positions are concerned.

"... articulation of value judgements (like definitions) belongs to the end of a person's development, not at the beginning. We strive to open the discussion, particularly among peers, so that the child begins to question and work on value judgements that will eventually be his."(8)

Furth also suggests that an acceptance of the view that thought is action leads to a broader conception of the locus of schooling:

"Excursions out of the classroom should be an ordinary part of the school day."(9)

Also that the rigid blanket curriculum of schooling is not in accord with a knowing process that resides in a great diversity of constructed cognitive structures:

"The school for thinking would not be tied to any fixed curriculum. Think of the freedom and initiative that could result from this fortunate condition."(10)

Think of the suppression and lack of initiative that could result from the present unfortunate conditions!

Ginsberg and Opper (1969) have produced a useful account of what they consider to be the educational implications of Piagetian

theory. Firstly, they emphasise the difference between the thinking processes of adults and children.

> "The young child is quite different from the adult in several ways; in methods of approaching reality in the ensuing views of the world and in the uses of language."(11)

Like Furth, these writers emphasise the link between action - thinking - schooling:

> "Perhaps the most important single proposition that the educator can derive from Piaget's work and thus use in the classroom, is that children, especially young ones, learn best from concrete activities."(12)

Ginsberg and Opper suggest that as learning occurs through the child's activity, the major task of schooling is to provide for the child a wide variety of potentially interesting materials on which the child may act. As they state, this view would require a considerable re-organisation of schooling as it now exists.

> "Acceptance of the principle of active learning requires a considerable reorientation of beliefs of education. Teachers (and the public at large) usually consider the aim of education is to impart knowledge of certain types. According to Piaget's theories, this conception is in error for several reasons. First, teachers can in fact impart or teach very little. It is true that they can get the child to say certain things, but these verbalisations often indicate little in the way of real understanding. Second, it is seldom legitimate to think of knowledge as a thing which can be transmitted. Certainly the child needs to learn some facts, and these may be considered things. But often the child does not learn facts if the teacher transmits them, the child must discover them himself. Also, facts are but a small portion of real knowledge. True understanding involves action, on both the motoric and intellectual levels."(13)

They also explore Piaget's notion that knowledge is acquired in a self-regulated fashion. They point to the superiority of self-controlled learning, and the implications of this for schooling. The

child, they say, is more likely to modify his cognitive structure in a
constructive way when he controls his own learning than when methods of
social transmission (teaching) are employed.

> "These principles, if taken seriously, should lead to extensive
> changes in classroom practice."(14)

> "Consequently, it is quite safe to permit the child to
> structure his own learning. The danger arises precisely
> when the schools attempt to perform the task for him."(15)

> "What the student needs then is not formal teaching, but
> an opportunity to learn."(16)

The contribution of social interaction to knowledge is also
emphasised:

> "Another type of experience leading to understanding of the
> environment is social experiences, or interaction with other
> persons, be they peers or adult."(17)

The implication of Piaget's view is that social interaction
should play a significant part in the classroom, say Ginsberg and Opper.
Children should talk with one another. They should converse, share
experience and argue. It is hard to see, they say, why teachers should
force the child to be quiet, when the results seem to be only an authori-
tarian situation and extreme boredom. Ginsberg and Opper consider that
Piaget's theory points to the serious inadequacy of traditional schooling,
especially in the early years of school.

> "By 'traditional' methods of instruction, we mean cases in
> which the teacher uses a lesson plan to direct the students
> through a given sequence of material; attempts to transmit
> the material to the students by means of lectures and other
> verbal explanations; forces all students to cover essentially
> the same lessons; and employs a textbook as a basic medium
> for instruction. Under such an arrangement, the students
> have fixed positions in a classroom; talk to one another only
> at the risk of punishment; are required to listen to the
> teacher; must study the material which the teacher feels is
> necessary to study; and must try to learn from books."(18)

An admirable description of current schooling! Ginsberg and Opper suggest four erroneous assumptions about the nature of children and their learning which have been wrongly made in traditional schooling.

1. That children of a given age level should learn essentially the same material.

2. That children learn through verbal explanation on the part of the teacher or through written exposition in books.

3. That if the students were given a greater degree of control over learning, that is, if they were allowed to select what is to be learned and the ways in which it is to be learned, then they would learn little.

4. That uncontrolled talking is disruptive to the educational process.

Piagetian theory, then, <u>does not</u> provide a justification for the present system of schooling. It does not justify the verbalism, the passivity, the insistence upon 'correct' answers and behaviours, the restrictions upon choice and individuality, the rigidity. Instead the current prominence of Piagetian theory is an implicit condemnation of our schooling. Such condemnation must prompt those educators who accept optimum cognitive development as a valid goal for schooling to look toward either profound revision or else total abolition of so defective a system.

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Harvey, Hunt and Schroder (1961) have also looked at cognitive development and the implications of such development for schooling. They suggest that conceptual development progresses from a concrete pole to a more abstract pole.

"We assume that development represents progression toward greater abstractness in the concrete - abstract dimension, which results in modification in the structural nature of the subject - object ties."(19)

In their view, the abstract pole is qualitatively different:

"Thus, as progressive development occurs, the person orders the world relativeistically and less stereotypically.   In other words he operates more in terms of multiple alternatives (within a more complex dimensionalised space) rather than in terms of black-white categories."(20)

Not only is this pole different, but also highly desirable:

"... we believe that abstract conceptual structure and its associated creativity, stress tolerance, and flexibility is a desirable adaptive, valuable state."(21)

Because they regard this to be so valuable, they are convinced that the attainment of abstract conceptual structures should be the raison d'etre of schooling.

"The goal of education in a democratic society such as ours is (or should be) to produce more abstract conceptual structures. Educational procedures therefore aim not only to induce progression to the next abstract stage when such progressive leaps are appropriate, but also to maintain sufficient openness to progression so that closedness and arrestation do not occur."(22)

The function of schooling is seen by Harvey, Hunt and Schroder to be that of maximising openness and inducing progression toward abstract functioning.   It is not the task of the agents of schooling (teachers) to teach the child the right and wrong responses, but to programme the

environment so that the child can discover things for himself. Effective schooling as they view it, is reflected not in how much the child knows, but how he uses what he knows. They are critical of current schooling practices.

> "Current educational practices reward Stage One* or Stage Three* functioning by their emphasis upon memorization and inflexible accretion of facts or upon successful interpersonal relationships."(23)

What Harvey, Hunt and Schroder call "training conditions" are important in providing for conceptual development, which is said to proceed through an invariant sequence, where conditions permit. They suggest reasons which explain the limited contribution of current schooling to conceptual progression. Firstly, that a child who is original and creative may not be popular with either peers or his teachers, a circumstance which runs counter to the current value placed on social acceptance. Secondly, he may be a source of embarrassment or threat to the teacher whose adequacy is challenged by questions or knowledge with which the teacher cannot cope. Third, the child who is progressing toward stage four* may not do at all well on many achievement tests that require only a concretistic repetition of statements made in a book or by the teacher. Fourthly, in order to reach stage four, the child must go through stage two (to be inventive and creative one must develop internal control) which may be difficult for a teacher to tolerate and view in perspective.

They also suggest that teachers may not possess the qualities necessary to provide appropriate 'training conditions'.

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* See footnote at end of Chapter.

"Another possible reason for the dearth of informational
training lies in the fact that in order for the training
agent (teacher) to use informational interdependent
training, he must be flexible and capable of abstract
functioning himself. Training for progression requires
that the training agent accept differences between students
in a tolerant fashion, support and encourage the students'
effort to try out new approaches, and reflect reality to
the student."(24)

The rules and prescriptions which abound in our system of
schooling seem to fit directly into Harvey, Hunt and Schroder's
description of the most concrete, most absolutistic stage of unilateral
dependence, and the training conditions to conform to those associated
with stage one - unilateral training. Such conditions are said to be
characterised by external source determination of absolute criterion for
behaviour; rewards and punishments directed toward these ends;
extrinsic evaluation; greater rigidity, immediacy and explicitness in
the way in which the source reacts to the end product of the subject's
behaviour - the criterion is explicitly and directly determined by the
source.

Current schooling does seem to function this way. Children are
subjected to external determination in an absolutistic fashion. Times
and places of attendance, sequence of learning and subjects, styles of
handwriting, dress, vocabulary, forms of address, where and when to play,
what to play, how to relate to and interact with peers, levels of com-
petence, amount of energy invested in 'effort', all of these things and
many other things are, with only a few exceptions absolutistically
determined by the 'training agents'. If this is the case, and it is
asserted that it is the case, then schooling impedes or arrests progres-
sion toward abstract conceptual functioning. Such impediment is not

educational, but a travesty of education. A system of schooling which functions in this way is a social cancer. It grows an increasing number of concretistic absolutistic, externally controlled and centred individuals. It must keep society and social institutions, to say nothing of the individuals themselves at a stunted, poorly developed level.

SUMMARY

In this chapter the theoretical positions of Piaget and Harvey, Hunt and Schroder on cognitive development have been briefly examined, and the import of their views for schooling briefly looked at.

This chapter has been concerned to assert the view that schooling, as currently existent, is antagonistic to optimal cognitive development, that rather than being conducive to cognitive development, schooling constricts and inhibits cognitive development.

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FOOTNOTE

Harvey, Hunt, and Schroder (1961) set out the following
characteristics of the development of conceptual functioning:

(a)   First Stage: Unilateral Dependence.

"Conceptual systems in the first stage are characterised by ex-
ternal control, by the acceptance of externally derived concepts
or schemata not built up through experience with the actual
stimuli and by the absolutistic nature of such concepts.   In a

new or relatively unstructured situation, a person's functioning is maximally anchored in external control and is therefore characterised by seeking external criteria for evaluating his behaviour. --- First stage functioning is assumed to have the following characteristics: things are endowed with power as in magical thought; answers to questions are accepted more in the sense of absolutes (Werne, 1957); thinking is more concrete ('this is the way it is because it is'); behaviour associated with this stage is characterised by a greater immediacy, by greater sensitivity to limits, to what is right and wrong, to what is tolerated and not tolerated, and by greater submissiveness to external control." (p. 94).

(b) Second Stage: Negative Independence.

"Negative independence represents functioning that is negatively related to external constraints. Since such functioning represents a lessening of the importance of external control and the initial budding of internal control, we use the term, negative independence; the term does not imply any necessary hostility or aggression. --- Second stage concepts represent a differentiation from external forces, but such concepts are not highly articulated. However, they are foundations on which informational and interdependent standards can develop and represent the initial form of internal control. --- This stage has been referred to as 'freedom from' authoritarian control and contrasted with positive freedom, independence, or 'freedom to'. (Fromm, 1941)." (p. 98).

(c) Third Stage: Conditional Dependence and Mutuality.

"This stage may be characterised by conditional or 'as if' functioning, in that it involves learning about one's relationship to the environment in a more objective way. --- As third stage concepts emerge, a more objective view of the social environment becomes possible. The person in the third stage views other people less subjectively (that is, less in terms of his own motives and less in terms of absolute standards) and more in terms of other's standards and past experience. His understanding of other points of view, rather than resisting or submitting to them, makes mutual relationships possible. Third stage functioning also involves holding alternate views of the self, of events, and of others simultaneously with a minimum of concern for ambiguity. --- During this stage mutuality, obtaining satisfaction from pleasing others, and empathy replace unilateral functioning, and concern with dominance and power." (p. 101).

(d) <u>Fourth Stage:</u> <u>Interdependence.</u>

> "In the fourth stage mutuality and autonomy are integrated so
> that neither interferes with the other and yet both are
> important.   The nature of subject-object linkages at this level
> is abstract, interdependent and informational. --- Fourth stage
> functioning is characterized by abstract standards developed
> through the exploration of alternative solutions against a
> variety of criteria.   These standards are systematically
> related to the informational consequences of exploration and as
> such are 'tools' not masters, since they are subject to
> change under changing conditions.   Abstract functioning is
> characterised both by the availability of alternate conceptual
> schemata as a basis for relating and by the ability to hold a
> strong view or attitude that does not distort incoming
> information."   (p. 109).

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CHAPTER THREE

Schooling is a mass business.   It tends to be carried out in a factory-like fashion.   The units of 'input' are processed as uniform 'throughput' and extruded as units of 'output'.   In other words individuality, uniqueness, idiosyncratic propensity are not qualities which our present schooling deals in.   Despite this, there is and has been many assertions that uniqueness and idiosyncracy should be the very essence of schooling.

Entwistle (1970) has pointed out that the case for individuali-sation of schooling can be argued on either moral or technical grounds. Some of these arguments will be presented below.   Tyler and Brownell (1962) point to both the ubiquity and desirability of individuality.

"No matter what difficulties they make for schoolmen,
  individual differences are real, inevitable, ineradicable,
  desirable and indeed essential."(1)

They also note that experience expands this variability rather than constricting it:

"According to evidence produced by psychological research,
  experience tends to increase rather than decrease variability.
  Especially is this true in the case of characteristics that
  are related to the more important and significant psycho-
  logical processes."(2)

Tyler and Brownell consider that schooling does too little to cater for individuality.   They express the view that an increased concern for individuality within schooling is highly desirable and suggest that an implementation of this even to a modest extent would have a

startling effect:

> "It is not too rash to say that in most schools individualised
> instruction can be increased as much as 10% or 20% and this
> through the use of one or another of the plans for homo-
> geneous grouping which have been described.   Moreover such
> modest gains - 10% to 20% would be of the greatest practical
> significance and might amount almost to a miracle in
> educational history."(3)

Such a miracle seems to them to be a long way off:

> "As far as schools and instruction are concerned, we have a
> long way to go in making the most of opportunities afforded
> in individual differences."(4)

Carl Rogers (1969) is also concerned at the lack of attention
to individuality in the process of schooling.   He is also critical about
the way in which social change is not allowed to be reflected in change
in the conditions in schooling.   Also his famous[5] repudiation of
teaching as an activity done to other persons is a strong assertion of
the idiosyncratic view of schooling.   He alleges that schooling is
undesirably constrictive:

> "Can the education system as a whole, the most traditional,
> conservative, rigid, bureaucratic institution of our time
> (and I use these words descriptively rather than critically)
> come to grips with the real problems of modern life?   Or
> will it continue to be shackled by the tremendous social
> pressures for conformity and retrogression, added to its
> own traditionalism."(6)

Because he perceives the nature of the world to be so changing, Rogers
feels that processes of change and the ability to cope with change are
the most pertinent goals of schooling:

> "Changingness, a reliance on process rather than upon static
> knowledge, is the only thing that makes any sense as a goal
> for education in the modern world."(7)

> "... if we are to have citizens who can live constructively
> in this kaleidoscopically changing world, we can only have

them if we are willing for them to become self-starting, self-initiating learners."(8)

Rogers suggests that there are assumptions made by those who implement schooling which prevent them from producing these outcomes. These assumptions he says are implicit rather than explicit, and are revealed by what teachers do rather than what they say. They are:

(1) The student cannot be trusted to pursue his own learning.

(2) Presentation equals learning.

(3) The aim of education is to accumulate brick upon brick of factual knowledge.

(4) The truth is known.

(5) Constructive and creative citizens develop from passive learners.

(6) Evaluation is education, and education is evaluation.

Schooling, to Rogers, would be better based upon the assumptions that:

(1) Human beings have a natural potentiality for learning.

(2) Significant learning takes place when the subject matter is perceived by the student as having relevance for his own purposes.

(3) Much significant learning is acquired through doing.

(4) Learning is facilitated when the student participates responsibly in the learning process.

(5) Self-initiated learning, involving the whole learner-feelings as well as intellect - is the most pervasive and lasting.

(6) Creativity in learning is best facilitated when self-

criticism and self-evaluation are primary and evaluation
by others is of secondary importance.

(7)   The most socially useful learning in the modern world
        is the learning of the process of learning, a
        continuing openness to experience, an incorporation
        into oneself of the process of change.

Rogers' assertions are thus argued from both the moral and the technical
perspectives.   He values the 'fully functioning' person as the end
product of development.   He also asserts that learning which is not
'Significant Experiential Learning' is technically ineffective.   On both
grounds he is unhappy with present schooling.

Siegel (1967) edited a book of Contemporary Viewpoints on
Instruction.   In his summary of the views of the contributors to this
book he notes that they also emphasise the idiosyncratic, active, self-
initiated aspects of learning.   As well, the contributors emphasise the
need for very considerable revision of current schooling.   Siegel
summarises their views:

"All of the chapters tend to emphasize the individual learner.
Classes do not learn; students learn.   Therefore, rather
than speaking of 'best' instructional arrangements, many of
the contributors refer to optimal instructional arrangements
for particular learners."(9)

"All of the contributors reject the reactive-passive learner
model, i.e. the learner as a person to whom something is
done."(10)

"Virtually all of the contributors assert the desirability
of multiplicity - both of educational goals and of
instructional means toward the attainment of these goals."(11)

Siegel also notes that the contributors to his book show a general dis-
satisfaction with prevalent educational practices which are class-

directed rather than learner-directed.

"All contributors have envisioned a need for schools that are more complex than the ones in existence."(12)

Schooling, then, as Erickson says in this book, is seen to be properly directed toward:

"The individual learner (is) the final and unique component in all instructional arrangements."(13)

Keuscher (1970) is another who asserts both the need for learning to be idiosyncratic, and for changes in schooling to allow for this.   Variability can be reacted to in several ways, he states. Individual differences can be denied to exist; they can be tolerated as a nuisance and a liability; one can attempt to eradicate them and get all pupils to conform to some arbitrary standard or one can cultivate and nurture differences as an asset and precious resource.   Keuscher is of the opinion that the final alternative is the most desirable, but is also of the opinion that too little is being done currently:

"Unfortunately much more lip service than implementation is given to individualising education.   In fact it is safe to say that nothing is more discussed, yet has less done about it than individualisation of instruction."(14)

Keuscher[15] contends that the following are compelling reasons why schooling _must_ be individualised.

(1) Philosophically it is consistent with the principles upon which our government which spawned our educational system is based.

(2) The very nature of our democratic system and the way it functions demands knowledgeable, thinking participants.

(3) Assembly line methods are tending to produce mass-produced standardised citizens, at the expense of individuality.

(4) As society grows increasingly complex there is a greater demand for diversity of talents and skills.

(5) It is probably the most efficient way to educate if one focusses on the product rather than the process.

Keuscher makes a direct comment on the dichotomy previously mentioned:

"Most teachers and administrators will insist they are individualising instruction. Unfortunately when one gets into classrooms and carefully observes what is going on there, it is quite apparent that while educators generally support the individualisation of instruction, in actuality, they are making little progress in that direction."(16)

Combs (1966) puts forward, in similar vein, an argument in favour of a greatly increased concern for individuality in schooling. His argument is primarily a moral one, based upon his perception of the nature of the social world, and the kinds of skills and persons most pertinent to it.

"Schools which do not produce self-directed citizens have failed everyone - the students, the profession, and the society they are designed to serve."(17)

"Authoritarian schools are as out of date in the world we live in as the horse and buggy."(18)

Combs is critical of much of the curriculum of current school which is, he says, predicated on a concept of learning conceived as acquisition of the right answers. This conceptualisation leads to many practices which Combs does not consider desirable. Preoccupation with right answers; insistence upon conformity; cookbook approaches to learning; overconcern for rules and regulations; preoccupation with

material things instead of people;   the solitary approach to learning;

emphasis upon grades rather than understanding and content rather than

principles.

Goodman (1968) also argues strongly for the placement of

learning in the hands of the learner.   He states that nothing can be

efficiently learned, or, indeed, learned at all unless it meets need,

desire, curiosity, or fantasy.

> "Unless there is a reaching from within, the learning cannot
> become 'second nature' as Aristotle called true learning.
> It seems stupid to decide a priori what the young ought to
> know and then to try to motivate them, instead of letting
> the initiative come from them and putting the relevant
> equipment at their service.   It is false to assert that
> this kind of freedom will not serve society's needs - at
> least the needs that should humanly be served;   freedom is
> the only way toward authentic citizenship and real, rather
> than verbal philosophy."(19)

Goodman whilst convinced of the importance of education would largely

demolish present schooling.

> "It has been estimated by James Coleman that the average
> youth in high school is really 'there' about ten minutes
> a day.   Since the growing-up of the young into society
> to be useful to themselves and others and to do God's work,
> is one of the three or four most important functions of any
> society, no doubt we need to spend even more on the
> education of the young than we do;   but I would not give
> a penny to the present administrators, and I would largely
> dismantle the present school machinery."(20)

Glaser (1964) notes that a society, committed to the signifi-

cance of individual performance, should act accordingly in its schooling.

He sets out some of the requirements for implementing individualisation.

Implicit in his points is the need for extensive alteration in schooling.

His suggested changes are:

(1)   The conventional boundaries of grade levels and arbitrary
      time units for subject matter coverage needs to be re-
      designed to permit each student to work at his actual level
      of accomplishment in each subject matter area and to permit
      him to move ahead in each subject area and to permit each
      student to work at his actual level of accomplishment in
      each subject as soon as he masters the prerequisites for
      the next level of advancement.

(2)   Well-defined sequences of progressive behaviourally-
      defined objectives in various subject areas need to be
      established as guidelines for setting up a student's
      programme of study.

(3)   A student's progress through a curriculum sequence must
      be monitored by adequate methods and instruments for
      evaluating his abilities and accomplishments so that a
      teaching programme can be adapted to his requirements
      and readiness.

(4)   Students must be taught and must be provided with appro-
      priate instructional materials so that they acquire
      increasing competence in self-directed, self-paced learning.
      In order to accomplish this, the teacher must provide the
      student with standards of performance so that he can
      evaluate his own attainment.   Primarily, teacher-directed
      learning must be replaced by teacher-guided, learner-
      directed accomplishment in order for the goals of
      individualised education to be achieved.

(5)   Special professional training must be provided to school
      personnel so that they can accomplish the evaluation and
      diagnosis of student performance that is required in
      order to organise instruction for individualised programs.
      Teachers must become increasingly competent in the theory
      and practices of educational diagnosis, evaluation, and
      guidance.   Currently, the teacher is trained in the

total class management of learning.

(6)   The individualisation of instruction requires that the
       teacher attend to and utilise detailed information about
       each student in order to design appropriate instructional
       programs.   To assist the teacher in processing this
       information, it seems likely that schools will take
       advantage of the unique benefits of automation and
       automated data-processing.

Glaser's concern with the need for schooling to be individual-
ised is based upon technical criteria.   Unlike some of the authors
cited above he does not couple his plea for individualisation with some
personal-social ideology (except that learning should be efficient).
Nevertheless the changes that would have to be made to implement his
suggestions are no less radical than the changes suggested by others.

Gagne, (1967) like Glaser is concerned to increase the technical
efficacy of schooling.   He too emphasises the need for greater individ-
ualisation of schooling.   He draws on the neurophysiological basis of
arousal and attention to emphasis the uniqueness of learning:

> "One relatively prevalent conception of how instruction
> works is that it creates a learning situation which in a
> sense 'captures control' of the nervous system of the
> individual so that he inevitably learns."(21)

Gagne stresses the uniqueness of these internal processes:

> "Regardless of how much 'control' is exerted by external
> conditions, the internal of the learner are likely to
> make a crucial contribution to the events of learning.
> Furthermore, this crucial internal process contributed
> by the learners nervous system is, so far as is known,
> highly idiosyncratic.   At present it cannot be predicted
> or even described adequately and it can be 'controlled'
> only in a probabilistic sense."(22)

Gagne suggests, therefore, that additional emphasis needs to be given in
a very broad and comprehensive sense to the notion of self-instruction,
not just as an immediately applicable technique, but as a goal.

> "This may be the direction of practical development which
> could best exploit the unique internal contribution of the
> individual learner."(23)

SUMMARY

The views reviewed in this chapter represent a confluence
toward the conclusion that learning is a highly unique event which
occurs idiosyncratically. The obvious implication for schooling is
that these features of learning should be taken into account in a variety
of ways. Unfortunately, it is just as obvious to the commentators that
schooling does not take this implication. In fact many of the
machinations of schooling seem to operate in an opposite direction. This
leads to the allegation that there is something inadequate in a system
of schooling like our present one. Again there seems to be a gap
between the practices of schooling and the practices which might be
expected to follow from the uniqueness of the learner, and the
desirability of individuality.

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CHAPTER FOUR

This chapter continues the previous one, in that it looks at some kinds of individuals and some aspects of some individuals which schooling does not cater for very well. Some of the topics raised are under continuous controversy and debate. It is not within the purpose of this thesis to enter into such things as definitional debates or interpretations of empirical data.

The 'culturally deprived' or 'culturally different' or more simply the 'disadvantaged' are a group of children which are thought by many to be poorly catered for in schooling. Hickerson (1966) contends that not only does schooling not cater for these children, but through both formal and informal means, causes them to become an alienated section of society:

> "As has been pointed out reading is of little importance to nearly 20% of our population. School is the same. School not only tries to teach him unimportant things, but attempts to make him something he is not, and does not want to be."(1)

Hickerson suggests that schooling alienates this group of children very quickly.

"School and child early reach a parting of the ways."(2)

Hickerson points to the disparity between the values and life-styles of the teachers and these children.

> "The culture pattern to which most of our teachers are committed is diametrically opposed to the culture patterns of millions of economically deprived children. ... The teacher is given the task of convincing them that their values, commitments, indeed much of their entire lives

are wrong."(3)

He claims that the formal methods of alienating these children are the formal methods of classification and evaluation used in schooling. They are firstly classified as academically untalented because they bring with them to school few of the skills needed if they are to be appraised as potentially able.   Secondly they are assigned to the slow reading groups, their curriculum is diluted, and later they are subjected to Intelligence and other standardised tests to confirm what had already been determined about them.

Fantini and Weinstein (1968) also point to the huge disparity between the curriculum of schooling and the 'hidden curriculum' of the family, the neighbourhood, the sibling and peer group.   They suggest that schooling is to many 'disadvantaged' children 'phoney.'

> "The most pervasive criticism that many of our children and
> particularly those we term 'disadvantaged' have levelled at
> adult society has concerned what they call the 'phoniness'
> of our conventional educational system."(4)

They suggest that the high incidence of school dropouts reflects this aspect of the system.   They see this to be reflected in various aspects of the curriculum.   Firstly the curriculum is frequently not real:

> "In presenting a world almost totally divorced from reality,
> the school adheres to what we shall call the Antiseptic
> Curriculum."(5)

> "The phoniness of the antiseptic curriculum, is communicated
> to children not only in the reading materials assigned, but
> a variety of ways throughout the daily school routine.
> It is communicated by the way the teachers dress, speak, act;
> by what they teach and how they teach it."(6)

Fantini and Weinstein allege that not only is this curriculum

harmful to 'disadvantaged' children, but to all children:

> "Thus the antiseptic curriculum, in which reality is ignored,
> in the long run, damages any child.   The effects on a child
> from the lower extreme of the socio-economic continuum are
> particularly harmful."(7)

The content of schooling is dubbed the 'nonessential

curriculum.'

> "If there is a preponderance of useless subject matter in
> the formal curriculum it is at the expense of content which
> could be very successful both to the growing, seeking child
> and to society itself."(8)

Fantini and Weinstein are directly critical of current schooling

and of the teachers who implement it.

> "Our society, through its policy makers appears to be
> increasingly aware that fundamental discrepancies exist
> among the purpose, process, and product of one of its
> key institutions the school."(9)

> "Of strategic importance to the heart of the educational
> process itself, the teacher is a more or less faulty product
> of the very process he must perpetuate - long before he
> begins his professional training, he is conditioned to his
> role by his own early education."(10)

As well as being indoctrinated into the schooling system,

Fantini and Weinstein suggest that teachers may also have developed

notions that children who fail are stupid, stubborn, or naughty; that

children who use slang or poor grammar are slow, uncouth, ill-bred, or

delinquency bound.   This, they suggest leads teachers to set up a self-

fulfilling prophecy - a cycle of low expectation - low performance which

further handicaps the learner.   They see the need for profound and rapid

changes in schooling:

"Our times demand that institutional changes be effected
with the rapidity of revolution and rendered with the
subtlety of evolution."(11)

Since Getzels and Jackson (1962) there has been a great deal of
interest in creative abilities - and a great deal of controversy.   There
are suggestions made by various commentators that creative abilities are
neither accepted nor fostered by current schooling.   Indeed it would
be surprising in view of the descriptions of schooling by many of the
commentators above, if creativity and divergent productions were found
to abound.   Torrance (1965) is strongly in favour of the encouragement
of creative behaviour:

"There is little doubt but that the prolonged and severe
stifling of creative thinking cuts at the very roots of
satisfaction in living."(12)

Torrance notes that it is an 'almost obvious' fact that creative
behaviour is not likely to flourish in an environment which is hostile or
indifferent to creative achievement.   He states that pressures towards
conformity and submissiveness are antithetical to the development of
creative behaviour:

"Much of the evaluative behaviour of teachers appears
designed to enable the teacher to control or coerce
conformity to behavioural norms.   Such evaluative
behaviour is not likely to have a positive influence upon
any kind of truly creative behaviour --- much scattered
evidence suggests that creative thinking flourishes when
students feel that the teacher is on their side."(13)

He is not optimistic about the likelihood of teachers being on their side:

"A basic problem in providing a responsive environment is
that many teachers do not genuinely respect individual
differences."(14)

"In most school situations that I have observed, children

are seldom free - even for a moment - from evaluation."(15)

Torrance (1965) quotes a similar conclusion of Jules Henry
(1963):

"Carping criticism, painfully evident in almost any
American classroom, is viciously destructive of the early
tillage of those creative impulses we say we cherish."(16)

Gifted children represent a further group of children who do
not suffer well at the hands of schooling. Witty (1951) asserts that
gifted children are neglected:

"Educators are awakening to the fact that gifted children in
our schools have too often been neglected. These children
have seldom been challenged to develop their superior abilities."(17)

Witty contends that a third or more of gifted children leave
school with an inadequate amount of education to qualify them for the
best use of their abilities. The evidence, he says, shows that school-
ing inadequately stimulates or motivates gifted children.

"The studies and surveys presented in this book make it
clear that the typical elementary school provides a too
meagre and too restricted curriculum for the gifted.
In many schools the abilities of gifted children are
unrecognised; and in others are unchallenged or
neglected."(18)

Like Witty, Margaret Mead finds the provisions of schooling
inadequate for the gifted.

"The task of the school becomes then a redesigning of the
school situation in such a way as to protect and foster
the gifted child."(19)

De Haan and Havighurst (1957) see the gifted child to be very
much a concern of schooling:

"It is the schools business to recognise and help develop
the talents of the gifted whether or not parents take
any responsibility."(20)

They do not believe that current schooling meets this obligation.
They suggest that the need to implement 'enrichment' provisions for the
gifted indicates that schooling is deficient for the gifted.

"The term enrichment is a revealing educational term -
implying that the average educational diet will suffice
for most average children but that something extra needs
to be added for gifted children."(21)

One of the frequently asserted goals for schooling is prepara-
tion for life, especially vocational life.   However, numbers of writers
view current schooling as being not adequate in this respect.   Halsey,
Floud and Anderson (1961) edited a book on Education, Economy, and
Society, in which assertions are made that schooling lags far behind
changes in the economic systems of society.   In the introduction Floud
and Halsey allege that:

"The truth is that the schools and universities function
badly as selectors and promoters of talent."(22)

They stress the need for a general non-specialised schooling
directed toward a changing unpredictable future.   Drucker suggests that
the "new fact" is that a developed society and economy are less than fully
effective if any individual is educated to less than the limit of his
potential.   One could accept much less than perfection as a criterion
and still conclude that the present system of schooling leaves our society
and economy much less than fully effective.   Drucker sees the need for a
critical review of schooling:

"... the greatest impact of the educational revolution is

on education itself.   It raises basic questions about the
values, the purposes, the structure and tools of
education."(23)

The "Crowther Report" also suggests the need for rapid social

change to be incorporated into schooling:

"To say that the world is living through a scientific
revolution has become a truism.   For all that, we are
not sure that its consequences for education are always
rightly drawn."(24)

It points out that a boy who enters industry today will not

retire until well into the next century.   It predicts that he will go

through at least one complete technological revolution in his industry.

"The job he will hold when he becomes a grandfather may not
exist at all today; it will be concerned with processes
not yet invented, using machines still to be designed."(25)

"Clearly the first quality that is needed to cope with such
a world is adaptability."(26)

Vaizey and Debeauvais also stress the need for a kind of

schooling which emphasises adaptability:

"... a general and flexible education enabling people to
adapt themselves rapidly to changing circumstances."(27)

They too query current schooling:

"The economist asks whether there is the best use of
skilled teachers, (the scarcest factor in the educational
process) and able pupils.   Is the school year, or the
school day for example, the correct length to get the
results that are needed."(28)

Ginsberg contends that schooling is inefficient in that it

develops much less of the potential economic resources than it could.

"One of the most striking shortcomings is the extent to
which individuals with good intellectual potential are

not educated and trained, despite the great public and
private investment in education."(29)

As well as being of questionable relevance to the vocational
future of children, schooling would seem to be also questionable on its
contribution to the ultimate psychological 'health' or 'maturity' of
children.   At least some writers on the complex topic of psychological
'health' question (either explicitly or implicitly) the practices of
schooling.   Schooling is at present a large-scale enterprise and
functions along bureaucratic lines.   Bureaucratic organisations are
impersonal, inflexible, rule-governed.   This kind of setting is seen by
some writers to be unsuited to adequate personality development.
Argyris[30] concluded that the inherent needs of "mature" individuals
for independence, variety, and challenge are suppressed in organisations
which insist upon placid, dependent and submissive 'employees'.   For
teacher, no less than pupil, a bureaucratised system of schooling like
the present one produces the "trained incapacity" which Veblen saw as
characteristic of the bureaucrat.

Carl Rogers[31] has written a considerable amount on the "fully-
functioning" person.   The characteristics which he sees as most salient
in such people do not appear to be likely to develop from current
schooling.   He emphasises the adaptibility, flexibility and changingness
of the fully-functioning person.   Growth toward such functioning is
characterised by certain features.   The individual moves away from
facades, oughts, meeting expectations, pleasing others.   Towards self-
direction, being a process, being complexity, openness to experience,
acceptance of others, trust of self.   Sufficient has been said in the
pages above to indicate that schooling is <u>not</u> facilitative of these

features.   Rather the whole direction of schooling is in the reverse
direction.   So, from the viewpoint of the Rogerean 'fully-functioning
person' schooling is sadly astray.

Maslow[32] has also considered psychological 'health' or, as
he prefers to call it, self-actualisation.   He postulates an 'instinc-
toid' inner nature which each individual strives to actualise.   He
postulates a list of prepotent needs.   The key to progression through
this hierarchy of needs is gratification.   Maslow suggests that
environments (including educational or schooling ones) which gratify are
good, those which fail to gratify are bad.   (Bad because they do not
foster self-actualisation).   From the pages above, it is thought that
schooling does not provide conditions likely to gratify needs lower down
the hierarchy - safety, love and belongingness, esteem needs.

The final shortcoming of schooling to be raised is in the
effect that schooling is likely to have on the child as future moral
agent.   Edmund Leach (1968) thinks that the basic concern for orderli-
ness and certainty which characterises present schooling is not useful
in preparing people for the moral situations of the future.   He suggests
that it is this very orderliness which is so inadequate:

> "It is this expectation of orderliness which generates our
> fear of anarchy and which thus in a world of accelerating
> change creates a panic feeling that things have got out of
> control.   But if we are logical it would be order not
> chaos which will now fill us with alarm.   An orderly world
> is a world governed by precedent and experience; nicely
> organised to cope with facts which we already know ... but
> in a context of technological revolution orderliness is
> simply a marker of how the members of society have got out
> of touch with what is really going on."[33]

"Well the trouble is that moral judgments are about social

relations and social relations have no material existence."(34)

Leach argues that the aim should be to maximise variation.
He, like others, is convinced that the people who are going to be able to
cope with the rapidly changing future are those who are temperamentally
unorthodox - the curious, the skeptical, the people who are not bound to
established opinion.   Leach is critical of the practices of current
schooling:

> "Education ought to be concerned with training people to
> exercise their imaginations creatively, instead of which
> it is too often little more than a selection device for
> picking out the clever conformists."(35)

Castle (1970) is not optimistic that the agents of schooling -
teachers - will be able to keep abreast of the changing moral situations:

> "One of the less admirable characteristics of teachers
> throughout the ages has been their enduring capacity to
> resist the impact of a new idea."(36)

Entwistle (1970) points out that the democratic society is a
pluralistic conception, and as such contains the assumption that associa-
tions having widely different (even conflicting) aims should co-exist.
This conception he suggests should lead to a schooling which provides
children with the means to construct their own values, not to indoctri-
nate them with any content.

> "If in a democratic society we find indoctrination both
> impossible and undesirable, only social education is
> possible.   We seem driven to the conclusion that children
> should learn to articulate or affirm their own social
> values."(37)

Current schooling certainly does not attempt to provide
children with the opportunity to articulate or affirm their own values!

Peck and Havighurst (1960) state that real moral behaviour is made less likely by unthinking conformity.

> "Even if tradition is right, to teach children to obey it
> simply because it is tradition, or an 'authority' is to
> cripple their capacity to become truly mature and
> intelligently self-governing in their moral behaviour."(38)

They too are critical of the way schooling functions to prepare children as future moral agents.

> "Twelve or fourteen years conditioning in the public schools
> have made anxiously dependent conformers of them, even
> though they actively resent being 'told' at the very same
> time."(39)

SUMMARY

In this chapter a brief look was taken at some specific aspects of the general principle that learning is idiosyncratic. The views of some commentators on disadvantaged, creative and gifted children were briefly stated. As well as this the child as future worker, mature person and moral agent was considered. In these instances, the deficiencies of schooling in relation to postulated 'goods' were suggested.

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CHAPTER FIVE

The four chapters above outline a critical discontent with schooling. The viewpoint delineated is a minority one, and there are undoubtedly many who would profoundly disagree with the perceptions of these commentators. Many would express satisfaction and strong approval toward current schooling. Some might even rightly suggest that there are already places of schooling which would escape from the criticisms made. However, whilst it is true that there are, in various nooks and crannies, schooling settings which do not fail to operate in an educational way, such instances are rare. Their atypical nature is shown by their salience and the interest shown in them by many groups. Consideration of this minority viewpoint is, nevertheless, a valid and potentially valuable activity. Firstly, the perspective on schooling which they present is a relatively recent one, and one which seems to be increasingly held. As such it offers a commentary on schooling which may not have been previously articulated, or at least not articulated in so cogent, relevant, or convincing a manner. Secondly, serious consideration should be accorded the assertions of any body of responsible persons who present serious criticisms of central social institutions. Thirdly, the criticisms contain (implicitly at least), suggestions from which an improved, a more appropriate, a more educational system of schooling might evolve.

What might be suggested from this vision of schooling? Are the suggestions feasible, from a practical viewpoint? An attempt will be made to explore some of the aspects of their suggestions, and to

postulate some conditions which might be congruent with these.   No
attempt is being made - and it would be inappropriate to do so - to set
out a detailed set of specifications or blueprint.   Instead, the
suggestions below are made in a tentative, exploratory, 'perhaps' way.

The first issue is the kinds of human relationships which are
perceived to exist within present schooling.   The critical perspective
is based in an ethical position.   It reflects a judgement, a commentary,
a conclusion, concerning the way in which human beings do and should inter-
act in 'schooling' settings.   The view is taken that schooling is not
only anachronistic in the kinds of human relationships which it promotes,
but that these relationships are bad.   This allegation asserts that
traditional school relationships, especially those between children and
adults, require revision.   The traditional, autocratic, no questions per-
mitted, orientation of adults toward children is condemned.   What is
advocated instead?   Honest, personal relationships between adults and
children - or at least relationships far more characterised by these
features than presently.   Relationships between children and adults which
do not function within the context of a grossly inequal distribution of
power.   A cessation of subordination to some external, extrinsic, pre-
conceived system of rules and regulations.   Instead, collaboration,
reasoning and mutual decision-making.   The compulsory aspect of current
schooling is also strongly attacked.   Not only the compulsory attendance,
but also the coercive compulsion to do what is decided by others, rather
than assuming responsibility oneself.   It is asserted the present society
and the likely society of the future needs products from schooling which
are open-ended, which express idiosyncrasy.   Channels of schooling which
are not constructed upon static and segmental values and orientations,

but which are considerable enough in scope to accomodate all members of a complex, dynamic society are seen as desirable.   The alleged need is to construct a system which does not attempt to render the culturally differ- ent, similar.   Instead, the culturally different need to be supported by structures and systems of schooling which allow their differences to flower and become blended into a societal fabric of a multi-coloured hue. At an individual level this requires a strong commitment to providing means for individuals to optimise those aspects of themselves which they choose to.   The case for this cultivation of idiosyncrasy rests on two major grounds.   Firstly, an ethical preference or positive valuation of the unique aspects of persons.   Erik Erikson has suggested that the 'mutilation of a child's spirit is the most deadly of all sins'.   A secular version of this could be that the deadliest of all educational sins is to prevent any child from developing optimally in any direction that it may choose.   To realise this a desirable system of schooling should be based upon a strongly held allegiance to the desirability of uniqueness and diversity of developmental direction.   Secondly, the acceptance and cultivation of idiosyncracy is seen to be pertinent to the rapidity of social change and the consequent need for persons who can create, implement and cope with innovation.

Sweeping changes in the content of schooling are advocated as well.   A fixed, prescribed curriculum is no longer valid.   Knowledge is increasingly dynamic, frequently revised or altered.   On the other hand self-initiated, self-directed, and self-sustained learning is exhorted, by implication at least, from a variety of sources.   Because learning is so directly under the control of idiosyncratic learners, curricula need to emanate in large part at least, from such learners.   A fixed curriculum

is inappropriate unless learners are likewise fixed.   Then, a fixed, imposed curriculum is inconsistent with the kinds of human relationships which are held to be desirable.

Expansion and revision of settings for schooling is also urged. A fixed place, set times of the day or night, standardised periods of time each day, month or year, arbitrarily imposed is not appropriate to learning.   All such impositions deny the unique configurations of individuals.   Learning can occur almost anywhere.   It can occur at almost any time.   It may be protracted or brief.   It can even occur in classrooms between 9.0 a.m. and 3 p.m. - but it is inconceivable that it can occur at that place and time only.

How feasible are the suggestions - implicit or explicit? Certainly change of any magnitude in the desired direction would be radical.   The buildings, settings, personnel would need to be varied, not standardised as they now are.   The location might be in any building or in the open.   'Teacher' is at present a very static role, with traditional, inflexible expectations attached to it.   To implement the kind of schooling which does not suffer from the deficiencies endemic in the current variety, 'teacher' needs to become a complex and multi-dimensional conception.   Something similar to the notion of consultant might be appropriate. Consultants could be both available in some standard (not standardised) settings and also on demand to meet the requirements of individual learners.   A multitude of settings could have on the spot consultants to school those unfamiliar with the requirements of the setting.   Other settings could have long-term programmes of consultation.   On the job training could be conducted in this way.

Implicit in these suggestions is that the altered system would function with altered components. Specifically - the kinds of persons and their interpersonal relationships would be considerably altered. This raises the issues of social change and social feasibility. Are such changes even vaguely possible from society as it now is? There seems to be adequate grounds upon which to respond with a cautious yes. Introducing some of the changes could well be merely bringing schooling into line with some other sections of society. Some writers assert a cultural lag between economic, technical, social and moral aspects of society, and the structure and functioning of current institutions of schooling. Others decry the conservative bias of schooling. It would therefore be possible for alterations to be made in schooling without disrupting members of all segments of society.

Much of the process of schooling is now justified on the grounds of economic and administrative efficiency. Superficial objections could be made to the suggestions above that allowing learners to determine their own curriculum, time, and place of schooling would be inefficient and administratively clumsy. Such objections are probably not as easily supportable as might at first appear. Criteria of efficiency are not easily defined. By many definitions, it would be difficult to support the maintenance of present schooling on grounds of efficiency! It could also be suggested, in rebuttal of this objection, that administrative and economic efficiency are not primary ends of schooling. Efficiency in the attainment of educational goals - yes. But concern for economic and administrative efficacy per se, is an illicit goal displacement. Schooling which operates in a mass, undiversified fashion, without the flexibility and complexity which the task demands must answer the question

- where is the efficiency? If the children do not learn at the rate or intensity that a more learner-centred and less administration-centred system would permit, then the alleged efficiency is pseudo-efficiency. In fact it is inefficiency. If less money is now spent than would be spent to diversify and individualise schooling, and fewer individuals fashion their development in satisfying ways, then the money 'saved' is saved at the cost of a huge loss of profit. It could thus be argued that if the kind of schooling advocated above were to be more costly (and it may not be) then, in terms of the real returns to be expected, it would be a more economic system. It is conceivable that this logic could be both explicable and acceptable to present society. Even so, the promulgation and implementation of an altered system of schooling which departed from expectations of parents, teachers, employers, and children would be no easy task. However, it would be possible, and could be seen as part of the role of professional educationists who concur with the need for such change. Bridging the schooling-education gap would be the essence of the change. A majority of teachers would need to be well versed in the educational schooling.

An examination of the explicit and implicit changes suggest that they could, if not easily, be implemented within the framework of society. Profoundly altered relationships between 'teachers' and 'learners' are advocated. Whilst the definition of desirable and undesirable relationships is a complex, ethical, judgemental matter, it would not be impossible to operationalise a set of objectives which would delineate such relationships. The attainment of these objectives would be an even more complex matter because relationships are personal and emotional. Some possible approaches could be appropriate. Firstly, group norms and role

definitions affect interaction, including interaction between leaders and group. Changes in the expectations regarding 'teachers' and 'pupils' would be likely to develop where schooling was differently structured and conceived. The inequality of power could also become altered in this way. The suggestion that 'teacher' and 'pupil' collaborate in a collegial, democratic, or contractual basis is not new. What would be radical would be for it to be practised widely. The lack of pupil choice and the excessive degree of compulsion could likewise be resolved. Pupils (or other more appropriate label) of whatever age, could become contractual partners in the schooling contract. Children and their parents, or just children could 'shop around' a diversity of schooling settings and procedures, and choose the ones that they are willing to enter into contracts with. (Something like this sort of thing is already done, to some extent, at a tertiary level). An objection likely to be raised against the encouragement of diversity, especially of curricula, is that some kind of chaos would result in a society which did not compel every child to undergo the same kind of schooling. The suggestion has recently been made that all children in a pluralistic democracy should undergo a core experience - schooling - to ensure a willingness to cooperate with other groups (Entwistle, 1970). Such an assertion is questionable. Schooling which is the same for separate individuals does not really exist. Secondly, the present system of compulsory schooling cannot by any means claim that there is uniformity of schooling experience. State schools differ from private schools, and both state and private schools are heterogeneous within themselves. As schooling progresses, the tendency is already toward greater diversity of courses and requirements, not homogeneity. Thirdly, it would seem that a democratically pluralistic and cohesive society would be more likely to emanate from a schooling

system which was also pluralistic.   Fourthly, increasing technological

sophistication in transportation and communication are more likely to

foster awareness of any common core than compulsory and uniform schooling.

Finally, in the face of widely diverse segments within society, the

ethics of compelling each and every section to conform to some uniform

schooling is questionable.

No fixed curriculum!   Is there any knowledge which is essential,

which must be acquired by children?   In terms of survival there does not

seem to be any such knowledge, certainly not any that would justify a

prolonged period of compulsory schooling.   What would children do if

there were no body of 'knowledge' for them to master?   Children are

curious and inquiring.   They do not exist in vacuo, but within a social

context.   They will learn through interaction in this social context.

As for formal knowledge - a person who knows no mathematics at fifteen

years of age, can if there are the opportunity and facilities available,

acquire a high level of mathematical understanding.   And probably in a

relatively short period of time.   It has been argued that being educated

does not entail mastery of any specific content.   From this viewpoint,

to be educated is primarily a question of process.   In an increasingly

pluralistic society, induction into widely differing groups is likely to

involve learning widely differing content.   Knowledge of any static,

rigid, monolithic kind is not likely to be of much value.

Are the changes in methodology feasible?   The learner initiated

system of schooling is a possible notion in terms of technology.   A

variety of teaching machines with appropriate programmes which cover an

extensive range of material could be available for public use sited

adjacent to relevant settings.   Teaching machines could form part of

informational complexes on animal life, biology, zoology sited beside farms, veterinary clinics, pet shops, and museums. Similar complexes on the selection, compilation and publication of reading materials could be placed beside libraries and newspaper companies. Films, television, guided tours and literature could be incorporated into a huge range of social settings.

The social role of 'teacher' could disappear to be replaced by a variety of consultants. These people could have the function of meeting the requirements of learners, who may come to them to discover something about the 'content' area to which they are attached. How would consultants qualify for their positions? Existing tertiary institutions could function in a consultative fashion to produce professional consultants. Persons wishing to function as consultants could enter settings which engage in the professional study of communication. It could be open to anyone who wished to become a professional consultant. What of the cost of such a consultant system? Assuming that the resources of present schooling would be available in present or alternative form, the cost is unlikely to be greatly increased.

Then there is the question of 'minimum standards' - for citizenship, literacy, employment. Such a question does not raise problems as grave as might first appear. People do not live in-vacuo, they live in a world inhabited by other people, by social forms which they encounter. In the course of their social interaction they acquire socially appropriate patterns of behaviour - at least in terms of the sub-culture to which they belong. Minimum standards of literacy, for survival, are so minimal that formal schooling is not needed to promote them. People

could learn to read, write, and calculate when they felt the need to in a specific circumstance. Beyond this, given that incentives and rewards which exist today, or ones similar, remain - levels of literacy and numeracy similar to those of today could be expected. What of vocational entry standards for employers? How will employers be able to ensure that their employees have some basic amount of skill and knowledge? In a fashion similar to their present methods. They can decide on the skills necessary and recruit persons who have these. Also, on the job training could be done by relevant consultants employed by employers for this purpose.

These rudimentary and incomplete suggestions are not presented as prescriptive or exhaustive. They are advanced to show that the kinds of changes indicated could become embodied in an alternative system. What follows is a consideration of psychological, philosophical, and socio-logical viewpoints which might offer support to a system of schooling which would escape the criticisms made of the present one.

(a) PSYCHOLOGICAL

Psychology provides some support. At a general level there is a changing conception of man. Gordon (1966) describes the change as being from a Newtonian to an Einsteinian model of man.

Newtonian Model Man:

A mechanistic, fixed, closed system characterised by:
(1) Fixed intelligence
(2) Development as an orderly unfolding.
(3) Potential as fixed, though indeterminable.
(4) A telephone-switchboard brain.
(5) A steam-engine driven motor.

(6)   Homeostatic regulator (drive reduction).

(7)   Inactive till engine is stoked.

The emergent view of man is:

Einsteinian Model Man:

An open-energy, self-organising system characterised by:

(1)   Modifiable intelligence.

(2)   Development as modifiable in both rate and sequence.

(3)   Potential as creatable through transaction with the environment.

(4)   A computer brain.

(5)   A nuclear power plant energy system.

(6)   Inertial guidance and self-regulatory feedback-motivation system.

(7)   Continually active.

This view of man as an open and self-organising system is not congruent with traditional schooling. It seems to be more in accord with a system of self-chosen and self-constructed schooling. There are a number of areas within psychology which would provide an adequate basis for a schooling system which allowed the learner to enter into this kind of education (through schooling). One area which emphasises the uniqueness of the learner, and lends support to the reasoning that unique learnings should be available for unique learners, is personality theory. For while there are still theories of personality, not a theory of personality, the majority of theories do accept that individual configurations are idiosyncratic. Gestalt Psychology has asserted that the way in which an object is perceived is determined by the total context or configuration in which the object is embedded. Relationships among the components of the perceptual field rather than the fixed characteristics of the individual components determine perception. Lewin, whose position emerged from a Gestalt context, emphasises the uniqueness of experience and

structuring of the environment.   Each person exists within a unique
'life-space'.   This 'life-space' is the whole of psychological reality
for the person, and contains the totality of possible facts which are
capable of determining the behaviour of the individual.   So, behaviour
is a function of the life space.   Before anything can influence a person,
it must exist as a fact in the psychological environment of the life
space.   The life space notion lends support to the claim that unique
differences are one of the givens that form part of learning.   Any group,
say 35 children in a classroom, consists of the same number of unique life
spaces.   Moreover, according to Lewin the life space is not fixed and
static, it is constantly changing.   To attempt to 'teach' 35-40 unique
and dynamic life spaces simultaneously is not feasible.   The dynamic
aspect of the life space follows the principle of contemporaniety, accord-
ing to the need of the moment.   The life space consists of regions which
are of either positive or negative valence.   The person experiences need
(tension) and locomotes from region to region.   A locomotion is a
psychological occurrence and does not necessarily involve physical move-
ment.   As it is not possible to keep track of the complexity of locomo-
tions taking place in a group of persons, self initiated and directed
learning seems to be almost the only alternative to be derived from Lewin's
theory.   A pupil may be sitting in a classroom, but psychologically re-
playing a basketball game on the playground.   Some facts of the classroom
such as what the teacher is saying may not impinge upon him at all.
A similar view of personality functioning is the phenomenological or
perceptual view (Snygg and Combs, 1959).   They contend that all behaviour
without exception, is completely determined by and pertinent to the
perceptual field of the person.   The world is invested with meanings

which are for each person the 'reality' to which responses are made.   In
a manner similar to the life space, the phenomenal field is fluid and
constantly changing, although there is a certain continuity of direction.
They assert a monolithic motivation - to strive to meet the need for
adequacy.   At any given time the field of a given person is organised
with reference to his need and the activity by which he is trying to
satisfy it.   Acceptance of the importance and nature of the phenomenal
field leads to a repudiation of mass learning, of learning as something
done to another.   Instead the functioning of the personality to maintain
and enhance the phenomenal self within a phenomenal field which is need-
satisfying becomes the prime factor in learning.   Gordon Allport has
long urged the study of the qualitative features of individuals.   He
suggests a concern for the idiographic (morphogenic) rather than the
nomothetic (dimensional).   Allport contends that 'propriate' striving is
largely conscious and stresses self-controlled intentions.   What the
individual tells us he is trying to do is the most important key to how
he will behave in the present.   Therefore, a schooling system which
allowed pupils to state their intentions and entered into contractual
arrangements to realise these would follow from Allport's view of the
functioning of the human personality.

What has been called 'Organismic Theory' is a view of person-
ality which supports self-learning.   Accepting that the individual is
motivated by one drive - the drive toward self-actualisation or self-
realisation, these theorists minimise the primary and directive influence
of the environment on normal development and stress the inherent poten-
tialities of the organism for growth.   The organism is said to select
the features of the environment to which it will react.   Except in

abnormal circumstances the environment cannot force the individual to behave in a manner that is foreign to its nature. Maslow, a leading proponent of this point of view believes that each person has an innate inner nature which strives to become actualised. Each inner nature or self is unique, and if not suppressed will follow its own growth direction. Rogers also uses the notion of self and emphasises the importance of providing conditions which will allow the self to actualise. Rogers, as will be discussed more fully below, argues explicitly in favour of more autonomous learning. Existential personality theory also emphasises that persons are choosing and self-determining. This is another phenomenological theory which asserts that man is free and that he alone is responsible for his existence. Whatever a person does is done because it is his own choice. These theorists emphasise the dynamism of existence. They use the term 'becoming' to emphasise that existence is never static, it is always in the process of becoming something new, of transcending itself. The most obvious implication of these theories is a type of self-directed learning.

In a somewhat different fashion, the 'learning theory' or 'S-R' description of personality emphasises the uniqueness of each personality. According to this view the innate, perhaps hierarchical responses of the neonate become modified by reinforcement to form a unique pattern. Whether the particular variant of this viewpoint emphasises contiguity, reinforcement, imitation, or some other aspect, the experiences of one individual are unlikely to replicate those of another. Thus, this view of personality development also emphasises the variability of individuals, but does not lend the same support to the view that learning is self-initiated.

These viewpoints on personality development lend weight to the criticisms of mass, undifferentiated schooling. An undifferentiated schooling for highly differentiated clients is inconsistent. On the other hand, a system of 'schooling' which contains self-choice gains support.

Motivational factors are critical to learning. The study of motivation is another area of psychology from which support can be gained. The view that current schooling emphasises passivity too much can be upheld by some views of motivation. The view of the functioning of the central nervous system has altered (Hebb, 1955). The central nervous system is spontaneously active and this activity is thought to underlie the human need for activity which the classic experiments of Bexton, Heron, and Scott indicate. There is also an acceptance of curiosity, manipulatory, or exploratory motives. Berleyne (1963) has asserted that stimuli at some optimal level of novelty arouse curiosity motives which lead to 'epistemic' behaviour. This has as its purpose the equipping of the person with knowledge, i.e. structures of symbolic processes. Berleyne suggests that epistemic curiosity is a kind of arousal that initiates a quest for knowledge, and is relieved when knowledge is procured. Festinger (1958) has argued that if two cognitions are dissonant with each other there will be a motive for the person to attempt to change one so that they fit together, and reduce or eliminate 'cognitive dissonance'. Like Berleyne, Festinger accepts the traditional drive-reduction position and contends that successful reduction of dissonance is rewarding in the same way that eating when one is hungry is rewarding. Hunt (1962) speaking from a predominantly Piagetian frame of reference, speaks of the 'motivation inherent in information processing and action' suggesting a need for cognitive activity, a need that can be met only by

the intake of data, the processing of it, the drawing of inferences from it and the making of decisions.   White (1959) has suggested an urge for competency.   These views of motivation would afford support to a schooling which left the determination of learning very largely under the control of the learner.   They also lend strength to the criticisms of the passivity, the external incentives of much of current schooling.   Suchman is one writer who has explored the implications of these kinds of motives.   He bases his claims for 'inquiry method' on the following assumptions about persons:

(1)   The organism is meaning-hungry.

(2)   The human has almost continuous encounters with the environment, many of which are initiated by the individual as a means of making the environment more meaningful.

(3)   Self-initiated encounters are not random, but organised.

(4)   Action produces new encounters by changing the environment and changing the learners relationship to the environment.

(5)   Meaning results when encounters are guided, grouped, and interpreted by conceptual organisers.

Suchman suggests that meaning results from encounters between the learner and his environment.   External stimuli are selected, grouped, and internalised through these encounters under the control of internal organising patterns.   This, he says, puts the learner in the centre of the arena, interacting with the elements of his environment at many levels, and in many directions.   The element of learner autonomy (to pursue personal motives) is therefore crucial for the maximisation of meaning. It is therefore necessary to have very considerable changes made in schooling.

Related to views of motivation are notions on intellectual

functioning.   Hunt (1962) says that intelligence is a matter of central
processes, and that life experiences play a crucial role in the development
of these central processes.   The human brain is 'programmed' in the
course of living experiences.   He emphasises the reciprocal nature of
organism-environment interaction.   His assertions have implications for
schooling.   He uses Piagetian terminology, and emphasises the uniqueness
of epigenetically evolving schemata and the part played by the increasingly
autonomous and differentiated central processes.   He makes a number of
observations regarding organism-environment interaction.   Firstly, that
interaction needs to be sustained.   Appropriate stimulation and opportu-
nity to exercise schemata are required for the survival of both reflexive
and acquired schemata.   As the functioning of schemata are internal and
unique this amounts to an imperative for action, the person needs to be
actively exercising his schemata upon his environment.   Secondly, he
emphasises the intrinsically motivating aspects of such activities and
asserts that new accomodative modifications and new assimilative combina-
tions of schemata are sources of function pleasure.   This implies an
urge on the part of persons to initiate and engage in the acquisition of
knowledge.   Thirdly he suggests that the rate of development is in
substantial part a function of environmental circumstances.   This aspect
of schooling is much criticised.   The criticism is made from a variety
of viewpoints.   Fourthly, Hunt points to the still poorly understood
factor of the match between the schemata within the organism and the
situation in determining whether accomodative modification will occur in
any given encounter with the environment.   The uniqueness of schemata and
thus the uniqueness of the environment adds further support to the
contention that schooling can only be under the control of the learner.

Vernon has said that intelligence can be best thought of as "a fluid collection of infinitely varied thinking abilities". One implication of this view is that people require infinitely varied kinds of activities to express and develop these infinitely varied abilities. It also again suggests that the configuration of abilities of any individual will be unique. Vernon observes that:

> "One of the most urgent and most controversial questions in education today is what kind of organisation will encourage the fullest development of the varied mental capacities and inclinations of students."

Following Guilford's model of the intellect and a possible 120 components there has been an acceptance of the importance of divergent productions as a part of intellectual functioning. The interest in these productions is related to creative abilities, and there is much criticism of schooling for its rigidity and constriction of adventurous, divergent, or creative thinking.

Another area of psychology from which the advocated alternatives gain some support is the study of 'psychological' or 'mental' health. As Wilson (1968) has stated, it is almost impossible for anyone connected with the world of education to avoid being concerned with mental health. However, it can be argued, and is, that the characteristics of schooling are not conducive to the nurturance of psychological health. The nature of psychological health is a matter of much debate. This is partly because of the ambiguity of the notion of 'health' and partly because the notion of health is a normative one, or at least one which contains normative elements. Thus notions of ethical preference are contained within notions of 'health'.

Carl Rogers has advanced the 'Fully Functioning Person' as not only the apex of psychological health, but also the goal of education. He suggests that the following characterise the fully functioning person who would be:

(1)   Open to his experience

This openness is described as the polar opposite of defensiveness.   Every stimulus, whether originating within the organism or the environment would be freely relayed through the nervous system without being distorted by a defensive mechanism.   The person exemplifying this openness is able to fully live the experience of his total experiences rather than shutting them out of awareness.   It is likely that openness to experience will be nurtured optimally in an environment which permits persons to experience themselves and their reactions.   The phoniness of schooling, the fear and constriction referred to above is not likely to be conducive to the development of such functioning.   A situation of maximum personal choice to explore aspects of ones self is more likely to.

(2)   Live in an Existential Fashion

For the fully functioning person each moment would be new.   Such a person would realise that "What I will be in the next moment, and what I do grows out of that moment and cannot be predicted in advance either by me or by others." (Rogers, 1969, p. 285).   Such living in the moment, Rogers says, means an absence of rigidity, of tight organisation, of the imposition of structure on experience.   It means instead a maximum of adaptability, a discovery of structure in experience, a flowing, changing organisation of self and personality.   If this kind of functioning is an expression of psychological health, then schooling is greatly inadequate. In fact the inflexible structuring of experience in schooling is obviously in opposition to psychological health thus conceived.

(3)   <u>Find his Organism a trustworthy means of arriving at the most</u>
<u>satisfying behaviour in each existential situation.</u>

The person would do what 'felt right' in this immediate
moment and would find this in general to be a competent and
trustworthy guide to his behaviour.   The mind boggles!
This is so dissonant with schooling that reconciliation appears
impossible.   If however, Rogers view of psychological health
is valid - and it is certainly paid much attention, then a
schooling structure should be able to accomodate at least a
great deal of organismic functioning.

Maslow's work on self-actualisation is another accepted view of
psychological health.   He claims that each person has an inner nature
which is intrinsic, given, natural.   No psychological health is possible,
he says, unless this core of the person is fundamentally accepted, loved,
and respected by others and by himself.   Maslow places a large amount of
the impetus for growth under the control of the person himself.   Insofar
as he <u>is</u> a real person, he is his own main determinant.   Every person is
to a considerable extent his own project and makes himself.   If this
inner core of the person is frustrated, denied, or suppressed sickness
results.   The main source of sickness is the frustration of the basic
needs and the tendency of the person to grow in his own style, especially
in the early years of life.   Therefore, he argues that it is best in the
interest of psychological health to encourage and bring out this inner
nature.   In his view the main path to health is through need <u>gratifi-</u>
<u>cation</u>.   That is, children develop best in an environment which allows
<u>them</u> to gratify their needs.   Maslow contends that growth or lack of it
is the result of a dialectic between growth-fostering and growth-
discouraging forces in the environment.   When one looks at his list of
prepotent needs - physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem,

self-actualisation, and his claim that growth develops via gratification, schooling does not look likely to promote psychological health. Like Rogers, Maslow has delineated the psychologically healthy a 'self-actualised' person. He says that healthy people are characterised by:

(1) Superior perception of reality.
(2) Increased acceptance of self.
(3) Increased spontaneity.
(4) Increase in problem-centring.
(5) Increased detachment and desire for privacy.
(6) Increased autonomy and resistance to enculturation.
(7) Greater freshness of appreciation and richness of emotional reaction.
(8) Higher frequency of peak experiences.
(9) Increased identification with the human species.
(10) Changed interpersonal reactions.
(11) More democratic character structure.
(12) Greatly increased creativeness.

Although Maslow found self-actualisation only in about one per cent of persons, and only in older people, his description of psychological health and his belief in the importance of gratification does imply the need for a greatly altered system.

From what is asserted about psychological health, by at least some writers on mental health, then, a system of self-directed learning would gain support.

Another source of support is the changing conception of the nature of learning and the teaching-learning process. In the case of the learning process, there seems to be, from a number of perspectives, an increased emphasis upon factors internal to the learner. This altered emphasis derives from some of the views of personality motivation, and intellective functioning mentioned above. Not surprisingly, changes in

perceptions of learners results in changed perceptions of learning, and

'teaching'.   Rogers (1969) claims to have abstracted a number of principles

which are significant to learning:

(1)   Human beings have a natural potentiality for learning.

> "They are curious about their world until and unless this
> curiosity is blunted by their experience in our education
> system.   They are ambivalently eager to develop and learn.
> The reason for the ambivalence is that any significant learning
> involves a certain amount of pain, either pain connected with
> the learning itself or distress connected with giving up certain
> previous learnings."

(2)   Significant Learning takes place when the subject matter is
perceived by the student as having relevance for his own purposes.

> "A somewhat more formal way of stating this is that a
> person learns significantly only those things which he perceives
> as being involved in the maintenance of or the enhancement of
> his own self."

(3)   Learning which involves a change in self organisation in the
perception of oneself - is threatening and tends to be resisted.

> "Sometimes these painful and threatening learnings have to
> do with contradictions within oneself."

(4)   Those learnings which are threatening to the self are more easily
perceived and assimilated when external threats are at a minimum.

> "... a supportive environment and a lack of grades, or an
> encouragement of self evaluation, remove the external threats
> and permit him to make progress because he is no longer
> paralyzed by fear."

(5)   When threat to the self is low, experience can be perceived in
differentiated fashion and learning can proceed.

(6)   Much significant learning is acquired through doing.

> "Placing the student in direct experiential confrontation
> with practical problems, social problems, ethical and philoso-
> phical problems, personal issues, and research problems is one
> of the most effective modes of promoting learning."

(7) <u>Learning is facilitated when the student participates responsibly</u>
<u>in the learning process.</u>

"When he chooses his own directions, helps to discover his
own learning resources, formulates his own problems, decides his
own course of action, lives with the consequences of each of
these choices, then significant learning is maximised."

(8) <u>Self-initiated learning which involves the whole person of the</u>
<u>learner - feelings as well as intellect - is the most lasting</u>
<u>and pervasive.</u>

"It is a 'gut level' type of learning which is profound
and pervasive."

(9) <u>Independence, creativity and self-reliance are all facilitated</u>
<u>when self-criticism and self-evaluation are basic and evaluation</u>
<u>by others is of secondary importance.</u>

"External evaluation is largely fruitless if the goal is
creative work."

(10) <u>The most socially useful learning in the modern world is the</u>
<u>learning of the process of learning, a continuing openness to</u>
<u>experience and incorporation into oneself of the process of change.</u>

"If our present culture survives it will be because we
have been able to develop individuals for whom <u>change</u> is the
central fact of life and who have been able to <u>live</u> comfortably
with this central fact."

Boy and Pine (1971) state a similar list of conclusions about
the learning process.   The conditions which facilitate learning are,
they suggest:

(1)   An atmosphere which encourages people to be active.

(2)   An atmosphere which promotes and facilitates the individuals
discovery of the personal meaning of ideas.

(3)   An atmosphere which emphasises the uniquely personal and subjective
nature of learning.

(4)   An atmosphere in which difference is good and desirable.

(5)   An atmosphere which consistently recognises people's rights to make mistakes.

(6)   An atmosphere which tolerates ambiguity.

(7)   An atmosphere in which evaluation is a cooperative process, with emphasis on self-evaluation.

(8)   An atmosphere in which people are encouraged to trust in themselves as well as in external sources.

(9)   An atmosphere which encourages openness of self rather than concealment of self.

(10)   An atmosphere in which people feel that they are respected.

(11)   An atmosphere in which people feel they are accepted.

(12)   An atmosphere which permits confrontation.

(13)   The most effective teacher is the teacher who creates conditions by which he loses the teaching function.

These principles describe a learning context which does not prevail in schooling.   Instead a reversal of each point would be needed to capture the essence of present conditions.   However, the principles as stated do support the suggestions above for self-directed learning.

(b)   PHILOSOPHICAL

It is suggested that one of the major defects of current school-ing is that it is not an educational process.   It is instead a lower order process of training, indoctrination, and conditioning.   The judgement that schooling is not an educational process can be asserted from the widely accepted view of 'education' of R.S. Peters.   Peters adopts the view that 'education' refers to no particular form.   Rather,

it encapsulates criteria to which any one of a family of processes might conform. He asserts that 'education' differs from ordinary tasks and achievements in that it is inseparable from judgements of value. To say that we are educating people commits us, he says, to morally legitimate procedures. If something is to count as 'education' what is learnt must be regarded as worthwhile - just as the manner in which it is learnt must be regarded as morally unobjectionable. Therefore, as he states, when people speak of education it is essential to know what their standards of valuation are in order to understand the aspect under which some process or state of mind is being commended. Discussions of the aims of education then are attempts to give more precise content to the notion of the 'educated man' or a man who has achieved some desirable state of mind. Peters sets out three criteria which are to delineate the educated person:

(1) An educated man is one whose form of life - as exhibited in his conduct, the activities to which he is committed, his judgements and feelings - is thought desirable.

(2) Whatever he is trained to do he must have knowledge not just knack, and an understanding of principles. His form of life must also exhibit some mastery of forms of thought and awareness which are not harnessed purely to utilitarian or vocational purposes or completely confined to one mode.

(3) His knowledge and understanding must not be inert either in the sense that they make no difference to his general view of the world, his actions within it or in the sense that they involve no concern for the standards immanent in forms of thought and awareness, as well as the ability to attain them.

Educational processes, says Peters, are related to those various activities and modes of thought and conduct characterising an educated man as task is related to achievement. They must therefore approximate

to tasks <u>in which the learner knows what he is doing</u> and gradually develops

toward those standards of excellence which constitute the relevant

achievement.   He suggests that in this family of processes we can include

such things as learning by experience, teaching, training and instruction.

However, from the learners point of view such processes must be ones in

which he knows what he is doing.   <u>The learner must know what he is doing</u>,

must be conscious of something that he is trying to master, understand,

or remember.   Peters also discusses processes which are not, in his view,

educational.   Such things as 'picking things up', conditioning and the

use of extrinsic aids are classified as non-educational.   Conditioning

is widely used in current schooling, and 'extrinsic aids' are an integral

part of schooling (extrinsic aids are said to be such things as praise

and reward).   More cryptically, Peters defines education as initiation

into worthwhile activities.   These activities he says cover a range of

activities that are thought to be worthwhile passing on for some reason

apart from their utilitarian or vocational value.   Also a worthwhile

activity,is one which an individual might want to do just for what is

involved!   P.S. Wilson in his <u>Defense of Bingo</u> suggests that if this is

the case "All activites, then, could be 'more' or 'less' worthwhile to

different situations".   Wilson contends that the hardest thing on earth

is to try 'seriously' to help someone to discover, engage in, and dis-

cover afresh whatever the things may be which are worthwhile for him to

do.   This, he declares, <u>is the cooperative task of education</u>.   It cannot

be assumed before one even starts that some things are always worthwhile

for everybody, some ends fixed, some wants unchangeable.   Wilson can see no

justification for any attempt to insist that individuals should 'prefer'

or 'desire' or 'want' one thing rather than another - pottery more than

push-pin.

The position underlying the system of schooling outlined above
is very similar to the one propounded by Wilson. That is, that con-
straints and coercion are not desirable in education. Wilson asserts
that just by being born, each individual lays his own claim to a voice on
the subject of intrinsic value. Intrinsic value is thus held by Wilson
to reside in the valuing process itself. One cannot, because of the
autonomy of morals and ethical choice, stand in judgement on the intrinsic
valuing of others. Thus, if an adequate system of schooling should
provide education (worthwhile activities), it should provide for the
subjectivity and diversity of valuing. Education conceived in this way,
as Wilson argues, is dominated by neither children nor adults, but is
cooperative. Such a system should provide means by which learners can
negotiate the content, method, time and place of their education. This
would include, as a value preference, the option to choose much or little.
In his famous essay 'On Liberty' J.S. Mill defends the right of the
individual to sovereignty over himself. His reasoning and conclusion
is fairly consistent with the orientation underlying the criticisms of
present schooling and the suggestions above. He suggests that a person
should be free to do as he likes in his own concerns. Also, any person
ought not to be free to do as he likes in acting for another under the
pretext that the affairs of another are his own affairs. Mill's statement
here, in relation to education, can be taken to mean that a person _should_
_be_ free to choose for himself those activities which are worthwhile. It
is not desirable, Mill argues, for society to interfere with or overrule
the judgements and purposes of individuals in matters which pertain to
only that individual himself. For the interference of society in such
matters must be grounded on general presumptions. In any individual

case such general presumptions may be altogether wrong. Even if correct
they are as likely to be misapplied by persons who are merely external
observers. Therefore in the area of duties to oneself - an area to which
deciding upon worthwhile activities belong - "Individuality has its proper
field of action". Mill describes the term 'duty to oneself' to mean self-
respect and self-development. He also contends that no one can be held
accountable to other people to exercise these aspects of self-duty in any
particular fashion, or toward any particular goal. One of the major
positions taken by Mill in his essay is that the individual is not account-
able to society for his actions, in so far as they concern the interests of
no person but himself. If other people (not as society) wish to do so
they may express disagreement with his actions through advice, persuasion,
and avoidance, but not with stronger collective sanctions. In terms of
education, this argument can be used to support the view that individuals
should be free to pursue the kind of activities which they themselves
choose. This does not mean that there need necessarily be anything to
prevent groups of people from forming voluntary associations for engaging
in worthwhile activities. As Mill points out, the liberty of the indi-
vidual implies a corresponding liberty in any number of individuals to
regulate by mutual agreement such things as regard them jointly, and
regard no other persons but themselves.

Mill is opposed to the kind of education which is state imposed.
He deprecates any system of whole (or large part) control in the hands of
the state.

> "All that has been said of the importance of individuality of
> character, and diversity in opinions and modes of conduct,
> involves, as of the same unspeakable importance, diversity of
> education. A general state education is a mere contrivance
> for moulding people to be exactly like one another: and as

the mould in which it casts them is that which pleases the
predominant power in the government, whether this be a monarch,
a priesthood, an aristocracy, or the majority of the existing
generation, in proportion as it is efficient and successful, it
establishes a disposition over the mind leading by natural
tendency to one over the body. An education established and
controlled by the State, should only exist, if exist at all, as
one among many competing experiments carried on for the purpose
of example and stimulus, to keep the others up to a certain
standard of excellence."

Today we do have a predominantly State controlled system of
schooling. Such a system is objectionable on the grounds advanced by Mill.
Also, Mill's position is just as valid for children, as he argues it is for
adults. Mill took the position that children represented a separate case.
To him, children were too immature to be allowed the same freedoms in
education as adults. In this he seems to be imposing an arbitrary
chronology on his doctrine. Such an arbitrary limit does not seem valid.
The line between public and private duty seems to be equally applicable to
all persons, whatever their age. If self duty comprises self-respect and
self-development, then there is little logic in the suggestion that these
can or should have their genesis in some finite point in time. It seems
more persuasive and consistent to follow the view that education (the
pursuit of worthwhile activities) is most appropriately under the predomi-
nant control of the person (child or adult) in the exercise of his self-
duty - the pursuit of self-respect and self-development. Acceptance of
this position supports the kind of schooling outlined above where the
individual is at liberty to choose and cooperatively enter into worthwhile
activities with the consultants they choose to.

The freedom of choice to engage in self-chosen worthwhile
activities (education) is based upon a political philosophy which accepts

pluralism, individualism, and choice.   It entails the value position that
liberty to choose is one of the basic values.   Berlin in his discussion
of 'Two Concepts of Liberty' outlines what he calls both 'negative' and
'positive' freedom or liberty.   Negative freedom according to Berlin
is delineated by the answer to the question: what is the area within
which a person or group of persons should be left to do or be what they
want without interference from other persons?   Positive freedom lies in
the answer to the question: what or who is the source of control or
interference that can determine someone to do, or be, one thing rather
than another?   In terms of negative freedom, Berlin argues that one is
normally said to be free to the degree to which no other human being
interferes with ones activity.   To the degree that one is prevented from
doing what one wants, one is to that degree unfree.   Thus if persons are
prevented from reaching goals by other human beings they are unfree.
This kind of interference is coercion.   As Goodman points out, compulsory
education is a deliberate interference in the activities of individuals.
In Berlin's terms it is a constriction of negative freedom.   Goodman also
contends that such an interference (if it is to be maintained with validi-
ty) must be justified.   But if a high valuation is placed upon negative
freedom, it is very difficult to justify.   Compulsory schooling can be
seen as an unjustifiable depredation of the negative freedom of the
individual.   Like Mill, Berlin asserts that a frontier must be drawn
between the area of private life and public authority.   He also notes
that just where this frontier is to be drawn is a matter for debate.   It
is agreed here with Holt, Farber, Dexter, and others that education should
belong to the private area.   This position is held to be valid partly
on the grounds that the definition of worthwhile activities can only be

designated by each individual.   Also, partly on the grounds that decisions as to which activities, states, or goals are worthwhile (of value) are moral decisions.   The autonomy of morals, the denial that an 'ought' can be derived from an 'is' which is widely accepted, means that moral judgements (as to what is of value) are ultimately, as Hume long ago suggested, based upon emotional preferences.   At the present time Atkinson[1] concludes that no recent moral philosopher has found a way round the point that irreducible differences are possible in morality, that 'justifications' in this field have the 'remarkable property of failing to exclude opposed alternatives'.   Therefore compulsion to accept as worthwhile (valuable) activities and goals is not morally defensible. The view that education is a private, not a public matter is also derived from the position that maximal negative freedom is a highly desirable state of affairs within society.   More desirable than other states which may be induced by a restriction of negative freedom.   Thus, compulsion to learn to read the works of Shakespeare may bring the reader to a fuller knowledge of literature, which may be a desirable thing.   If, however, one values negative freedom, then the desirable state (if it is held to be so) of a fuller knowledge of literature if attained by the use of compulsion as a means to that end, cannot be condoned.   Like Mill, Berlin believes that the only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing your own good.   The only worthwhile activity is that of pursuing your own worthwhile activity in your own way.   So, education (not merely training, instruction, indoctrination or conditioning) can only be attained in a system of schooling in which each person himself can have the liberty to decide for himself which activities are worthwhile.

However, liberty to choose worthwhile activities is not, by

itself, sufficient.   For the positive sense of liberty is also of
importance.   In education the answer to the question of what or who is the
source of control or interference, that can determine someone to do, or be,
one thing rather than another - is only the person himself.   As Berlin
points out, such a position springs from an individualistic (not a-social)
and much disputed conception of man.   It also rests upon a repudiation, as
not morally defensible, of the imposition of activities judged'worthwhile'
by one person upon another.   Berlin argues against the view that such
imposition is justifiable.   It is often asserted that it is possible and
justifiable to coerce other persons in the name of some goal (justice,
public health, or education) which they would, if they were more enlightened,
themselves pursue, but do not because they are blind or ignorant or
corrupt.   This stance, an integral one in present schooling, renders it
easy for the 'enlightened' to see themselves as coercing others for their
own sake, in their, not the coercing agents, interest.   This position
assumes that the agents of schooling know what children should define as
'worthwhile' better than they know it themselves.   However, such a position
leads to the suppression of positive freedom.   Once this view is taken,
Berlin points out, the agent is in a position to ignore the actual wishes
of persons or societies, to bully, oppress or torture them in the name of,
and on behalf of their 'real' selves.   These kinds of things can be done
in the secure knowledge that whatever is the true goal of man, must be
identical with his freedom - that is, the free choice of his 'true' albeit
submerged and inarticulate self.   This travesty of freedom is a basic
flaw in current schooling.   Its historical roots lie in the belief that
children and adults are discontinuous and represent separate cases.   As
such they can or should be subjected to different treatment.   There does

not seem to be any reason why the same principle of freedom should not be
applied to both children and adults.   In fact it is asserted that morally,
children are as entitled to positive freedom as are adults.   For although
freedom may entail obedience, it is an obedience to a law which we pre-
scribe to ourselves, and we cannot enslave ourselves.   Berlin states this
well.   The essence of men (children and adults) is that they are
autonomous beings - authors of values, of ends in themselves.   The ultimate
authority of these values and ends is in the fact that they are willed
freely.   As this is so, says Berlin, nothing is worse than to treat them
as if they were not autonomous, but natural objects, played on by causal
influences, creatures at the mercy of external stimuli, whose choices can
be manipulated by their rulers, whether by threats of force or offers of
rewards.   To treat them this way is to treat them as if they were not free.
But this is indeed the kind of treatment accorded children by current
schooling - a tyrannical paternalism.   And paternalism is an extreme of
despotism.   For under paternalism persons are not treated as if they were
free, instead they are treated as material to be moulded in accordance
with the purposes of the agent, not their own.   To do this is immoral.
It is to deny their human essence, to treat them as objects without wills
of their own, and therefore to degrade them.   In the name of what, asks
Berlin, can anyone ever be justified in forcing men to do what they have
not willed or consented to?   Only in the name of some value higher than
themselves.   But if, as Kant held, all values are the creation of men,
and called values only in so far as they are so, there is no higher value
than the individual.   Therefore to do this is to coerce men in the name
of something less ultimate than themselves - to someone elses particular
craving for happiness or expediency, or security.   This is using other

persons as means and contradicts the fact that persons are ends in them-
selves.   Thus, he says, all forms of tampering with human beings, getting
at them, shaping them against their will to someone elses pattern, all
thought control and conditioning is a denial of that in men which makes
them men and their values ultimate.   It would be incredible to advocate a
schooling system which was based upon a denial of the essence of persons.
It is therefore essential to preserve this essence, that a great deal of
positive freedom should characterise any satisfactory system of schooling.
Current schooling constricts positive freedom to a huge extent.   It
assumes the view that children themselves cannot or will not do for them-
selves what must be done for them.   The schooling system assumes the
omnipotence and subsequent suppression of freedom outlined by Berlin:

> "I must do for men, (or with them) what they cannot do for
> themselves, and I cannot ask their permission or consent,
> because they are in no condition to know what is best for
> them; indeed what they will permit and accept may mean a
> life of contemptible mediocrity, or perhaps even their ruin
> or suicide."

Children are asked to accept the proposition that only the truth (sic)
is of value, and that the only way that they can learn the truth is by
blindly doing today what they, who know it, order or coerce them to do in
the certain knowledge that thus, and only thus, will they arrive at the
clear vision and be free like them.   This denial of positive freedom,
of the essence of persons is unacceptable as a basis for education.   It
is this aspect of schooling which arouses much of the criticism above,
and it is an aspect which any educational system of schooling would have
to avoid.

(c)   SOCIOLOGICAL

Cultural relativism is by now an 'old' anthropological discovery.
Sociologists have likewise been aware of sub-cultural relativism for some
time.   One of the most salient features of modern industrial society is
its internal diversification.   Such diversification makes traditional
sociological concepts as 'society' and 'culture', when used to imply
homogeneity, lose a great amount of meaning.   Pluralism is a phenomena
which schooling should accomodate to.   Traditionally, schooling has tended
to interpret 'equality of opportunity' to mean - treat all persons in a
similar fashion.   It is unlikely that this doctrine can survive in the
face of increasing diversity.   Sociology of education has recently
expended a great deal of its concern with the so-called 'disadvantaged' -
the non-middle-class in orientation.   Such sub-cultural ethnocentrism may
well express the death throes of the anachronistic interpretation of
equality of opportunity.   It may well be that the more relevant inter-
pretation of equality of opportunity is the equality to develop and sustain
the separate identity of each sub-culture.   Fromm in his The Sane Society
has suggested that the 'abstractification' and 'quantification' of urban
living is unhealthy.   This, then, would be one reason why a self-
selected type of schooling would be preferable.   It would allow learners
to select activities, to enter into contracts which were congruent with
their own sub-cultural identity.   Another argument in favour of this kind
of equality of opportunity would be that the domination of one sub-
cultural group by another one is immoral.   It is in opposition to both
a positive valuation of individuality, and of liberty to adopt one's own
life style.

Compounding the diversity of the present is what Toffler (1970) has called 'future shock'. He has drawn on the anthropological notion of culture shock (the immersion in a strange culture where familiar clues that help an individual to function in society are suddenly withdrawn and replaced by new ones that are alien and incomprehensible) to explain future shock (culture shock in one's own society). Future shock, he hypothesises, may well be the most devastating urban disease of tomorrow. He suggests that acceleration (the speed of change); novelty (the impermanence of things); and diversity (a plethora of choices) are the three major components of modern urban society which produce future shock. His arguments from a sociological perspective support the claims of people like Carl Rogers who argue, at the individual level, for complexity, changingness, tolerance of diversity and ambiguity. It is more likely that a self-initiated, contractual, type of schooling would provide for these aspects. Certainly there is very little encouragement of these kinds of things in the schooling of today. Children would probably be best prepared for change, ambiguity, and diversity, by living in circumstances which provided an optimum level of these things. A school-ing system, to be appropriate to this aspect of society would need to function at this optimum level.

Social organisations have also been studied by sociologists. The still predominant kind of organisation, including those concerned with schooling, is bureaucratic. These organisations rely upon a formal, hierarchical, invariant structure and system of rules and functions. As mentioned in a previous chapter, there is a dichotomy between these organisations and the characteristics of the psychologically healthy, as defined by Rogers and Maslow. There is also a differential amount of

access to the higher-up offices of bureaucracies to different sub-cultural groups. Commitment to equality of opportunity leads to a rejection of bureaucratic organisation of schooling. Thus the decentralisation of a contractual-consultant system of schooling would be more likely to suit the diversification and rapid social change of modern society.

SUMMARY

In this chapter a loose and speculative outline of what might follow from the criticisms of the viewpoints presented in the first four chapters was presented. It was suggested that the suggestions and implications were feasible and capable of implementation, although not necessarily easy implementation. Then a brief look was taken at some psychological, philosophical, and sociological supports for the suggestions. The conclusion offered is that these areas, major contributors to educational theory, do contain within them sufficient areas of support to back up the contentions and criticisms made. In fact on many counts strong support could be found.

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EPILOGUE

The chapters above have examined the viewpoints of a diverse group of educational commentators. Their perspective has been called the 'New Criticism' by Havighurst (1968). This agglomeration of writers is one which, it is asserted, have a useful contribution to make to schoolmen, to academic educationists, to educational administrators and planners, and to the public.

Schoolmen, if not too hurt and defensive, can benefit from a re-examination of their practices, and where the criticisms have veracity, alteration of them.

Educational administrators and planners, can do likewise, and be reminded again of the kinds of flexibility which they must bring to their task.

The public in general are done a service in that whatever their reaction to the criticisms may be, the rearing of children is so important a task that constant re-evaluation is essential.

The academic educationist is confronted, squarely, with the education-schooling dichotomy. This dilemma which pervades his discipline is a serious one. Whilst there is obviously scope for 'pure' academic education, the nature of the discipline is such that more than this is needed. Closing the education-schooling gap is a problem worthy of concern, research, and resolution. The problem is to find some way of bridging the gulf between:

(a)   SCHOOLING:

      (1)   Bureaucratic, inflexible.

      (2)   Administration oriented.

      (3)   Arbitrary, autocratic.

      (4)   Content-oriented.

      (5)   Conservative, prone to lag behind other segments of society.

      (6)   A closed system.

(b)   EDUCATION:

      (1)   Flexible, not committed to any organisation.

      (2)   Person oriented.

      (3)   Democratically, rational oriented.

      (4)   Process oriented.

      (5)   Radical - prone to be in advance of other segments of society.

      (6)   An open system.

It is of course unlikely that the 'New Criticism' will form more than just a part of the complex dialectic from which both schooling practices and educational thinking emerge. However, their offering is a valuable ingredient.

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