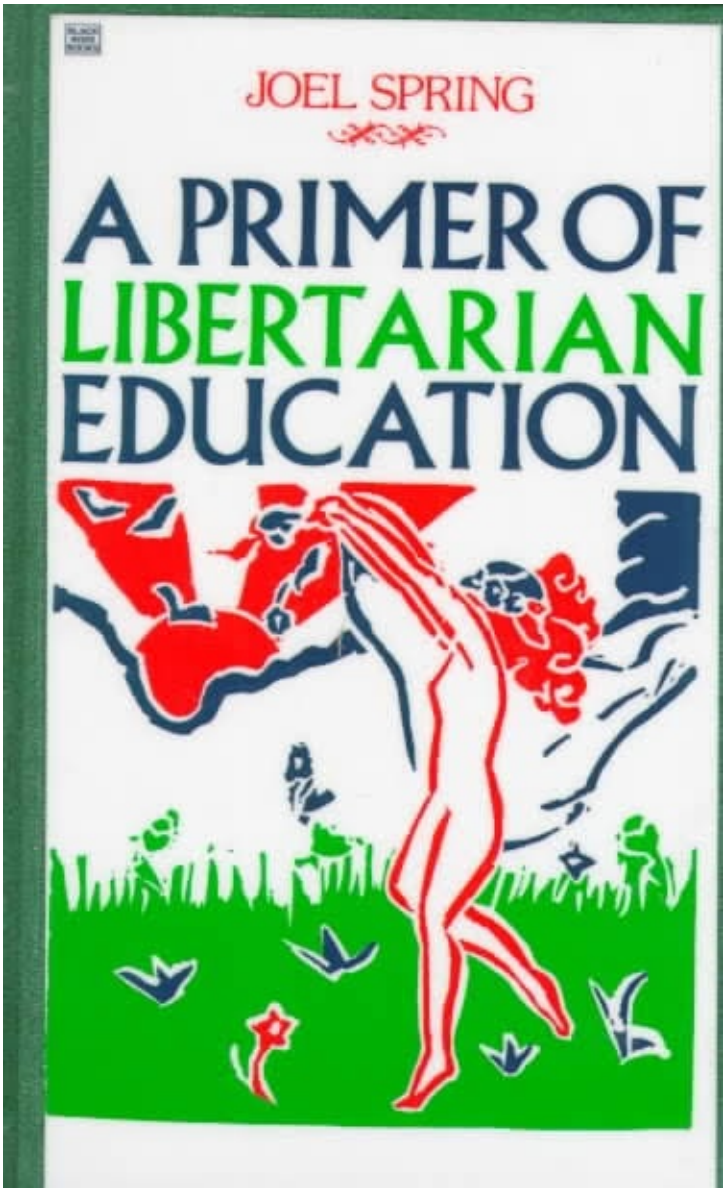
JOEL SPRING

A PRIMER OF LIBERTARIAN EDUCATION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Second Printing, July, 1977

Published 1975 by Free Life Editions, Inc.,

41 Union Square, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Library of Congress Catalog Number 75-10122ISBN 0-914156-12-8 hardcover0-914156-13-6 paperback

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Manufactured in the United States of America

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A NOTE ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS

The illustration on the cover and those used inside thisbook are reproduced from linoleum cuts made by childrenof the Modem School at the Stelton Colony, Stelton, NewJersey (1911-1953).

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INTRODUCTION

LIBERTARIAN THEORIES of education are a product ofthe belief that any successful radical change in societypartly depends upon changes in the character structure andattitudes of the population: a new society cannot be bomunless a new person is bom that can function within it.Radical pedagogy is concerned with new forms of sociali-zation that will encourage non-authoritarian and revolu-tionary character structures. Thus, radical pedagogyencompasses not only traditional modes of learning withinthe school but also methods of child rearing and theorganization of the family.

In considering radical forms of education it should berecognized that they have stood outside the dominantstreams of educational development, which have beendirected at reforming society rather than radically chang-ing it. For instance, public schools attempt to eliminatepoverty by educating the children of the poor so that they

can function within the existing social structure. Radicaleducation would attempt to change the social attitudeswhich support this social structure. The questions raisedby radical education are very different from those raisedby a reform-oriented education. The distinction is verymuch like the one Wilhelm Reich made between radicaland reactionary psychologists: a reactionary psychologist,when confronted with poor people who are thieves, wouldask how one could end their stealing habits; a radicalpsychologist would ask why all poor people do not steal.The first approach would emphasize changing behavior tofit into the existing social structure while the secondwould try to identify those psychological characteristics ofthe social structure which keep most poor people

undercontrol.

Public schooling and radical education are almostcontradictory notions. Public schools are supported by thedominant social structure and in turn work to support thatstructure. Public schools can reform and improve but theydo not attempt to make basic structural changes. Therejection of the public school represents one of theimportant themes in the historical development of radicalforms of education—from William Godwin in theeighteenth century to Ivan Illich in the twentieth—and hasbeen premised on the idea that schools came into being asa means of shaping the moral and social beliefs of thepopulation for the benefit of a dominant elite. Throughoutthe nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this tradition ofcriticism has been interwoven with practical attempts byradical groups to create a system of education that wouldfree people from ideological control.

This volume focuses on the major radical educationalideas flowing from anarchism, Marxism, and the Freudianleft. Anarchism represents one important radical traditionwhich has attempted to develop techniques for makingpeople free of all domination. As the anarchist Max Stimeremphasized in the nineteenth century, the primary prob-

lem is getting people to the point of truly owning theirminds. Another radical tradition has sought to achievefreedom from ideological control by raising levels ofconsciousness and linking thought and learning to socialchange. This stream of thought has made the overcomingof human alienation in the modem industrial world thefirst step in radical change. It has its origins in Marxistthought and is best represented in the modern world bythe work of Paulo Freire. A third tradition, that of theFreudian left, including people like A.S. Neill and WilhelmReich, has emphasized the necessity of changing characterstructure. All radical educators in the nineteenth andtwentieth centuries, of course, have placed some emphasison the necessity for changing the family structure andliberating women; for some, like Reich, the elimination ofthe traditional family and the development of free sexualrelations were to be the first step in radical education.

All of these groups and ideas have formed a tradition ofradical education in the nineteenth and twentieth cen-turies. It is a tradition which has not necessarily been heldtogether by common contacts, though this did occur, norby common institutional connections. Rather, its cohesionderives largely from a common belief that power anddomination by social structures depend on child-rearingpractices and ideological control, that the power of thestate and economy rests on a submissive population.Radicals within this tradition have not only a

sharedcritique but a shared alternative vision as well, emphasizingwomen’s liberation, sexual freedom, new forms of familyorganization, and the importance of autonomy.

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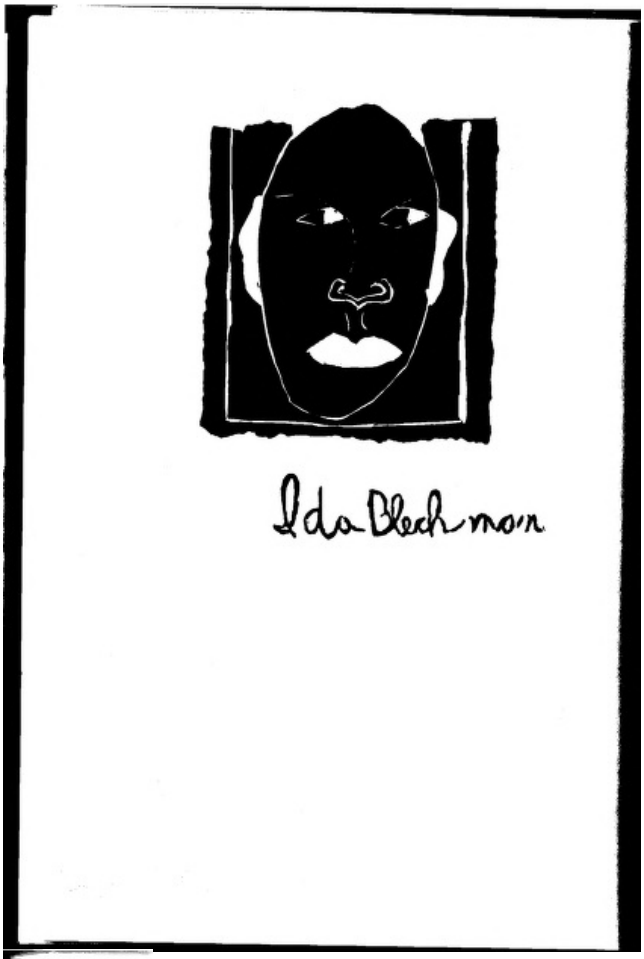

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THE RADICALCRITIQUE OFSCHOOLING

AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT of radical concern abouteducation has been the reaction to the rise of massschooling in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.During this period there was a steady trend towarduniversal

compulsory schooling in state-supported andregulated schools. The purpose of mass schooling has beento train the citizen and worker for the modem industrialstate. It is only natural for those who seek a radicaltransformation of society to have adopted a highly criticalposture toward systems of schooling which are organizedto maintain that society.

The major themes of radical criticism have centeredaround the political, social, and economic power of theschool. One concern has been that public schooling underthe control of a national government inevitably leads toattempts by the educational system to produce citizenswho will be blindly obedient to the dictates of that

government, citizens who will uphold the authority ofgovernment even when it runs counter to personal interestand reason and who will adopt a nationalistic posture of“my country, right or wrong.” Another theme of radicalcriticism has been that systems of schooling have beenused to produce workers who are trained by the process ofschooling to accept work which is monotonous, boring andwithout personal satisfaction. These workers accept theauthority of the industrial system and do not seek anyfundamental changes in that system. Still another concernhas been the myth of social mobility through educationthat has accompanied the development of mass schooling.This myth has led to the acceptance of educationalcredentials as a just measure of social worth and as a basisfor social rewards, and yet these credentials have beendistributed according to existing social class divisions.Rather than increasing mobility, education has added morecement to the divisions between social classes.1

These themes are illustrated by the work of three majorcritics of education: William Godwin, Francisco Ferrer,and Ivan Illich. Godwin was one of the first critics ofeducation to argue against the political power the statewould derive from its ability to spread its particularideology in the schools. Francisco Ferrer directed hisconcern toward mass public schooling and its role inproducing well-trained and well-controlled workers for thenew industrial economies of the nineteenth century. IvanIllich represents one of the most recent critics of therelationship between schooling and the social system. Allof these themes will

take on added meaning in laterchapters because in one sense radical theories of educationhave been attempts to produce the opposite of the verythings these critics are attacking. Radicals have searchedfor an educational system and a process of child rearingthat will create a non-authoritarian person who will notobediently accept the dicatates of the political and socialsystem and who will demand greater personal control andchoice.

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DURING THE LATE eighteenth and early nineteenthcenturies Western societies were feeling the tension of theshift from monarchical to republican forms of government.During this period the close relationship between thepolitical process and mass public schooling was developed.It was at this time that William Godwin wrote histrenchant critique of mass schooling. The French andAmerican revolutions symbolized the eighteenth-centuryfaith in individual reason and its ability to guide govern-ment. But there were certain inherent contradictions inthese political changes. Faith in individual reason couldlead to an argument for no government at all rather than arepublican form of government. For William Godwin, bornin 1756, the reduction in the power of monarchies seemedto be followed by the increased power of a new rulingelite. To change the form of government meant very littleas long as any government existed which could be used inthe interests of a controlling group. For Godwin faith inthe power of human reason implied a society where eachperson could be sovereign rather than a republican societywith periodic changes in the ruling class.

Godwin was bom into a family of non-conformistministers in England. He was trained for the church, butrejected the ministry and in 1783 attempted to open aschool. When his school did not succeed, he tried his handat writing. In 1793 he published an Enquiry ConcerningPolitical Justice which is considered the first modemanarchist attack on the concept of the state. Four yearslater he published the first modern libertarian text oneducation, the Enquirer. In 1796 he married Mary Woll-stonecraft whose book The Vindication of the Rights ofWomen is still a classic treatise on women’s liberation andthe method by which education is used to enslave womento men.2

Godwin’s ideas must be understood within the frame-work of the Enlightenment’s faith in progress as a productof the unfolding of human reason. He feared that the two

most striking phenomena of his time—the rise of themodern state and the development of national systems ofeducation to produce citizens for that state—would have \

the effect of dogmatically controlling and stifling humanreason. In the pamphlet he issued at the opening of hisschool in 1783, he argued that the two main objects ofhuman power were government and education. The mostpowerful of the two was education because “governmentmust always depend upon the opinion of the governed. Letthe most oppressed people under heaven once change theirmode of thinking, and they are free.”3 Any mode of Igovernment gains its legitimacy from the recognition andacceptance of people. Control of public opinion through jeducation means continued support. Despotism and injus-tice can therefore continue to exist in any society in which jthe full development of human reason has been deniedwithin the walls of the schoolhouse. I

The power of national education was clearly defined inGodwin’s study of government, Enquiry Concerning Polit- ;ical Justice. He warned that “before we put so powerful amachine under the direction of so ambiguous an agent, itbehooves us to consider well what it is that we do. \Government will not fail to employ it, to strengthen itshands, and perpetuate its institutions.” Godwin believed jthat the content of national education would be shaped toconform to the dictates of political power. He argued that“the data upon which their conduct as statesmen isvindicated, will be the data upon which their instructionsare founded.”4 The concern about national education wasa reflection of his own suspicions about the nature ofgovernment. First, Godwin felt that political institutionsfavored the usurpation of power by the rich and tended to \aggravate the differences between the rich and the poor.Legislation protected the property of the rich by unfairlaws and systems of taxation. Law was administered by the jgovernment to the advantage of those with economicpower, and government enhanced the power of wealth by \

translating it into social and political power. Second,Godwin believed that the growth of large centralized stateswould result in the promotion of values, such as

a questfor national glory, patriotism, and international economicand cultural competition, which would be of little benefitto the individual:

The desire to gain a more extensive territory, toconquer or hold in awe our neighbouring states, tosurpass them in arts or arms, is a desire founded inprejudice and error. . . . Security and peace are moreto be desired than a name at which nations tremble.5

National education would be used to support chauvinisticpatriotism and the political and economic power of thestate.

Godwin had other objections to national education. Hewrote,

It is not true that our youth ought to be instructed tovenerate the constitution, however excellent; theyshould be led to venerate truth; and the constitutiononly so far as it corresponds with their uninfluenceddeductions of truth.6

Godwin was convinced that a just society could only bethe result of all people freely exercising their reason. Sincepeople were constantly improving their reasoning powersand their understanding of nature, their understanding ofthe natural laws of conduct was constantly changing.Constitutions and other political institutions which tendedto make laws permanent could only hinder the unfoldingof people's understanding of how life should be regulated.

It was for this reason that dodwin objected to anational education which taught the laws of the land. Mostpeople, he argued, could understand that certain crimeswere injurious to the public. Those laws which stoodoutside the realm of reason and had to be taught rather

than understood were usually laws which gave advantagesto some particular group in society. Godwin wrote, as anexample, It has been alleged, that 'mere reason may teachme not to strike my neighbour; but will never forbid mysending a sack of wool from England, or printing theFrench constitution in Spain.' " He maintained that "allcrimes, that can be supposed to be the fit objects ofjudicial administration, are capable of being discernedwithout the teaching of law." He admitted that "my ownunderstanding would never have told me that the exportation of wool was a crime," but, he added, "neither do Ibelieve it is a crime, now that a law has been madeaffirming it to be such."7 In this statement Godwin wasexpressing his own revolutionary conviction that peopleshould not obey laws

wasexpressing his own revolutionary conviction that peopleshould not obey laws which did not conform to individualreason.

Godwin warned,

Had the scheme of a national education been adoptedwhen despotism was most triumphant, it is not to bebelieved that it could have for ever stifled the voice oftruth. But it would have been the most formidableand profound contrivance for that purpose, thatimagination can suggest.

Even in countries where liberty tended to prevail, heargued, people should be wary of national educationbecause of its tendency to perpetuate error. In one of themost striking expressions of the case against modemschooling, Godwin declared: “Destroy us if you please; butdo not endeavor, by a national education, to destroy inour understandings the discernment of justice and in-justice.”8

Godwin, however, was unique in raising such strongobjections during a time when national education wasconsidered one of the most advanced social causes. EvenMary Wollstonecraft favored a national education as ameans of eliminating the social advantages of men over

women. Godwin’s critique was borne out by the facts:most government plans for education were directed atmaintaining political and social order by instilling partic-ular conceptions of law and morality; most of them didplace emphasis on building national spirit and patriotismand were viewed as the bulwark of government. Yet mostreformers and revolutionaries of the period supportednational education plans because of a belief that schoolingwould sustain individual freedom.

Throughout Western society the modem national stateinstituted citizenship training in the school. In Prussia,Johann Fichte argued that the state should expend asmuch money on education as on national defense because,

The State which introduced universally the nationaleducation proposed by us, from the moment that anew generation of youths had passed through it,would need no special army at all, but would have inthem an army such as no age has yet seen.9

Fichte believed that the school would not onlv be aninstrument for instilling the

law of the land but wouldprepare individuals to sacrifice themselves for the good ofthe community.

In the United States the prophets of the common schoolmovement argued that a common school would create aconsensus of political and social values and effectivelyreduce political and social unrest. They exhibited analmost limitless faith that the school, regardless of itspolitical control, would become a great engine for freedomand human progress. For example, Henry Barnard, one ofthe great American common school reformers of thenineteenth century, expressed awareness of the problemscaused by state control of the schools, but dismissed themarguing that in the end education always led to freedom.In poetic terms he expressed the faith of thenineteenth-century schoolman in the power of learningonce it is set loose in a society. “It would be easier,” he

wrote in reference to the government stopping thewell-schooled individual, “to return the rain to the clouds,from which it is falling, before it has freshened hill-top andvalley, mingled with the waters of every rising spring, andreached the roots of every growing plant.”1 0

The faith of the nineteenth-century schoolman wascertainly crushed in the twentieth century with the rise ofNazi Germany. Schooling in Germany during this periodexemplified all the evils Godwin had foreseen in theeighteenth century. Schools were used to spread a par-ticular ideology and a brand of nationalism linked toterritorial expansion and to the glorification of thecountry’s leaders. The Nazis implemented changes in theschool curriculum, with compulsory training in racialbiology and increased emphasis upon German history andliterature. Five hours a day of physical education wererequired for building character and discipline and aspreparation for military training. Highly propagandizedtextbook material was introduced. An order from theMinister of Education in 1935 gave specific instructions tobegin racial instruction at the age of six years, toemphasize the importance of race and heredity for thefuture of the German people and to awaken in thestudents a pride in their membership in the German race asthe bearer of Nordic values. The instructions stated,“World history is to be portrayed as the history ofracially-determined peoples.”11

While Nazi Germany might represent an extremeexample of what Godwin had warned against, his criticismsalso proved prophetic in the case of the United States—thesystem of schooling that Leo Tolstoy referred to as the“least bad”

States—thesystem of schooling that Leo Tolstoy referred to as the "least bad." Patriotic exercises in U. S. schools reached afever pitch during the 1920's under pressure from suchgroups as the American Legion and the Daughters of theAmerican Revolution. Radical labor unions complainedabout their inability to get union information into theschools and about' the schools' emphasis on an economic

philosophy opposed to unionization. Upton Sinclair, aftertouring the public schools in the 1920's, complained thatthey were not furthering the welfare of humanity but weredesigned merely to keep the capitalists in power. One ofthe directors of a radical education program in New Jerseyin 1925 declared that

the public school system is a powerful instrument forthe perpetuation of the present social order with allits injustices and inequality . . . and that, quitenaturally, whatever is likely to disturb the existingarrangement is regarded unfavorably by those incontrol of the public schools.

Radicals argued that in each community, elected schoolboards were controlled by a business and professional elite.Studies throughout the century tended to support thisconclusion.12

Whether in Nazi Germany or in the United States,clearly the school by its very nature had become aninstitution for political control. Since it was an institutionconsciously designed to change and shape people, it wascontinually being sought as a weapon by different politicalfactions. By the twentieth century all political groupswanted to use the school to spread their particularideology and mold their ideal of the modern individual.The problem for radicals was that they usually lacked thepower to compete for control of the schools; hence, theschools tended to become bastions of conservatism.

BY THE END of the nineteenth century it seemed that theschools were also beginning to function as appendages tothe new industrial economies. It was charged that theschools produced obedient servants of both the state andthe corporation. One of the leading critics to make this

argument was the Spanish anarchist and educator Fran-cisco Ferrer, who founded the Modem School in Barcelonain 1901. Ferrer's work gained

founded the Modern School in Barcelonain 1901. Ferrer's work gained international recognition in1909 when he was accused by the Spanish government ofleading an insurrection in Barcelona and was executed. Hisexecution elicited a cry against injustice from many groupsin Europe and the United States and sparked interest in hiscareer and ideas. In the United States a Ferrer Society wasorganized and a Modem School established in Stelton,New Jersey as well as in other places. In Europe theInternational League for the Rational Education ofChildren, which had been founded by Ferrer, was reorganized after his death with Anatole France as its HonoraryPresident. The International League attempted to continuethe publication of Ferrer's review, L'Ecole Renovee, anddistributed information and manuals on the ModemSchool. In the United States the Ferrer Society published ajournal called The Modern School which became a vehiclefor radical criticism of the schools.

"They know, better than anyone else," Ferrer wrote inreference to government support of schooling, "that theirpower is based almost entirely on the school."13 In thepast, governments had controlled the masses by keepingthem in a state of ignorance. With the rise of industrialismin the nineteenth century, governments found themselvesinvolved in an international economic competition whichrequired trained industrial workers. Schools triumphed inthe nineteenth century not because of a general desire toreform society but because of economic requirements.Ferrer wrote that governments wanted schools "notbecause they hope for the renovation of society througheducation, but because they need individuals, workmen,perfected instruments of labor to make their industrialenterprises and the capital employed in them profit-able."14 Ferrer recognized that the hierarchical stmctureof capitalism required certain types of character traits inworkers. They had to be trained to accept the boredom

and monotony of factory work and to conform obedientlyto the organization of the factory. Workers needed to bepunctual, obedient, passive, and willing to accept theirwork and position.

In Ferrer's mind the schools had accomplished exactlythe things Godwin had warned of in the previous century.In becoming the focal points for maintaining existinginstitutions, schools came to depend on a system andmethod which conditioned the student for obedience anddocility. This, of course, was a charge leveled at theschools by a variety of critics; from Ferrer's point of view,however, it was an inevitable result of a school controlledby the state. "Children must be accustomed," Ferrer wrote, "to obey, to believe, to think according to thesocial

accustomed," Ferrerwrote, "to obey, to believe, to think, according to thesocial dogmas which govern us. Hence, education cannotbe other than such as it is to-day."15 For Ferrer one of thecentral problems was to break government's power overeducation. Reform movements that tried to work withinthe system could accomplish nothing toward the goal ofhuman emancipation. Those who organized the nationalschools, Ferrer claimed, "have never wanted the uplift ofthe individual, but his enslavement; and it is perfectlyuseless to hope for anything from the school of to-day."16For Ferrer it was inconceivable that a governmentwould create a system of education which would lead toany radical changes in society. It was therefore unrealisticto believe that national schooling would be a means ofsignificantly changing the conditions of the lower classes.Since it was the existing social structure which producedthe poor, education could eliminate poverty only byfreeing people to change the social structure in a radicaldirection. Writing in a bulletin of the Modem School aboutthe mixing of rich and poor in the schools of Belgium,Ferrer stressed that "the instruction that is given in [theschools] is based on the supposed eternal necessity for adivision of rich and poor, and on the principle that socialharmony consists in the fulfilment of the laws. 1 What

the poor were taught, according to Ferrer, was to acceptthe existing social structure and to believe that economicimprovement depended on individual effort within theexisting structure.

Ferrer's criticisms were directed at the very existence ofnational systems of schooling. Like Godwin, he saw theinevitable use of the school as a source of political control.Schools were becoming a great battleground in which eachfaction attempted to use the schools for its own ends. "Allsides know the importance of the game," he wrote, "andrecoil at no sacrifice to secure a victory. Everyone's cry is'for and by the School.' "18 The two dominant groups inthis battle were government and industry. The governmentwanted the schools to produce loyal citizens, and industrywanted obedient and trained workers. From Ferrer's pointof view these demands were not in conflict. Like Godwin,he believed that the state existed to protect the interests ofthe rich and that the needs of industry found expressionthrough the state. The differences between the criticismsof Godwin and Ferrer reflect the social differencesbetween the late eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries.The late eighteenth century witnessed the triumph of thenation state, with its demand for loyal citizens. The latenineteenth century witnessed the triumph of the industrialrevolution, with its

demand not only for trained workersbut also for workers who would perform hours of tediousdrudgery on the assembly line of the factory. Within thiscontext the goals of schooling were to be accomplishedboth through the content of the material taught in theschool and the method of presentation.

THE QUESTION OF METHOD became a central concernfor these educators. They held that there was a direct linkbetween methods of teaching and school organization, andthe type of character molded by the school. Godwin, for24

instance, argued that it was the method of discipline andthe techniques of teaching that undermined reason anderoded human freedom. He made a direct link between theform of motivation used by the teacher and the power ofthe government. A teacher used extrinsic motivation,presenting material to the student “despotically, byallurements or menaces, by showing that the pursuit of itwill be attended with . . . approbation, and that the neglectof it will be regarded with displeasure.” Extrinsic motiva-tion was defined as that which is connected to a thing byaccident or at the pleasure of some other individual such asgrades, or threats of punishment. Government, Godwinbelieved, also depended on extrinsic motives to assure thatpeople acted in a certain manner. Laws and police were thedespotic means by which government assured that peoplewould act in the interests of the state. An education basedon the despotic methods of extrinsic motives prepared theindividual for a government of despotic laws.19

In the United States the great debate at the beginning ofthe twentieth century centered around the type of socialand economic characteristics produced within the class-room environment. Liberal educators rejected competitionand individual work as promoting laissez-faire individual-ism. They sought a greater emphasis on group activity andgroup projects. This method of tdadhing, j it (, argued,

would mold the type of character required by the pewcorporate state. Radicals in the ynited States rejected'notonly the traditional classroom blit also the liberal quest.Both sought to mold the student in accordance with theneeds and authority of state and industry. One of thedirectors of the Modem School in New Jersey wrote in the1920’s,

From the moment the child enters the public schoolhe is trained to submit to authority, to do the will ofothers as a matter of course, with the result thathabits of mind are formed which in adult life are allto the advantage of the ruling class.2 0

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The question of the type of methods used in theclassroom includes the degree and nature of authority. Theschools of the twentieth century have developed a form ofanonymous authority which prepares students formanipulation by a bureaucratic and propagandists society.The traditional classroom exemplified overt authoritywhere the teacher directly confronted the students withhis or her power and students were at all times aware ofthe source of power. The redeeming factor in this situationwas that if students wished to rebel and claim theirfreedom, they could identify the source of power andreact to it. In the twentieth century anonymous forms ofauthority were introduced into the classroom through theuse of more sophisticated psychological techniques forcontrol. These forms of control have made the realizationof manipulation and identification of the source of controlextremely difficult.

The issue of the methods of the modem classroom andits relationship to control and authority is elucidated inthe writings of Ivan Illich. Illich accepts the radicalargument thdt the techniques used in the classroom inboth. the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were relatedto shaping a character tjiat could be manipulated by theexisting institutions of authority. The changes in classroomtechniques |We^q dirfedtly 'related to changes within theseinstitutions. Illich argues that a modem consumer-orientedsociety requires a type of character which is dependent onthe Advice of experts for every action. Modern societydepends on the consumption of expertly planned pack-ages. The school prepares the individual for this society byassuming responsibility for “the whole child.” By attempt-ing to teach automobile driving, sex education, dressing,adjustment to personality problems, and a host of relatedtopics, the school also teaches that there is an expert andcorrect way of doing all of these things and that oneshould depend on the expertise of others. Students in theschool ask for freedom and what they receive is the lesson

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that freedom is only conferred by authorities and must beused “expertly.” This dependency creates a form ofalienation which destroys people’s ability to act. Activityno longer belongs to the individual but to the expert andthe institution.21

RADICAL CRITICS HAVE also been concerned about thetype of character that is developed within the educationalprocess; this concern goes beyond the classroom and intothe whole area of child rearing and the nature of themodem family. For instance, psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reichbelieved that the basic problem in character formation wasthe structure of the middle-class family. In discussing therise of fascism in Germany, he linked the authoritarianpersonality with the process of child rearing within themiddle-class German family. Significant social change, heargued, could only take place by changing the family. Thistheme was echoed throughout the nineteenth and twen-tieth centuries and, as we shall see later, was an importantingredient in many radical education plans.2 2

Criticism was also leveled at the school insofar as ittended to reinforce and strengthen the social class struc-ture of a society. This problem was debated in almost alleducational circles in the nineteenth and twentieth cen-turies. In the United States educators continually wrestledwith the problem of organizing an educational system thatdecreased the separation between social classes. Americaneducators in the nineteenth century were always quick tocriticize European systems for providing different schoolsfor different social classes. Horace Mann, the greatcommon school reformer of the nineteenth century, hopedto overcome this problem by establishing a commonschool that would be attended by children of all classes.Mann thought that with the rich and the poor rubbing

shoulders in the common schoolhouse, class distinctionswould melt away. The problem with the common schoolapproach was that not all children entered the school withthe same cultural background and intellectual tools, nordid they intend to use their education for the samepurposes. In other words, the common school provided thestudent with too common an education. By the end of thenineteenth century American educators were trying toovercome this problem by “individualizing instruction”and “meeting individual needs.”

The attempt by American educators to solve theproblem of social class highlights one criticism made byIvan Illich, namely, that the public school as a centralinstitution of socialization tends to reinforce the socialorganization of the surrounding society. In this particularcase the school tends to increase social stratification. Theattempt to meet “individual needs” in American educa-tion-through ability grouping, vocational tracking, andspecial programs—raised all

through ability grouping, vocational tracking, andspecial programs—raised all the contradictions and prob-lems inherent in the school. Ability and vocationalgrouping were based on intelligence tests, interest andachievement tests, and counseling, with the result that bythe middle of the twentieth century there was greatconcern that American education was discriminating onthe basis of social class and race. During the 1940'ssociologists studying a small American town found thatthere was a direct correlation between social classes andvocational tracks in the high school. Children of the town'supper class dominated the ranks of the college preparatoryprogram and children of the lowest class in town filled thevocational track.2 3 This pattern appeared throughout theUnited States. And when children were separatedaccording to ability as defined by standardized tests theyended up being grouped according to social class and race.In America children were schooled into their social placesalmost as if there were separate schools for each socialclass.

For Ivan Illich this process of social stratification isinherent in schooling and is one of its most destructivefeatures. During the 1960's, while Chancellor of theCatholic University of Puerto Rico, he realized that despitethe amount of money the underdeveloped countries ofLatin America were spending on education, the poor werenot reaping the full benefits of these expenditures. Forpeople to get a full return on the educational dollar theyhad to go through the whole process of schooling, fromthe early grades through the universities.

The poor are led to believe that schools will providethem with the opportunity for social advancement, andthat advancement within the process of schooling is theresult of personal merit. The poor are willing to supportschooling on the basis of this faith. But since the rich willalways have more years of schooling than the poor,schooling becomes just a new way of measuring establishedsocial distances. Because the poor themselves believe in therightness of the school standard, the school becomes aneven more powerful means of social division. The poor aretaught to believe that they are poor because they did notmake it through school. The poor are told that they weregiven the opportunity for advancement, and they believeit. Social position is translated through schooling intoachievement and underachievement. Within the school thesocial and economic disadvantages of the poor are termedunderachievement. Without the school there would be nodropouts.

Like Francisco Ferrer, Illich views the school as aprostitute of power. The

ultimate power, he believes, is theschool´s effect on one´s self-concept; that is, educationteaches individuals about their own personal ability andcharacter traits. People learn to think of themselves asstupid or bright, as being worthy or as being failures.Assuming that an adequate self-concept depends onacceptance and on ability to function in a social context,the psychological power of the school is obvious. The

school dropout is told essentially that the school—thatmost helpful and democratic of institutions—has given himor her all opportunities and she or he has failed. Thedropout cannot help but accept this failure and concludethat there is little he or she can now do to get ahead.Rejection by the school leads to submission, apathy, andin the end to complete helplessness and social stagnation.

The authority of one social class over another is alsostrengthened in this process. The school teaches that thosewith more schooling are better people. Illich argues thatthe poor learn in school that they should submit to theleadership of those with more schooling, namely the upperclasses.

Ivan Illich describes the school as the new church.Society's support of schooling as a religious faith reflectsone of the central concerns of radical critics. The schoolderives its great power from the fact that it has become thecentral child-rearing institution in modem industrial so-cieties. Early childhood education and day-care centers areslowly increasing the power of this institution, while therole of other institutions in the process of child rearing,such as the family and church, has slowly been eroded.

IN SUMMARY, the very existence of the school allows forits use by a particular political and economic ideology. Thecontent of what is taught depends on who controlssociety. But the power of the school extends beyond itspropagandists role. The socialization process of the schoolshapes a particular type of character which meets theneeds of the dominant power within the society. Forcritics like Godwin and Ferrer, the socialization process ofthe school molds citizens who will submit to the authorityof the state and function as loyal workers in the newindustrial society. And the socialization process schools

people into an acceptance of their social position andmakes them dependent upon an irrationally organizedconsumer society.

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OWNERSHIPOF SELF

OWNERSHIP OF SELF is an important concept in radicaltheories of education because it extends the idea offreedom, taking it beyond its usual meaning of politicalliberty and equality before the law, and emphasizingcontrol over one's beliefs and actions. Political liberty haslittle meaning if an individual's actions are guided by aninternalized authority from which there is no escape. Thisinternalized authority can be the result of the moralimposition of a religion, an education or a child-rearingprocess. Certainly one of the goals of most educationalsystems has been the internalization of beliefs and thedevelopment of a conscience that will give unquestionedsupport to the existing social structure. The search forownership of self has been directed toward finding aneducational method or institutional arrangement thatwould allow for freedom from internalized authority and

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ideological domination. This has led to experiments withnon-authoritarian methods of education.

The concept of ownership of self emerged from therationalistic background of the eighteenth-century Enlight-enment. The Enlightenment brought a revolt againstmoralistic preachings and religious dogma which hamperedthe free use of reason. In the nineteenth century argu-ments were directed at both the state and the church andincluded a concern with ideology and the alienation ofthought from action. This concern revolved around theMarxist argument that the dominant ideology of a societyis the ideology of the dominant elite. Ideology is not aproduct of the actions of the vast majority of a society,but of the needs and desires of one particular social class.Since ideology gives shape and meaning to knowledge, thisresults in a separation of thought and action. Knowledgebecomes something which uses people rather than beingused by them. For example, Francisco Ferrer argued in thelate nineteenth century that a knowledge of arithmeticcould either become a tool for individual use or a tool ofenslavement to the industrial system. If arithmetic weretaught in terms of the ideology of capitalism—dealing withsuch things as problems of interest rates, business compu-tations, and other techniques for functioning within thecapitalist system—knowledge became a tool for enslave-ment. On the other hand, if arithmetic problems involvingthe development of new economic systems were presented,it became a tool of freedom and action.1

Since internalized forms of authority constitute a strongbarrier to ownership of self, they have been a majorconcern of radical critics from Rousseau, to Stimer, to thepresent day. Traditionally, Christianity referred to inter-nalized authority as “conscience” and viewed it as thepresence of God’s guidance and law within each person. Inthe late nineteenth century, church, school, family, andcommunity customs were all viewed as important sources

for the internalization of beliefs which help maintain socialorder.

ONE OF THE EARLIEST educational plans to deal withfreeing the individual from the domination of a system ofinternalized prescribed beliefs was Jean Jacques Rousseau'sEmile, written in the eighteenth century.2 This work iscertainly not as radical as that of the nineteenth-centuryanarchists but it did foreshadow many of their ideas and isa valuable aid to understanding the later arguments of menlike the German anarchist Max Stimer. Rousseau's educa-tional plan was based on the psychological argument thatan individual was incapable of reasoning about moral andsocial problems until the age of adolescence. Any teachingof moral and social ideas before this age resulted inacceptance on the basis of authority rather than reason.Rousseau recommended isolating the child from theseproblems and building the child's early education around afuture use of reason. The problem of isolation became animportant issue among libertarian educators in the nine-teenth and twentieth centuries. Was it really feasible toisolate the child from any dogmatic teaching? And whatdo you teach if you are isolating the child from all dogma?As we shall see, this became an important problem foranarchist educators like Francisco Ferrer.

According to Rousseau, the individual during this earlyperiod of development was incapable of reasoning aboutmorality or social relations. Words like "duty," "obey,""command," and "obligation" should be banished fromthe vocabulary during this stage of life. An adult shouldnot confront a child with any claim of authority or duty,but with the simple reality that the adult is stronger andolder.

For Rousseau the important thing was to avoid any

moralistic situations before the age when the child couldhandle them with his or her own powers of reasoning. Thiswas an important aspect of what Rousseau called "negativeeducation.'' In this case it meant no moral instruction. Ifmoral instruction were given at an early age, it woulddominate action rather than be utilized by the individual.The second part of negative education was the avoidanceof verbal learning. This meant education through exper-ience and not through verbal instruction or reading.Rousseau felt that books were one of the great plagues ofchildhood. He did not mean that the child should not betaught how to read, but rather that learning to read shouldbe attached to experience and necessity. For example,Emile in Rousseau's book would receive invitations

todinners and parties and couldn’t find anyone to read themto him. From these experiences Emile would take it uponhimself to learn how to read because of self-interest andnecessity. Rousseau’s method of teaching reading avoidedmoral instruction—it wasn’t based on a sense of duty orbelief in some abstract good. Learning and knowledge weretools for the individual to use, not tools to use theindividual. As we shall see in the next chapter, this is amajor emphasis in the pedagogical methods of PauloFreire.

The same idea guided the education of Emile just beforethe stage of adolescence. Rousseau argued that followingthe law of necessity came the principle of utility.Embodied in this principle was the sacred question, “Whatis the good of that?” During this stage Emile wasintroduced to the usefulness of social relationships whileavoiding their moral aspects. By learning about the manualarts and occupations, Emile learned about the interde-pendence of society and the usefulness of social organi-zation. Emile learned about the importance of socialorganization by experiencing its personal usefulness andnecessity. Thus with the beginning of the age of reasonEmile would be able to make a choice not on the basis of

belief but after consideration of necessity and usefulness.The acceptance of a government, for instance, would notbe a product of youthful indoctrination or the establish-ment of a fixed set of beliefs but a choice resulting from aprocess of reasoning.

At adolescence, Rousseau argued, the individual wasreborn. The development of sexual drives forced theindividual out of a narrowly defined sense of self into thesocial world. The development of moral and socialreasoning was a direct outgrowth of self-love. An in-dividual's understanding of others was based on the abilityto identify with the feelings of others. Concerns aboutgood and bad with regard to others were to be a result ofthe identity one established between self and others. Atthis stage Emile was introduced into society and under-went social and religious education. From this Emilelearned that if the authority of individuals and theprejudices of society are eliminated from education, andthe individual is educated according to nature, the light ofreason becomes the guide for individual action.

At the end of Emile's education he was asked what hehad learned. He replied

At the end of Emile's education he was asked what hehad learned. He replied that he had been taught to be freeby learning to yield to necessity, the ultimate necessity oflife being death. Rather than struggle with destiny,freedom requires its acceptance. He also argued thatpeople cannot obtain freedom under the safeguard of laws.Liberty, he claimed, was not to be found in governmentbut in the heart of the free person.

ONE OF THE SIGNIFICANT FAILURES of Emile wasRousseau's plan for making all social and moral beliefs theproduct of reasoning based on necessity and usefulness. Itwas the nineteenth-century anarchist Max Stimer whodeveloped this idea to its fullest and labeled it theownership of self. Stimer, whose reeil name was Johann

Casper Schmidt, was a poor German schoolteacher whoduring the 1840's attended meetings of the YoungHegelians in Berlin with Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. In1842 Marx published Stimer's important article on education, "The False Principle of Our Education," in theRheinische Zeitung. In 1844 Stirner completed his book. The Ego and His Own which so upset Marx that he later

devoted a large section of The German Ideology to anattack on Stirner.3

Stirner essentially agreed with Rousseau that themethod of education should allow for individual choice ofbelief. He premised this on the idea that individuals shouldat all times make their knowledge and beliefs subservientto their own needs and desires. In a sense the real test ofthis was their ability to rid themselves of any particularidea and belief. As Stirner wrote in his book, The Ego andHis Own, "The thought is my own only when I have nomisgiving about bringing it in danger of death everymoment, when I do not have to fear its loss as a loss forme, a loss of me."4 The thought that one could not get ridof, the thought which owned the individual, was whatStirner referred to as the "wheel in the head"—the moralimperative which told one what should be done. It was thethought which controlled the will, the knowledge whichused the individual, rather than being used by theindividual.

For Stirner the ownership of self meant the eliminationof "wheels in the head." This was a theme he elaboratedon in "The False Principle of Our Education." StirnerIII made a distinction between a "freeman" and an "educated

man.” For the educated man knowledge was used to shapecharacter; it became a wheel in the head which allowedhim to be possessed by the church, state or humanity. Forthe freeman knowledge was used to facilitate choice. “Ifone awakens in men the idea of freedom,” Stirner wrote,

then the freemen will incessantly go on to freethemselves; if, on the contrary, one only educates

them, then they will at all times accommodatethemselves to circumstances in the most highlyeducated and elegant manner and degenerate intosubservient cringing souls.5

For the freeman knowing something was the source ofgreater choice, while for the educated man knowingsomething was the determiner of choice.

The major problem with modern society, Stirner be-lieved, was that it was full of educated people instead offree people. “Man,” Stirner warned, “your head ishaunted; you have wheels in your head! . . . An idea thathas subjected the man to itself.” The problem was how toachieve not political liberty but ownership of self. Stirnerobjected to the idea of political liberty because it onlymeant the freedom of institutions and ideology. “Politicalliberty,” he wrote,

meant that the polis, the State, is free; freedom ofreligion that religion is free, as freedom of consciencesignifies that conscience is free; not, therefore, that Iam free from the State, from religion, from con-science, or that I am rid of them.6

This made the control and nature of education the centralissue for modem society.

The real source of power in a society was the institutionwhich owned the inner life of the individual. In the pastthe church fulfilled the mission of guiding and dominatingthe mind. In the world of the nineteenth century thedominating influence was becoming the politics of thestate. Religion and politics gained power by their ability toestablish imperatives directing the actions of the indi-vidual. Stirner wrote, “Under religion and politics manfinds himself at the standpoint of should: he shouldbecome this and that, should be so and so. With thispostulate, this commandment, every one steps not only infront of another but also in front of himself.”7

The power of the modem state lay in its recognition ofthe importance of domination of the mind. In the modemstate, laws were internalized within the individual, so that“freedom” merely meant the freedom to obey the lawsthat one had been taught to believe. It was the dream ofthe nineteenth-century schoolmasters to end disobediencethrough the internalization of law in the public schools.Stirner wrote, in one of his finest passages,

Here at last the domination of the law is for the firsttime complete. “Not I live, but the law lives in me.”Thus I have really come so far to be only the vessel ofits glory. Every Prussian carries his gendarme in hisbreast, says a high Prussian officer.

Placing the gendarme in the breast was the goal of themodem state. Freedom meant freedom from direct controlof the state and freedom to act according to the laws ofthe state. Stirner quoted Francois Guizot, an importantpolitical leader in France in the 1840’s, as stating, “Thegreat difficulty of to-day is the guiding and dominating ofthe mind. Formerly the church fulfilled this mission; nowit is not adequate to it. It is from the university that thisgreat service must be expected. . . .” It was for this reason,Guizot argued, that government had the duty of support-ing the university. Stirner pointed out that the charterbeing issued for the university called for freedom ofthought and conscience. He quietly commented, “So, infavor of freedom of thought and conscience, the ministerdemands ‘the guiding and dominating of the mind.’ ”8If ■ Domination was not only an internalization of a

concrete ideology which had direct and immediate ref-erence to the needs of a society. Domination also referredto the ideal, the moral imperative that captured the loyaltyof the individual. There were two levels of wheels in thehead. The first level led people through everyday life. Onewent to church and paid taxes because that was what onewas taught; that was the way one lived. On the second

level were ideals—ideals that drove people to sacrificethemselves for the good of the fatherland, that made themtry to be Christ-like, ideals that led them to give up whatthey were for some unrealizable goal. It was this realm ofideals upon which the strength of the church and statewas built. Patriotism and religious fervor were the resultsof people being possessed by ideals.

The ideal gains possession of people, Stirner argued,because of a confusion between what is thinkable andwhat is possible. Just because one can think that all peoplecan be good does not mean that it is possible for all peopleto be good nor that they ought to be good. Yet it isprecisely this "sleight of mind,''Stirner suggested, that occurs."It was thinkable that men might become rational;thinkable, that they might know Christ; thinkable, thatthey might become moral . . . that they might be obedientsubjects . . ." Since it was thinkable, it was possible, "andfurther, because it was possible to men . . . therefore theyought to be so, it was their calling; and finally—one is totake men only according to this calling, only as called men,'not as they are, but as they ought to be.' " From thispoint of view, individuals in the modem world were drivencreatures who sacrificed what they were for some ideal ofwhat they ought to be. People did not own themselves butwere owned by what they ought to be. The church toldpeople they ought to be like Christ, the state that theyought to be good citizens, and the liberal politician thatthey ought to give all to the cause of humanity. Modemindividuals could never find themselves because of a worldsurrounded with images of what they ought to be. "Man isnot the individual," Stirner wrote, "but man is a thought,an ideal, to which the individual is related not even as thechild to the man, but as a chalk point to a point thoughtof. . ." Both the possibility and moral imperativeness ofan ideal gain existence because they too can be formulatedby thought. The thought of the dominant institutionsbecame the moral imperative of a society. In the past the

dominant institution was the church with its handmaiden,the priest; in the nineteenth century it was the state andits preacher, the schoolmaster. "Thus," Stimer wrote, "thethinkers rule in the world as long as the age of priests or ofschoolmasters lasts, and what they think of is possible, butwhat is possible must be realized."9

Stimer believed that for individuals to own themselvesthey must gain beliefs not through schooling but throughactions of the will. In other words, a person might find ituseful to believe in something and act according to thatbelief. All ideas and actions were to be judged in terms oftheir value to the person. The distinction Stimer made wasessentially the difference between learning a religiouscatechism at an early age and making a choice later in lifeabout joining a church. On the one hand, learning tobelieve in a religion at an early age put a wheel in the headthat was difficult to lose. Religion becomes, as Stimerstated

wheel in the headthat was difficult to lose. Religion becomes, as Stimerstated, "An idea that has subjected the man to itself." Onthe other hand, if one chose a religion through the exerciseof reason based on relevant knowledge and free of anybelief about what ought to be, that belief was owned bythat person. If one owned the thought, one could get ridof it; it did not own the individual.

Of course in the case of religion, Stimer assumed thatnobody would want to own such a belief if given a choice.Religion and the state depended upon the teaching ofdogma. If people truly owned themselves, Stimer assumed,they would not find religion or the state useful and wouldnot choose them.

II! < Stimer also criticized the idea of equality in the modem

state. Equality within the state amounted simply to equaltreatment by the state. "As citizens of the State," Stimerwrote, "they are certainly all equal for the State. But itwill divide them and advance them or put them in the rear,according to its special ends, if on no other account; andstill more must it distinguish them from one another asgood and bad citizens." Within the framework of equality

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and freedom, the modern state turned all things to its ownends. Equality before the law did not mean the end ofinjustice, for all people could be treated equally underunjust laws.1 0

The belief in the rightness of the state was the mainproblem. If people became citizens and lived for the state,then the state could sanctify all actions. "If the welfare ofthe State is the end, war is a hallowed means; if justice isthe State's end, homicide is a hallowed means, and is calledby its sacred name, 'execution'; the sacred State hallowsevery thing that is serviceable to it." The state was aninstrument of power for the dominant elite in a society. Ifthe elite killed through the state it was justice. If a citizenkilled in retaliation, it was a crime. This situation couldexist only if people were taught to believe in the conceptof the state. Just as the church taught morality for God,schools taught citizenship for the state.

The solution to the problem of the state was a directoutgrowth of Stimer's reflections on education-knowledge would become a vehicle for self-ownership, atool by which people made choices about what was usefulto them. Stimer

ideal by which people made choices about what was desirable. Stirner envisioned replacing the state with aUnion of Egoists—a social organization of free individualsin which there would be no sacrifice to meaninglessabstraction; like the “welfare of human society.” Socialorganizations and institutions would be based on the needsof each individual. When their usefulness ended, so wouldthe institutions.11

Stimer never stated in any detail how one would achievean education free of dogma and moral imperatives or howan individual could be freed of the wheels in the head. Thisprocess became a goal for libertarian educators. They oftengot bogged down in circular arguments about a non-dogmatic education itself establishing its own dogma.Some radicals found themselves in the strange position oftaking a strong ideological stance toward social problemsbut fearing to convey that belief to the child. For example,

the American anarchist Emma Goldman warned radicalparents at the beginning of the twentieth century that ifthey imposed beliefs on their children, they would findthat the

boy or girl, over-fed on Thomas Paine, will land in thearms of the Church, or they will vote for imperialismonly to escape the drag of economic determinism andscientific socialism, or that they . . . cling to theirright of accumulating property, only to find relieffrom the old-fashioned communism of their father.12

THE DILEMMA OF ESTABLISHING an education forself-ownership was highlighted in Francisco Ferrer’sModem School in Spain. When Ferrer set about organizinghis school in the 1890’s, he searched for non-dogmaticbooks for its library. He found himself completelyfrustrated in his search and consequently the schoolopened without a single volume in its library.13 Theinability to find a non-dogmatic text illustrates the dangerof libertarian education becoming a vacuum, with adultsfearing to pass on any knowledge. This extreme was neverreached in the nineteenth century because of a basic beliefin the objective facts of science and human reason. Therewas an overriding faith that there existed a body ofobjective natural and social laws that people could learni*1 and use for their own benefit.

It was within the framework of science and rationalismthat Ferrer tried to actualize an education for self-ownership and freedom from dogmatic control. He be-lieved the role of the teacher to be that of planting thegerm of ideas which

He believed the role of the teacher to be that of planting thegerm of ideas which would grow within the range of theindividual's reason. The germ of the ideas was to be in theform of the exact sciences. "The work of man's cerebral

energy is to create the ideal," Ferrer wrote, "with the aidof art and philosophy. But in order that the ideal shall notdegenerate into fables, or mystic and unsubstantialdreams ... it is absolutely necessary to give it a secure andunshakable foundation in the exact sciences."1 4

The only purpose in teaching the exact sciences was toprovide a basis for the use of reason. Education was notdesigned to make a person into a good citizen, a religiousperson, or even a good person. Any such goal was viewedas dogmatic, as imposing an ideal of what ought to be. Itwas for this reason that there were no rewards orpunishments in Ferrer's Modem School. "Since we are noteducating for a specific purpose," Ferrer wrote, "wecannot determine the capacity or incapacity of the child."In other words, in an educational process with noparticular goal or end, the children could not be rewardedor punished because there was nothing to be punishedfor.15

There were goals, of course. Whether these goalsdefeated the idea of non-dogmatic education was aquestion that provided endless debate in libertarian circlesand proved utterly unanswerable. Ferrer clearly stated,

It must be the aim of the rational schools to show thechildren that there will be tyranny and slavery as longas one man depends upon another, to study thecauses of the prevailing ignorance, to learn the originof all the traditional practices which give life to theexisting social system, and to direct the attention ofthe pupils to these matters.

One feels confident that Ferrer would have dismissed anycriticism of this goal as nonsense. He was convinced thatthere was an objective set of facts that could be learnedwithout subjecting the student to an ideology.

One example was Ferrer's technique of teaching arith-metic. This was discussed earlier in this chapter as anillustration of either enslavement or freedom through

knowledge. Ferrer wanted arithmetic taught with examplesdealing with the just distribution of production, communi-cation, transportation, the benefits of machinery, andpublic works. "In a word," Ferrer wrote, "the ModemSchool

wants a number of problems showing whatarithmetic really ought to be—the science of the socialeconomy (taking the work economy in its etymologicalsense of ‘good distribution’).”1 6 In this sense objectivefact or knowledge had a special meaning. It was objectivein the sense that individuals could use it for maintainingtheir own individual freedom. Arithmetic placed in theframework of the existing economic systems became amethod by which individuals were indoctrinated into thosesystems. On the other hand, arithmetic presented as a toolfor creating a more just organization of the economy wasknowledge that individuals could use to free themselves.

Another example of this type of method was EmmaGoldman’s criticism of traditional methods of teachinghistory. She wrote, “See how the events of the worldbecome like a cheap puppet show, where a few wire-pullersare supposed to have directed the course of developmentof the entire race.” History which emphasized the actionsof rulers, governments, and great men conditioned theindividual to accept a society in which most people wereexpected to be passive with a few leaders directing events.Emma Goldman believed history should emphasize theability of all people to act and shape the direction ofhistory. History presented in the traditional mannerenslaved humanity to authoritarian institutions. But whenhistory is portrayed with all people as active agents,individuals learn of their power to shape the future.1 7

The educational process in these examples loses itsdogmatism and moral direction—it presents material theindividual can use to obtain freedom. The problem withthis technique is that it skirts the issue of how theindividual can learn about a particular ideology out of adesire to understand. How does one learn about religion

without becoming religious? How does one learn aboutcapitalism without becoming a capitalist? Should one infact isolate the child from all beliefs? Couldn’t one learnmore about the real meaning of an ideology by listening toa believer argue his or her cause?

ONE WAY OUT of this particular dilemma was offered bythe Christian anarchist and Russian novelist, Leo Tolstoy,who established a school in Russia in the 1860’s. Tolstoyresolved the issue by replacing the concept of educationwith that of culture. He argued that one had to make aclear distinction between the concepts of culture, educa-tion, instruction, and teaching. Culture

between the concepts of culture, educa-tion, instruction, and teaching. Culture was defined as thetotal of all the social forces which shaped the character ofthe individual. Education was the conscious attempt togive people a particular type of character and habit. AsTolstoy stated, “Education is the tendency of one man tomake another just like himself.” The difference betweeneducation and culture was compulsion. “Education isculture under restraint. Culture is free.” Tolstoy arguedthat instruction and teaching were related to both educa-tion and culture. Instruction was the transmission of oneperson’s information to another; teaching was the instruc-tion of physical skills. Teaching and instruction weremeans of culture, Tolstoy claimed, when they were free.They were means of education, “when the teaching isforced upon the pupil, and when the instruction isexclusive, that is when only those subjects are taughtwhich the educator regards as necessary.”18

Learning, then, should be a process of culture and notof education. The school should practice non-interference,with students left free to learn what they wanted to learn.Tolstoy defined a school as “the conscious activity of he

who gives culture upon those who receive it. . Non-interference in the school meant “granting the person . . .the full freedom to avail himself of the teaching whichanswers his need, which he wants . . . and to avoid teachingwhich he does not need and which he does not want.”Museums and public lectures were examples of schools ofnon-interference: they were consciously planned to

achieve a certain goal, but the user was free to attend ornot to attend. Established schools and universities, on theother hand, used a system of rewards and punishments andlimited the area of studies to achieve their particular ends.A non-compulsory school was one without a plannedprogram where teachers could teach what they wanted andtheir offerings would be regulated by the demands of thestudents. The school would not be interested in how itsteaching was used or what the effect would be on thestudents. The school would be a place of culture and notof education.

Tolstoy’s solution essentially tried to solve the Stimer-ian problem of self-ownership by eliminating all compul-sory institutions that were designed to turn a person intosomething. This was premised on a profound belief that ifpeople were allowed to be self-regulating, they wouldchoose the best and most rewarding life. For Tolstoy, whowas a Christian anarchist, self-regulation meant allowingpeople to be governed by the goodness of God within themselves. This

allowingpeople to be governed by the goodness of God withinthemselves. This, of course, was a concept rejected bystrict rationalists like Ferrer and anti-religious thinkers likeStimer. Yet if the religious argument is overlooked, thereare possible grounds for agreement between Stimer andTolstoy on the issue of self-regulation, centering on therelationship between teacher and student. Both Stimer andTolstoy would probably have agreed that self-regulation isimpossible as long as the traditional teacher-studentrelationship exists and the school continues consciously toplan a particular outcome.

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STIRNER'S ANALYSIS of the relationship between stu-dent and teacher was one of his most profound contribu-tions to the understanding of the enslavement of humanityin the modem world. Ownership of self was more than justa matter of not forcing moral imperatives and dogma onthe individual; it was also a matter of free exercise of thewill. The very existence of a teacher-to-student relation-ship froze the will of the individual. In fact this rela-tionship prepared individuals to give up their wills to theauthority of social institutions.

Stimer believed that knowledge which was taughtturned individuals into learners rather than creative per-sons. Learners lost their freedom of will through increasingdependency on experts and institutions for instructions onhow to act. They were without free will because theydepended on learning how to act rather than determiningfor themselves how to act.

Where will a creative person be educated instead of alearning one, where does the teacher turn into afellow worker, where does he recognize knowledge asturning into will, where does the free man count as agoal and not the merely educated? [emphasisadded]19

To avoid turning people into mere learners, the goal ofpedagogy should be self-development—in the sense of anindividual gaining self-awareness and the ability to act. Theexisting schools worked against the freedom of the will.

In discussing the development of education up to histime, Stimer argued that following the Reformation,education in the humanistic tradition was a source ofpower: ". . . . education, as a power, raised him who

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possessed it over the weak, who lacked it, and theeducated man counted as the

possessed it over the weak, who lacked it, and theeducated man counted ... as the mighty, the powerful,the imposing one: for he was an authority." The rise of theidea of universal schooling, on the other hand, underminedthe authority of the humanist scholar with a new systemdesigned to produce citizens trained for practical life.Authority in the system of popular education was not thatof one person over another; it was the authority of thedogma of the practical and useful. This new educationalauthority meant not subservience to the scholar, butsubservience to an ideology of pragmatism. Neither ideawas to Stimer's liking, ". . . only scholars come out of themenageries of the humanists, only 'useful citizens' out ofthose of the realists, both of whom are indeed nothing butsubservient people." Education for practical life, Stimerbelieved, produced people of principle who acted accord-ing to maxims. "Most college students," he stated, "areliving examples of this sad turn of events. Trained in themost excellent manner, they go on in training; drilled, theycontinue drilling."2 0

In the framework of Stimer's argument the growth ofpublic schools in the nineteenth century takes on addedmeaning. As we have pointed out, the schools were tied tothe idea of turning out useful citizens trained for practicallife. The school assumed responsibility for the whole child.Individual free will and initiative became subservient to theexpertise of the teacher. The enslavement of the individualwas the result of the actions of the individual being turnedover to the production line of education.l|ii To understand this concept fully one must place it

within the broad historical framework of the developmentof the school. What Stimer was witnessing in the nine-teenth-century school was the steady institutionalizationof the socialization process. Some form of school hadalways existed in Western society but its role had beenwhat Tolstoy referred to as instruction and teaching, noteducation. Schools existed often on a voluntary basis to

teach reading, writing, and skills needed for the church orbusiness. Churches, of course, developed schools for theirown moral purposes. Most of the ways an individuallearned how to act were a part of growing and living withinthe family and community. There was little separationbetween the socialization process and the world in whichindividuals acted out their lives. Willing and acting were apart of life and one saw one's actions as a product of one'sinteractions with society.

The school was fast becoming the central agency forsocialization, though. It was assuming more and moreresponsibility for completely educating or shaping theindividual. Socialization became more a product of the lifeof the school than of the life of the community. By theend of the nineteenth century, educators like John Deweywere expressing concern about this situation, demandingthat the school become a community that reflected thereal life of the surrounding world. From the viewpoint ofeducators like Dewey the school had to be accepted as thecentral agency of socialization—the problem was to makeit effective by turning it into a real community.

Stirner asserted that within the school knowledge didnot grow as part of a process of action and exercise of will,but was taught by a teacher and then acted upon by thestudent. What the school really taught the individual washow to be a learner. This took Stirner far beyond manyother libertarian educators of the nineteenth century. Hewould have rejected Ferrer, not because Ferrer wanted anon-dogmatic education, but because he wanted a school.In Tolstoy's terms, Stimer wanted a society wheresocialization was a product of culture and not of edu-cation. Ownership of self meant freedom from dogma andmoral imperatives and a will that did not depend onauthoritarian sources. Ownership of self meant freedomfrom schools themselves.

In the twentieth century this theme has been elaboratedupon by Ivan Illich. Illich sees the teacher-student relation-

ship as the backbone of the enslavement of modemhumanity to a mass consumer society. He argues that whatpeople learn in school is to trust the judgment of theeducator and distrust their own judgment. In school onelearns proper and socially useful ways of working, study-ing, using leisure time, and enjoying life. This prepares oneto accept a society that provides packages and programsfor all aspects of life. The will is frozen until an expertprescribes or approves. Illich wrote in 1971,

... in a service centered economy man is estrangedfrom what he can "do" as well as from what he can"make," ... he has delivered his mind and heart overto therapeutic treatment even more completely thanhe has sold away the fruits of his labor.

For Illich, "Schools have alienated man from his learning."The process of

schooling turns the individual completelyover to the control and authority of experts and in-stitutions.2 1

Explicit in Illich's thinking and implicit in Stimer's isthe idea that the only solution would be the creation of asociety in which schools would neither exist nor benecessary. This would not mean the end of institutions topass on skills, but the end of institutions with curriculumsdesigned to make people into something, to manipulatethem. Knowledge and learning within such a society wouldbe linked to real-life processes and personal usefulness.Knowledge and learning would not be placed in a specialinstitution.

Implied in the concept of a society without schools isthe end of all other institutions which are breedinggrounds for dogma and moral imperatives. In a sense thechurch and state are themselves schools, with ideas of howpeople should act and what they ought to be. A societywithout schools would be one without institutions ofmysticism and authority. It would be a society of

self-regulation where institutions would be products ofpersonal need and usefulness and not sources of power.

Certainly Francisco Ferrer might have responded to theidea of deschooling society by saying that one could notwish a non-authoritarian society into being and that theModem School was the beginning of a plan to move in thatdirection. Stirner never fully dealt with the problem ofpassing on knowledge without filling the head with wheelsand ideals. But he was sure, as Elizabeth Burns Ferm (anAmerican educator and eventually the head of an Amer-ican-style Modem School) wrote in 1907, that theeducator to be avoided was the one that endeavored "tomake and leave an impression on the child."2 2

IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY libertarian groups havetried to implement these educational goals, either bycreating non-authoritarian schools or by rejecting theconcept of schooling altogether. Those who sought toestablish libertarian institutions of schooling envisionedlearning centers that would avoid the institutionalizationof controls.

One of the problems that has confronted contemporarylibertarians is that they live in a highly organized andrationalized technological society which leaves little roomfor the individual to grow and develop through theexercise of

individual will. Urban industrial society isalready so highly organized that children can find littleopportunity to explore and construct their own world.Added to this is the uniformity of the equipment availableto educational leaders—mass-produced learning aids andplaythings which are used to rationalize the developmentof the individual. The libertarian tradition requires not

only freedom from the imposition of ideology but alsofreedom for self-development, and the twentieth centuryhas witnessed a wide variety of educational experimentsdesigned to create environments for self-development.

The Modem School movement begun by Ferrer andA.S. Neill's Summerhill represent part of this libertarianconcern; in the 1950's and 1960's it was further evidencedin a very widespread movement for the establishment of"free schools" and alternative forms of education. The freeschool movement was an attempt to establish an environ-ment for self-development in a world that was consideredoverly structured and rationalized. One of the precursorsof the "free school" idea of the 1960's, for instance, wasthe development of the "free playground" movement inthe 1940's. This movement was an expression of libertar-ian concern about reshaping the world so that peoplecould control and use it for their own purposes.2 3 Thefirst free playground was begun in Copenhagen in 1943and shortly after World War II the idea spread to Sweden,Switzerland, and the United States. In Stockholm theplayground was known as "Freetown," in Minneapolis as"The Yard," and in Switzerland as "Robinson Crusoeplaygrounds." The basic principle of the adventure play-ground was that it was equipped only with raw materialand tools, lumber, nails, junk metal, shovels, and buildingequipment. There was no manufactured equipment such asswings or see-saws; essentially the children were given themeans to build, destroy, and rebuild their playgrounds.2 4

The interesting thing about the adventure playgroundmovement is its implicit criticism of a new component ofauthoritarian control: the urban-industrial environmentitself, as represented in the highly structured school andplayground. Manufactured equipment on the playgroundtends to structure play itself, and leave little room forcreativity or experiment. In this sense a free school or afree playground could provide an opportunity for the childto experience an unstructured environment.

In this context one can understand that libertarianinvolvement in the free school movement of the 1960'swas taking one solution to the problem of education: freeschools as an oasis from authoritarian control and as ameans of passing on the knowledge to be free. On thesurface one could argue that the term "free school" wascontradictory. How could a school be free if, as Tolstoyargued, a school was a conscious attempt to turn one intoa "something"? The free school movement was, and still is,a very complex phenomenon with roots partly in Freudianand Reichian psychology, as represented in A.S. Neill'sSummerhill, and partly in traditional libertarian concernsabout authority, as best exemplified in Ferrer and theModern Schools. Part of the movement can be explained,as we shall see in the chapter on Reich and Neill, in termsof changing psychological perspectives, and part of themovement can be explained in terms of an attempt toprovide a free and unstructured environment. GeorgeDennison, one of the popular leaders of the free schoolmovement, wrote in 1966 that his "First Street School isradical and experimental. There are no grades, no gradedreport cards, no competitive examinations. No child iscompelled to study or answer questions when he does notwant to."2 5 At first glance there would appear to be verylittle that was "radical" about a situation without grades,report cards, or examinations. After all, that is the waythings "should" be. But placed in a broader perspective,these changes were radical in the sense that the First StreetSchool represented a refuge from a society that was highlystructured and graded and left little room for self-development.

One of the major spokesmen for the free schoolmovement was America's leading libertarian philosopher,Paul Goodman. Goodman wrote not only about schoolingbut also about the nature and direction of modem society.He was one of the leading spokesmen for the decentraliza-tion of urban and technological structures. Concerned with

maximizing individual autonomy, he argued for the decen-tralization of industry to a local level so that the individualcould directly control the use of technology. In the samemanner he argued for decentralization and democraticlocal control of bureaucracies.2 6

Goodman continued the libertarian tradition by arguingthat schooling had become a process by which theindividual was stamped, graded, certified, and

returned tosociety. All of this, he argued, was for the benefit of theruling industrial elite. He wrote in Compulsory Mis-Education in the early 1960's that the real function ofeducation was to grade and market skills. "This means, ineffect, that a few great corporations are getting the benefitof an enormous weeding out and selective process—allchildren are fed into the mill and everybody pays forit."2 7 Goodman's plans for education involved the decentralization of large and cumbersome school systems andthe establishment of small-scale schools. He offered a planwhich together with A.S. Neill's ideas gave direction to thefree school movement. Goodman suggested that in somecases schools could dispense with their classes and usestreets, stores, museums, movies, and factories as places oflearning. The use of certified teachers could be dispensedwith and people like the druggist, the storekeeper, and thefactory worker could be used as teachers. And, mostimportant, the school would be non-compulsory. Withincities it would be reduced to a mini-school which throughdecentralization would be influenced by the desires of thestudents and the neighborhood community.2 8

IT WAS IVAN ILLICH in the late 1960's who gave thelibertarian tradition new life both in terms of criticismsand proposals. Illich argues that schools themselves are the

problem. They are a source of ideological control, andthey reproduce and reinforce the existing social structure.The schools also serve to alienate people from theirlearning and make them dependent on the authority ofinstitutions and experts. Illich's proposals for deschoolingsociety overcome some of the inherent problems of thefree school movement. The free school movement hasassumed the need for something called a school toovercome the problems of an existing structured society.The danger lies in the possibility that the free schoolwould become even more therapeutic, and create evenmore dependency, than the established school. Whatindividuals might actually learn in such a school was thatthey needed an institution to give them freedom. Illichrejects the concept of the free school and argues that trueautonomy can result only from changes in institutionalstyles. It is within this context that the deschooling ofsociety is to take place.

Ivan Illich's concept of what education should be is verymuch like Tolstoy's. In fact, one could argue that he iswithin this traditional stream of Christian anarchism. BothIllich and Tolstoy want people to have the chance toexperience

anarchism. Both Illich and Tolstoy want people to have the chance toexperience culture without the creation of an institutioncalled the school which tries consciously to turn peopleinto something, to shape people according to a pre-conceived goal, by means of an organized curriculum.

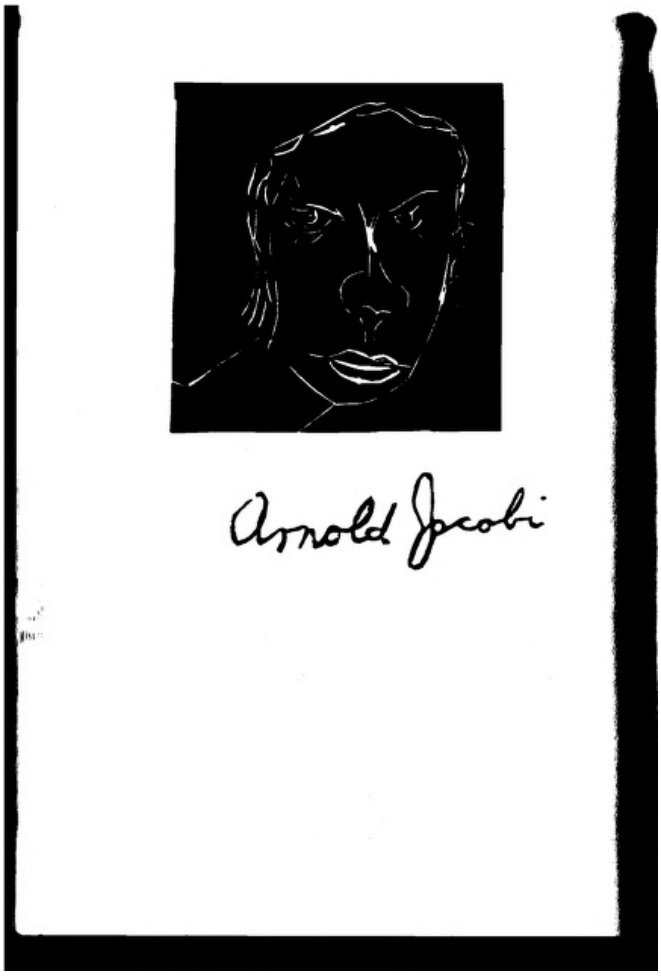
The most pressing problem of the modem world, Illichargues, is to change the style of institutions and tech-nology so that they work for the benefit of the individual.A series of “public utilities” for education which peoplecould use for their own purposes would serve this goal.These utilities would be organized so that no one couldgain a position of power in them. Essentially what Illichproposes is dividing the functions of schooling intoseparate and distinct units. For instance, he suggests apublic utility that would be an information center, a kindof expanded library where books and other media would

be available, as well as information on such things asvisiting industrial centers and on opportunities to observe avariety of community activities. Another distinct utilitywould be a place where people could register theirskills—typing, fishing, bricklaying, knowledge of history,etc. Those who wished to learn a skill could then findsomeone who had that skill and was willing to teach it. Atboth the information center and the skill center individualswould be free to choose whatever information or skillsthey wanted to learn. There would be no one in a positionto make those decisions for the individual nor decide whatwas in the individual’s best interest. The divorce of the twofunctions would avoid the possibility of the developmentof an extended and graded curriculum. There might be acurriculum within a skill like typing, but this curriculumwould not extend beyond that particular skill. In otherwords, the curriculum planning would be completelyturned over to the individual. Illich also proposes anotherutility or communications system as a means of linkingpeople of common interests. This could be either com-puter matching, journals dealing with specific interests, orsimple notices in which people would register the interestsstthat they wished to share.2 9

Illich’s exploration of differing institutional styles ex-presses traditional libertarian interests more consistentlythan the free schools, which served as oases of free activitybut failed to effect any change in the overall structure ofsociety. They were schools with planned purposes and as■m' such always stood the chance of being used as institutions

ill hit of control. Illich's plans emphasize the separation of

learning and control. In the eighteenth and nineteenthcenturies, William Godwin, Max Stimer, Leo Tolstoy, andother anarchists recognized this as one of the fundamentalproblems for modern society. In the twentieth century,with the expansion of schooling and psychological tech-niques of control within the school, the problem has



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THE GROWTH OFCONSCIOUSNESS:MARX TO FREIRE

KARL MARX REFERRED to Max Stimer as a man inrevolt against the "rule of thoughts," who believed that ifyou taught people "to knock them out of their heads . . .existing reality . . . would collapse."1 This, Marx said, wasvery much

like believing that drowning resulted frompeople being possessed with the idea of gravity; if youknocked the idea out of their heads by showing it to be asuperstition or a religious idea, it “would be proof againstany danger from water.” It was not enough to talk aboutthe “spooks” controlling human consciousness withouttalking about the social reality which produced thosespooks. This link between social reality and consciousnesshad important implications for pedagogical methods,becoming a key element in the educational proposals oftwentieth-century humanist psychologists like Carl Rogersand in the pedagogical techniques of the Brazilian educatorPaulo Freire.

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Paulo Freire, in conducting literacy programs for adultsin Brazil in the mid-twentieth century, developed aperspective which combined educational methods with thisMarxian concept of consciousness. The separation ofthought and action is overcome by linking learning to willand social action. Learning becomes an instrument forindividual liberation. Freire first set forth his educationalmethod in his doctoral dissertation at the University ofRecife in Brazil in 1959. While working as Professor ofHistory and Philosophy of Education at the same university, his teaching methods were implemented throughoutthe northeastern part of Brazil. After the military coup of1964, Freire was jailed by the government for hiseducational activities. He was “invited” to leave thecountry and spent the next five years working in Chile,then became a consultant at Harvard University. Freire’slectures at Ivan Illich’s Center for Intercultural Documen-tation in Mexico in 1970 and 1971 attracted students fromthroughout South America. In Mexico and other LatinAmerican countries his techniques have been implementedin both rural and urban settings. Freire must be consideredone of the most important educational philosophers of thetwentieth century.

At the heart of Freire’s educational method is a conceptof humanity which owes its origin to Marx’s concern withthe development of individual consciousness and alienationin modem society. His concept of human potential inmany ways fulfills the meaning of consciousness as definedby Marx and gives expression to Stimer’s concept ofownership of self. One must understand Freire’s conceptof humanity in order to grasp his educational method.Freire’s whole technique stands in danger of being trivial-ized unless this concept is emphasized.

The goal of social life, Freire argues, is the humanizationof the world. By this he means a process by which eachperson becomes conscious of the social forces workingupon him or her, reflects upon those forces, and becomes

capable of transforming the world. To be human is to bean actor who makes choices and seeks to guide one's owndestiny. To be free, to be an actor, means knowing whoone is and how one has been shaped by the surroundingsocial world. It is one's social world and environment thatdetermine the nature of one's consciousness and ideology.Without a knowledge and awareness of that determination,humanization is impossible.

The opposite of a humanized world, in Freire's terms, adehumanized world, is one without self-awareness, withouta consciousness of the historical forces determining exis-tence. Without this consciousness people are unable tobecome actors in the stream of history and are simplyacted upon by history. This condition of oppression iswhat Freire calls the culture of silence. The culture ofsilence can be a product either of simple ignorance or ofeducation itself. By being kept in a state of simpleignorance, the peasant in Brazil can be locked in thisculture of silence, never realizing the forces that caused hisor her poverty. On the other hand, an educational programwhich only assimilates the peasant into the very socialsystem which caused impoverishment in the first place, isnot a liberatory force. Freire would have agreed withStirner that education can produce wheels in the head thatstand in the way of consciousness of self.

This concept of humanization implies, as Marx stated,that "consciousness can never be anything else thanconscious existence, and the existence of men is theiractual life-process." In a pedagogical sense this means thatto expand consciousness is to make one aware of one's lifeprocesses. From Marx's standpoint, however, life was notdetermined by consciousness but consciousness by life,and it was this criticism that he leveled at Stirner. Theinteraction of an individual with the world determined hisor her subjective view of the world and of self. In otherwords, an individual learned a concept of self, whom he orshe was, by the nature of his or her relationships to

society. Human interaction with the world also producedan ideology and an understanding of the world. As Marxwrote, “We set out from real, active men, and on the basisof their real life-process we demonstrate the developmentof the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life-process.”[2]

For Freire, to know the objective world is to begin toknow oneself. If learning is to be meaningful, it must betied to the life process of the individual. Freire’s methodof teaching illiterates began with a concrete study of theeveryday lives of the people. For example, in a smallvillage a team of educators would work in cooperationwith the villagers to develop thematic representations ofthe life processes of the residents. These would then bepresented to the villagers in the form of pictures, tapes, orany appropriate media. The thematic representationswould contain certain problems and contradictions in theculture which could serve as the basis for discussion. InFreire’s words,

Utilizing certain basic contradictions, we must posethis existential, concrete, present situation to thepeople as a problem which challenges them andrequires a response—not just at the intellectual level but at the level of action.[3]

response—not just at the intellectual level,but at the level of action.3

One example presented a scene of a drunken man walking |on a street and three men standing on a comer talking.

This scene was shown to a group of tenement dwellers inSantiago to raise questions about the causal relationshipswithin their particular social organization and culture.4The discussions resulting from such thematic representa-tions would be the source for the words that would formthe basis of the literacy campaign.

Language is tied directly to the life processes of thelearner and thus becomes a source of self-understanding.

As individuals progress in reading and writing by using

words that help them understand their world, theirawareness of self constantly expands. For Freire, acquiringliteracy through thematic representations becomes a meansof objectifying the individual's world. It gives the in-dividual the necessary tools for thinking about the world.A culture of silence is one in which people are unable todistance themselves from their life activity, making itimpossible for them to rise to the level of reflection. Thedialogue around thematic representations provides a meanstoward reflection and a basis for both literacy andself-c onsciousness.

Within this framework learning becomes a source ofliberation and a tool for social change. People aredehumanized because they lack a full awareness of theirlife activity. This is why people in a culture of silence donothing to change their world. Freire agrees with Marxthat "the animal is one with its life activity. It does notdistinguish the activity from itself. It is its activity."5 Inthis sense, those in a culture of silence remain at a level ofmere animal activity; in fact, the source of economic andpolitical oppression is precisely the reduction of humanbeings to this state. Freire wants to restore humanity tothe oppressed by giving them a conscious life. As Marxwrote, "But man makes his life itself an object of his willand consciousness. He has a conscious life activity. . . .Conscious life activity distinguishes man from the lifeactivity of animals."6

For Marx, Freire, and the twentieth-century existen-tialist psychologists, it is in the realm of consciousness thatthe contradiction between freedom and

determinism isovercome. While consciousness and life activity are de-termined by material conditions, a person who has noconsciousness of self, who has nothing but life activity, iscompletely propelled by social forces. But the person whois aware of these forces and conscious of their nature isable to break with the trajectory of history and participatein the radical change of self and society. Rollo May,

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writing about existential psychology in the mid-twentiethcentury, argues that while psychology must recognizedeterministic factors and human finiteness,

In the revealing and exploring of these deterministicforces in the patient's life, the patient is orientinghimself in some particular way to the data and thus isengaged in some choice, no matter how seeminglyinsignificant; is experiencing some freedom, nomatter how subtle.7

And it is precisely toward this relationship to theindividual's world that Freire's educational method ismeant to lead.

In this method the tying of language and learning to thelife processes is meant to overcome the separation ofthought and action. The dialogue based on thematicrepresentations of everyday life is meant to grow into agreater consciousness of the surrounding social reality.Theory and activity are to be brought together in socialaction. According to Freire, ". . . a revolution is achievedwith neither verbalism nor activism, but rather with praxis,that is, with reflection and action directed at the structuresto be transformed." A drawing of tenement living condi-tions might be presented to the poor of an area and fromthis would grow a reflective process questioning theconditions and their social causes. No theory as to why theconditions existed would be given to the poor; rather,theory would be a product of the reflection and action ofthe people themselves.

The leaders cannot treat the oppressed as mereactivists to be denied the opportunity of reflectionand allowed merely the illusion of acting. ... It isabsolutely essential that the oppressed participate inthe revolutionary process

with an increasingly criticalawareness of their role as subjects of the transformation.8

This praxis would end the separation of thought andaction that Marx had argued was contributing to humanfragmentation and alienation. The origins of this separation, according to Marx's interpretation, lay in thehistorical development of the separation of classes and thedivision of labor. The separation of manual and mentallabor in the development of civilization permitted theseparation of consciousness from life activity. Marx wrotein The German Ideology that with the division betweenmental and manual labor

consciousness can really flatter itself that it issomething other than consciousness of existing prac-tice, that it is really conceiving something withoutconceiving something real-, from now on conscious-ness is in a position to emancipate itself from theworld and to proceed to the formation of "pure"theory, theology, philosophy, ethics, etc.9

Marx also saw this division between theory and practiceas resulting from the organization of modern industry. InCapital he argued that the worker became a mereappendage of the machine, trapped in a life of endlessdrudgery and routine. Intellectual and reflective powerswere not brought into use in manual labor. Marx wrote,

The separation of the intellectual powers of produc-tion from the manual labour, and the conversion ofthose powers into the might of capital over labour, is,as we have already shown, finally completed bymodem industry erected on the foundation ofmachinery.

People in the modem factory organization were forcedinto specialized and limited roles with the intellectualactivity a function of the managers and owners. Individualskill and worth, Marx argued, "vanishes as an infinitesimalquantity before the science, the gigantic physical forces,

and the mass of labour that are embodied in the factorymechanism. . . ,"1 0

Separation of thought and action means that theorybecomes a product of a class

which is separated from lifeactivity. It means that individuals experience a fragmenta-tion of their powers, becoming appendages of the machinerather than giving it control or direction. John Dewey, forinstance, wrote in Education and Democracy that theseparation of liberal education from industrial and profes-sional education was a result "of a division of classes intothose who had to labor for a living and those who wererelieved from this necessity." Workers, he aruged, had noinsight into the social aims of their work and, conse-quently, the "results actually achieved are not the ends oftheir actions, but only of their employers."1 1

FREIRE ARGUES THAT traditional education was prem-ised on what he calls the "banking" method of education—the idea that a student is an object into which knowledgeis placed, not a subject in the learning process. Thisbanking method of education, Freire argues, shares manyof the properties of an oppressive society: "the teacherteaches and the students are taught"; "the teacher thinksand the students are thought about"; "the teacher acts andthe students have the illusion of acting through the actionof the teacher"; and "the teacher is the subject of thelearning process, while the pupils are mere objects."12 Inadult literacy programs the banking theory manifests itselfin the use of reading material which has little relationshipto the life activity of the learner. Rather, such programsattempt to work upon and change the learner.

The fact that the banking theory turns the learner intoan object reflects the assumption that the fundamentalproblem is not with society but with the individual. Inother words, in the case of poverty a banking system of

education assumes poverty exists because the poor do notknow how to function properly within society. The goal ofeducation, then, is to change the behavior of

properly within society. The goal ofeducation, then, is to change the behavior of the poor sothat it conforms to the needs of a society which createdpoverty in the first place. In the very process of educatingthe poor, all blame is placed upon them. They arecondemned, essentially by being told they have failed.

In this manner the consciousness of the oppressed ischanged without changing the oppressive conditions ofsociety. Education as banking is not liberating but con-tributes to the docility and alienation of the oppressed.Marx's concept of alienation illuminates the full meaningof Freire's criticism of the banking method. For Marx,work should function to objectify the self and henceprovide the individual with a source of self-awareness.Work or activity that becomes foreign to or alienated fromthe individual—as it does in the case of the bankingmethod of education—does not fulfill this function. Inanswer to the question of what constitutes the alienationof labor, Marx wrote: "First, that the work is external tothe worker, that it is not part of his nature; and that,consequently, he does not fulfill himself in his work butdenies himself. . . ."13 In the same manner the learningmaterial of the banking method stands in opposition to thelearner. Instead of affirming the learner's life and providingtools for greater understanding, it denies that life andobscures self-awareness.

Within this framework Marx's concept of human aliena-tion is very similar to Freire's concept of the human beingas the object of teaching. For Marx alienation meant thatwork or life activity is not an object for individualfulfillment; rather, the individual becomes a mere objectused for production. "The alienation of the worker in hisproduct," he wrote, "means not only that his laborbecomes an object, assumes an external existence, but thatit exists independently, outside himself, and alien to him,and that it stands opposed to him as an autonomouspower."14

Similarly, in the banking method of education thelearner's self becomes an object of the educational process,worked upon to achieve goals external to itself. The goalsand content of this kind of education are not a product ofthe learner, they are not subject to his or her control. Thelearner is viewed as an object, a means for achieving theteacher's end. The object of teaching is not to understandthe self but to change the individual in accordance withalien goals. For instance, the banking method of educationnot only tells the poor they are the problem, but alsoestablishes a model of what they should be which is aliento what they are.

The model presented to the oppressed of what theyshould be like is a model shaped by the oppressor. Such amodel inherently tends to perpetuate the existing socialstructure. Thus both the content and moral imperatives ofthe banking method reflect the ideology of the ruling class.As Marx wrote, "The ideas of the ruling class are in everyepoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class, which is the rulingmaterial force of society, is at the same time its rulingintellectual force."15

What the banking method of education achieves is thecreation of a consciousness which is alien to the learner.The poor are given a model based on the life and actions ofthe rich. Such models were just what Stimer had criticizedas moral imperatives which force people to act incontradiction to their own needs and liberation.

ONE OF THE GOALS of Freire's method is to bring thosein a culture of silence to an understanding of self whichwould allow them to expel the internalized

to an understanding of self whichwould allow them to expel the internalized image of thedominant class.

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. . . when the dominated classes reproduce the dom-inators' style of life, it is because the dominators live"within" the dominated. The dominated can eject thedominators only by getting distance from them andobjectifying them. Only then can they recognizethem as their antitheses.1 6

For example, this was precisely the situation confrontedby black people in the United States in their relationshipto white society. By internalizing the style of life of thewhite population they were internalizing the very culturewhich had been responsible for slavery and racial segrega-tion. For instance, black people discovered that they hadadopted the same standards of beauty—fair skin andCaucasian facial features—as white members of the society.The slogan "Black is Beautiful" represented the beginningof the ejection of this false consciousness.

Freire's method is thus directed both at the expansionof consciousness and at the ejection of the false conscious-ness created by the structure of society. In this sense hecombines the traditional Marxist concern about over-coming alienation with the traditional libertarian desire forfreedom from imposed moral imperatives. This means thatpeasants in Latin America must be given the tools to liftthemselves out of the culture of silence and gain consciouscontrol over the social forces affecting their lives. Peoplemust be helped to see that part of the problem is their ownacceptance of "success" as it has been defined for them bythe dominant class. They must begin to treat their ownlives as authentic and not to reject their own realities onthe basis of the values of the dominant class.

Without the ejection of these values, social changewould mean only that one oppressive faction takes theplace of another—essentially a change in palace guardwithout any change in the palace. This would not meet thecriteria of a humanistic revolution, which can only beaccomplished through individual liberation of conscious-ness, through the participation of all people in socialchange.

THE RADICALISM OF FREIRE'S PRAXIS, which tiestogether reflection and action, can be more fully appre-ciated if it is compared to the ideas of a humanistpsychologist like Carl Rogers. Rogers' therapy, and whathe calls student-centered teaching, is based on a concept ofself-actualization and self

student-centered teaching, is based on a concept ofself-actualization and self-awareness very similar to Freire'sideas. The drive for self-actualization is what Freire callsthe "humanism of man (sic)"; it is a desire to gain greaterconscious control over one's environment. Rogers writesthat self-actualization means movement "in the directionof greater independence or self-responsibility ... in thedirection of increasing self-government, self-regulation, andautonomy, and away from heteronymous control, orcontrol by external forces."17 Self-actualization isachieved through what Rogers calls congruence of thepersonality. "We may say," he writes, "that freedom frominner tension, or psychological adjustment, exists when theI concept of self is at least roughly congruent with all the

experiences of the organism."18 In other words, psycho-! logical adjustment occurs when one's concept of self

corresponds to the forces that have shaped that self.Congruence of personality means that one has an aware-ness of the social forces shaping personality and an abilityi to control and give direction to those forces,

j But humanist psychologists like Rogers fail to relate

! personality to the structure of society and to go beyond

"f self-actualization to the transformation of society. It is

after all the organization of society which assumes a majorshare of the responsibility for non-congruence and lack ofself-actualization. The failure to analyze social and polit-ical implications is what makes humanist psychologysuperficial. It is more of a technique for management andadjustment than for changing society. This is one reasonwhy methods like those of Carl Rogers have becomepopular among school leaders in the United States.

These limitations become apparent when humanistpsychologists talk about social change. For Carl Rogers thekey to social change is a self-actualized person who createsa climate which allows for self-actualization of otherpeople. Rogers calls this the "chain reaction" effect ofclient-centered therapy.

Here is a theoretical basis for sound interpersonal,intergroup, and international relationships. . . . Thisatmosphere of understanding and acceptance is theverv

climate most likely to create a therapeuticexperience and consequent self-acceptance in theperson who is exposed to it.

For Rogers it is the "psychological 'chain reaction'which appears to have tremendous potentialities for thehandling of problems of social relationships."19 Thisis a utopian vision which is to grow from the warmacceptance of all people. Compared to Freire's humanizedindividual engaged in changing self and the world, Rogers'self-actualized person appears incomplete.

The political and social implications of Freire's methodbecome evident in his demonstration of the relationshipbetween levels of individual consciousness and levels ofdevelopment of political and social organization. Indi-vidual liberation through education is closely tied to stagesof social liberation. This relationship clearly is not thesame as Rogers' "chain reaction" of acceptance, but israther a process of turning the individual's learning intoself-liberation by working to create a liberated society.

Another important point about Freire's attempt to linklevels of conscious development to political and socialreality is that it makes his educational theory universal,establishing its relevance for highly industrialized societiesas well as for those of the Third World.

In Freire's model the lowest level of consciousness is, ofcourse, the culture of silence in the peasant societies of theThird World. In Latin America this takes the form of a

rural/urban split, with the rural areas dominated by anddependent on the ruling elites of the urban centers. Asstated above, the dependent society accepts the values andlife style of the dominator and cannot achieve self-awareness. "This results," Freire writes,

in the duality of the dependent society, its ambiguity,its being and not being itself, and the ambivalencecharacteristic of its long experience of dependency,both attracted by and rejecting the metropolitansociety.2 0

Individuals at this level of consciousness tend to ascribethe cause of their plight to self-blame or to supernaturalsources. For example, peasants might feel that hunger iscaused by their own incapacity or that it represents theanger of the

gods. In Freire's educational process dialogueabout problem situations might at first tend to resort tosuch explanations, but part of the goal of dialogue wouldbe to aid in going beyond that level of consciousness. Theculture of silence also exists in industrial countries.Minority groups in the United States, for example, haveonly recently been emerging from their own state ofdependence, throwing off their self-concepts of naturalincapacity and their internalization of the values and lifestyle of the dominator.

Freire's next stage of consciousness and social develop-ment is very close to the level of development of mostindustrial countries. He calls this stage naive-transitivenessbecause it refers to the beginning of a popular conscious-ness, one which has not fully emerged from the culture ofsilence. At this stage pressure and criticism begin to beapplied to the dominant groups in the society. The leadersof a society might respond to this by allowing superficialchanges and granting certain political and economicprivileges in order to maintain their control. But thesechanges would still result in a heightening of popular

consciousness. The situation would be analogous to aprison in which an attempt is made to satisfy discontentby allowing prisoners to exercise outdoors. The result forthe prisoners would be a heightened awareness of theirimprisonment. When a minor social reform is made, peoplemay gain an understanding of critical social problems andmay push for even greater changes.

In describing the transition of consciousness Freire istrying to describe the developing political conditions inboth the Third World and industrialized countries. Heargues that the contradictions at the stage of naive-transi-tiveness foster the growth of a populist leadership whichattempts to exploit the awakening consciousness of thepeople for its own gain. At this stage, because the massescannot speak for themselves, they depend on populistleaders. At the same time intellectuals and students start tobecome engaged in social projects. Art becomes directedtoward problems of concrete social reality. The inherentcontradiction at this stage results from populist leadersallowing the participation of youth groups and intellec-tuals in the political process in order to control them. Thisallows for the development of revolutionary leaders withinthe political process itself. Freire's description of this stageof transition of consciousness sounds very much like thesituation in the United States in the 1960's and early1970's. Populist political leaders attempted to manipulatepopular opinion by seeking help from intellectuals andyouth and by

manipulatepopular opinion by seeking help from intellectuals andyouth and by using protests of these groups to cementtheir own political ranks.

For Freire, the revolutionary leadership would becomprised of those who help the masses move from thelevels of semi-intransitive or naive-transitive consciousnessto the level of critical consciousness. He argues that if themasses are not made the subject of the revolutionaryprocess rather than its object, the revolutionary projectwill move to the right. A truly liberating revolution is onein which the people assume the role of active subjects in

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the transforming and recreating of the world. Freire sumsup the difference between cultural action of the left and ofthe right: “The former problematizes, the latter slogan-izes.” The right-wing revolutionary assumes that peoplehave to be shaped to fit the “utopian” vision of theleaders. The left-wing revolutionary assumes that thepeople themselves must make the utopian vision.

For Freire the role of a critical consciousness cannotstop even with the birth of a revolutionary society. Criticalconsciousness plays a role in ejecting those cultural mythswhich remain. It is also “a force countering the bureau-cracy, which threatens to deaden the revolutionary visionand dominate the people in the very name of theirfreedom.” While Freire does not speak directly of theRussian revolution, it is probably the example he had inmind. The failure of the revolutionary cause and the swingto the right in the Soviet Union can be linked to the defeatof the power of the local soviets and the end of the massparticipation of the people in the revolutionary en-deavor.2 1 The large-scale bureaucratic machinery thatdeveloped made the people into mere objects of economicand social planning, instead of active, critical subjects withcontrol over social institutions. The new “socialist manand woman” have yet to be bom in the Soviet Union.

Revolutionary change would not necessarily result fromthe contradictions arising under populist leadership, how-ever. The other possible direction, Freire believes, alongwith Illich and others, would be the creation of a masssociety. This would involve a change in consciousness fromthe transitive state to a pathological form of “irrationalconsciousness.” Highly technological societies may bemoving toward a future where specialization in workbecomes so narrow that people are generally incapable ofthinking. In a dehumanized mass society, people no longerparticipate in the transformation of society. Freire writes,“Men begin thinking and acting according to the prescrip-tions they receive daily from the communications media

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rather than in response to their dialectical relationshipswith the world.” In a mass society almost all consciousnessof self is lost. Gone is the element of risk and planning onan individual level. “They do not have to think about eventhe smallest things; there is always some manual whichsays what to do in situation ‘a’ or ‘b’.” The mass society isa well-schooled society where people have given upindependent thinking for mere learning based on expertadvice. As in one of Freire’s examples, “Rarely do menhave to pause at a street comer to think which direction tofollow. There’s always an arrow which de-problematizesthe situation.” While street signs are not evil “they areamong thousands of directional signals in a technologicalsociety which, introjected by men, hinder their capacityfor critical thinking.”2 2

their capacityfor critical thinking.” 2 2

While Freire’s educational work grew out of a concernfor the problems of South American society it hasuniversal relevance as a definition of humanism and as aneducational method. Obviously the method is not limitedto one age group but can be applied to all people in allsocieties. If one applies the model to a country like theUnited States, for example, it raises some very importantissues. It has already been suggested that within thisframework minority groups in the United States can beconsidered as being at the level of a culture of silence or ata level of intransitive consciousness. Furthermore, themajority of other Americans can be classified as being in astate of transitive consciousness or existing with the“irrational consciousness” of a mass society. The conceptof mass society represents an extension of Freire’s crit-icism of the banking method of education. The individual,an object within the mass society, is taught how to use hisor her tools and conveniences properly. In such a societyno situation becomes problematical or calls for individualpraxis. People are dehumanized because of the lack ofinterrelationship between consciousness and practice.

It seems obvious what Freire’s method means for a

country like the United States. It means that learning mustresult from praxis. Learning must be directly connected tosocial problems and used to solve those problems. It meansa recognition of the teaching of reading as the mostpolitical act in the educational process. Language is thetool an individual uses to relate to his or her world. Taughtin the manner of the banking method, it becomes a toolfor the stifling of consciousness. Taught as part of acontinued expansion of consciousness, it becomes aninstrument for self-liberation. To be taught how to read ina situation which is completely abstracted from self-understanding is to be, in Illich’s terms, “well-schooled.”Black people in the United States certainly discovered thiswhen they began to look closely at the white, small-townbias of public school text books.

One can go about implementing Freire’s methods invarious ways, depending on the skills and the imaginationof the group leader. For instance, one might teach readingin a middle-class suburb by beginning with some thematicrepresentation of a community problem—pollution, per-haps, or, on a more unsophisticated level for smallchildren, one might take up such everyday themes as play,fights, or family problems. The leader and the childrenengage in a dialogue about the nature of the problem.From this initial dialogue words are taken that begin

nature of the problem.From this initial dialogue words are taken that begin toform the basic text for reading. The children then work tosolve the problem, reflect on their attempted solutions,add new words and stories to their readers and attempt todevelop theories about the situation. In a poor urban areathemes dealing with crime, poverty, family problems, andpollution could be used. In both examples the actualthemes would not be chosen until after careful investigation. In this manner action, learning and consciousnesswould develop together.

FREIRE'S METHOD DEPENDS on dealing with real andimportant problems. The problems cannot be artificialclassroom contrivances. This, of course, means thatwhether the method is trivialized or not depends on thegroup leader. Freire assumes that the contradictions of theculture of transitive consciousness will produce thatrevolutionary leadership. This optimism might not beshared by everyone.

There is also an assumption in Freire's method thatpeople will want to become self-aware and that once this isaccomplished, they will act in their own interests and in arational manner. For what if people resist real freedom andself-awareness? The problem of individual freedom extendsbeyond just consciousness to include human characterstructure. For example, Wilhelm Reich argued that Marxwould not have been able to explain the rise of fascism

argued that Marxwould not have been able to explain the rise of fascism inGermany in the 1930's because he lacked the tools forunderstanding character structure, especially the particularcharacter structure which sought the security of anauthoritarian state. From this particular view the imple-mentation of Freire's humanized world requires anotherelement. It requires liberating the character structure ofthe individual so that self-awareness and a desire forself-determination become possible. It also implies that theestablishment of a liberated world means changing child-rearing patterns and the family, so that people desire to beand can be free.

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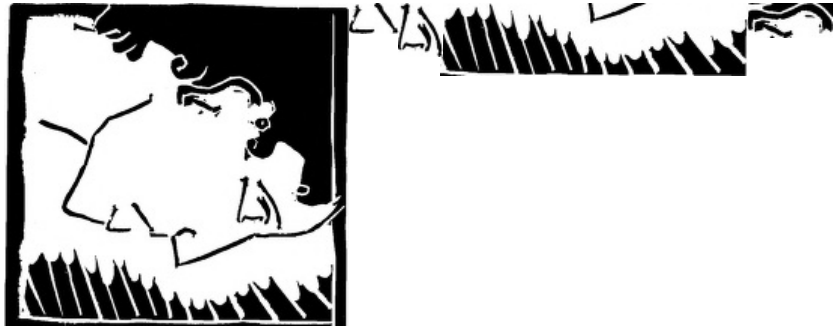
SEXUAL LIBERATIONAND SUMMERHILL:REICH AND NEILL

CERTAINLY MAX STIRNER’S formulation of ownershipof self and Paulo Freire’s educational methods are meantto lead to basic changes in the individual. But one of thepossible limitations of their arguments is that characterstructure is deeply rooted in the early stages of the child’spsychic development. That is, whether a child develops anauthoritarian or non-authoritarian style of social conductmight depend more on early development than on laterforms of socialization such as formal education.

Concern about child-rearing practices and their relation-ship to political and social revolution has centered aroundthe organization of the family itself. The value ofcollective child-rearing practices versus the traditionalnuclear family is one of the major issues raised. The twomost important figures in this dialogue have been WilhelmReich and A.S. Neill, who were closely associated in theirwork during their later years.



Wilhelm Reich's belief that the nature of child rearingwas directly related to forms of social organization,resulted from his attempt to combine the sociology ofMarx with a reinterpretation of Freudian analysis. Reichbelieved that it was possible for people to dispense withthe irrationalism of politics and government and toestablish what he called a "work-democracy" on the basisof a self-regulating character structure. This would be asociety free of all authoritarian institutions—including thepolitical state—where social relationships would evolvefrom economic organizations which would be created bythe workers themselves. He linked the authoritariancharacter structure, which desired control by authoritarianinstitutions, to child-rearing methods and sexual repres-sion. For Reich the central educational task of thetwentieth century was sexual liberation and abolition ofthe patriarchal family. When in 1937 A.S. Neill, thefounder of the Summerhill School in England, first metReich, Neill said, "Reich, you are the man I've beenlooking for for years, the man who joins up the somaticwith the psychological. Can I come to you as a student?"1This association with Reich, which began after their initialmeeting in 1937, proved important in the development ofNeill's ideas, as we shall see later.

TO UNDERSTAND REICH'S THEORY of the self-regulating character structure one must understand hisdifferences with Freud. One of the basic points on whichthey differed was the nature of aggression. Freud,supporting an extremely conservative social philosophy,argued that aggression was an innate human instinct andthat one's relationship to civilization and to oneself wasbest described in terms of conflict between the competinginstincts of thanatos (death) and eros (love) and reality. InCivilization and Its Discontents, Freud claimed that social

order could only be maintained by the repression andcontrol of the aggressive death instinct. This control wasthe function of authoritarian institutions. Freud's pictureof civilization is not pleasant or hopeful. Humanity is tornbetween eros, the passions of embracing the world, andthanatos, the desire to destroy it. As civilization pro-gresses, the aggressive instincts have to be repressed,resulting in aggression toward self and increased feelings ofguilt. For Freud the inevitable price humanity pays for theprogress of civilization is increased authority and guilt.2

If accepted, these cultural pronouncements undercutthe basis of utopian and revolutionary thought. FollowingFreud, the most that one could achieve would be anunhappy truce between one's self and society. Andauthoritarian institutions are necessary to control aggres-sion and to guide the development of a strong superego.Freud's agrument is essentially one for "law and order." Itsuggests that if all police, laws, and traditional authori-tarian child-rearing methods were dispensed with the resultwould be the unleashing of thanatos and a bloodbath ofmutual destruction.

Reich rejected Freud's concept of a death instinct.Instead, he believed that cruel and aggressive charactertraits were the result of authoritarian, sexually repressivechild-rearing practices. Sexual repression resulted in sexualanxiety, which in turn caused a general pleasure anxiety.Inability to experience pleasure and aggressive charactertraits, Reich argued, were always found together. On theother hand, ability to experience pleasure and non-hostilecharacter traits were also linked. At the center of Reich'sconcept of pleasure were the sexual drives. Unlike Freud,who believed these drives were in conflict with theaggressive instincts, Reich saw aggressiveness as the prod-uct of the repression of sexual drives. In the 1920's,comparing sadistic and non-sadistic character traits,

Reichwrote, “The mildness and kindness of individuals capable

of genital satisfaction was striking in contrast. I have neverseen individuals capable of genital satisfaction who hadsadistic character traits.”3

The revolutionary nature of Reich’s argument was thatit offered the possibility of planning a system of educationand even organizing a whole society, so as to eliminatehostility and authoritarianism. It also suggested a methodof analyzing political structures in terms of their child-i i j rearing practices. Authoritarian and repressive political

structures could be linked to educational practices whichreflected the same traits. This, Reich argued in the Mass! j Psychology of Fascism, was certainly the case with the rise

i of fascism in Germany. He explained in The Sexual

Revolution that because of the Russian revolution’s failureto carry out the promises of its early years—the revolu-tionary moral codes and experimental practices in educa-tion and child rearing—it had resulted not, as he hadhoped, in a non-repressive society, but in the emergence ofan authoritarian one.

I One of the primary aims of a revolutionary movement

must be the freeing of the character structure of thepeople. This, Reich argued, could not be accomplished ona mass scale through the use of psychotherapy. Whilemental health clinics might be able to help a few patients,their overall impact was quite limited. In the 1920’s, aftereight years of work in a psychoanalytic clinic, ReichI realized that “Psychoanalysis is not a therapy for large-

scale application.”4 Patients in the clinic required a daily*i! hour of therapy for at least six months. The only hope was

in prevention. This meant ridding society of what Reichconsidered its most repressive institutions: compulsivemarriage and the patriarchal family. Compulsive marriagerefers to the traditional social demands that sexualrelationships be limited to marriage and that marriageshould be honored

and maintained for the entire life of thepartners. At the heart of these two institutions lay arepressive sexual morality.

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Reich's emphasis on revolutionary institutional changesreflected his rejection of the conservative tendency ofpsychology and his interest in Marxist social philosophy. Adistinction had to be made between reactionary psy-chology and social psychology. His example of thisdistinction involved the type of questions that might beraised about individuals who steal when they are hungry orgo on strike when they are exploited. Reactionary psy-chology, Reich argued, would try "to explain the theft andthe strike in terms of supposed irrational motives; reaction-ary rationalizations are invariably the result." On the otherhand, social psychology would not feel it necessary toexplain why some people steal when hungry or strike whenexploited but would try to explain "why the majority ofthose who are hungry don't steal and why the majority ofthose exploited don't strike."5

The questions raised by social psychology, Reich felt,provided the missing ingredient in Marxist social philos-ophy. The scientific sociology of Marx did not have thetools to explain why all exploited workers did not strike.The rationale and techniques of exploitation could beexplained by Marxism, but the workers' acceptance ofexploitation could not be. Social-economic reasoningcould not explain thoughts and actions which wereinconsistent with economic interests and situations. Reichbelieved that Marx would not have been able to explainwhy a majority of German workers supported the rise offascism. What was lacking in the freedom movements inGermany, Reich argued, "was a comprehension of ir-rational, seemingly purposeless actions or, to put itanother way, of the cleavage between economy andideology." What had to be realized was that it was notonly the case, as Marx stated, that "the ideas of the rulingclass are the ruling ideas" but that, as Reich stated, "everysocial order produces in the masses of its members thatstructure which it needs to achieve its main aims." In thecase of fascism in Germany the supporting authoritarian

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character structure of the masses was a product of therepressive nature of the German family.6

Reich's goal was the elimination of cruelty and hostilityin people's characters by

bringing about major institutionalchanges. Reich held that the individual had a characterarmor which resulted in an inability to function sponta-neously and naturally. This “armor” was a product of thehistorical experience of the individual. “The whole expe-riential world of the past was alive in the present in theform of character attitudes. The make-up of a person is thefunctional sum total of all his past experiences.” Individualtherapy was an attempt to break through these armoredlayers of character. Reich found that this therapeuticprocess revealed that the destructiveness in a person’scharacter was nothing but anger “about frustration ingeneral and denial of sexual gratification in particular.”Destructiveness in the individual character was in this casea reaction to the inability to find pleasure. This inability tofind or experience pleasure resulted in pleasure anxietyand character armor which both protected the individualfrom pleasure and produced hostility to all pleasure-producing experiences. Reich argued that pleasure anxietyand character armor could explain why people were willingto sacrifice their happiness to authoritarian institutionsand social customs. Character armor not only drives peopleto a joyless life, but also makes them demand that othersconform to authoritarian structures. The central mech-anism of pleasure was, of course, sexual. Reich argued thatas individuals encountered barriers to the satisfaction ofthe sexual urge, they began to hate. If there were no socialoutlets for expressing hatred, it became inhibited andinternalized.7 The type of character produced by thisarmoring was one most amenable to authoritarian orfascist political organizations.

It was primarily sexual anxiety, and pleasure anxiety ingeneral, then, which inhibited the expression of both loveand hatred. The individual not only developed destructive

character traits, but was driven by anxiety to depend onauthority. In the 1920’s Reich realized, in what he himselflater regarded as one of his most important conclusions,that “the orgastically unsatisfied individual develops aninsincere character and a fear of any behavior which he hasnot thought out beforehand. . . .”8 In other words, theindividual becomes incapable of spontaneous and naturalactions and seeks refuge in safe and dependent actions.Because of pleasure anxiety about acting, people are drivento seek security in an authoritarian structure which willdictate their actions.

Reich’s utopian vision called for replacing this rigidcharacter structure with a

self-regulating character, therebydecreasing individual dependence on authoritarian struc-tures. He noted that a breakdown in people's characterarmor brought about major changes in their socialcustoms, work and independence. Individuals who hadbeen highly moral suddenly found moralistic attitudesalien and queer. Reich wrote, ". . . they might havepreviously defended the principle of premarital chastity,now they felt such a demand as grotesque." Similarreactions took place with regard to work style. Individualswho had worked mechanically and viewed work as anecessary evil began to seek jobs in which they wereinterested. People whose jobs were already inherentlyinteresting became more absorbed in their work. Teacherswho had not been critical of present educational tech-niques began to find the usual method of treating childrenintolerable. The creation of a self-regulating characteroften led to a complete breakdown of the work ethic.Workers who had previously worked out of a compulsivesense of duty found the work unbearable once they wererelieved of this compulsion.9

In many ways Reich's concept of self-regulated char-acter is like Max Stimer's concept of ownership of self.For example, in contrasting moral regulation with self-regulation Reich wrote that, "the individual with a moral

character structure performs his work without inwardparticipation, as a result of the demands of a 'Thou shalt'which is alien to the ego."10 Moral regulation created anarmor which was not within the control of the individual.In Stimer's terms, it created moral duties which owned theindividual. Or, as Reich wrote,

The moralistic bureaucrat remains so even in bed. Thehealthy character type, on the other hand, is able toclose up in one place and open up in another. He is incommand of his armor, because it does not have tokeep back forbidden impulses.1 1

For Reich a person with a self-regulated character wasfree of all hostility and conducted his or her life on thebasis of desire and pleasure. Established moral codes werereplaced with individual regulation. Reich, unlike Freud,did not believe this would lead to chaos. On the contrary,he saw people as being social and loving by nature. Forexample, women who were trapped in compulsive marriageand only performed the sexual act out of marital duty,lived a life of constant frustration. But free of compulsivemarriage and pleasure anxiety, Reich argued, men andwomen would usually seek one mate who loved andsatisfied

argued, men andwomen would usually seek one mate who loved andsatisfied them. This new kind of morality was to begoverned by genital satisfaction and desire. “An unsatis-factory act was abstained from not because of fear, butbecause it failed to provide sexual happiness.”12

It is important to realize that for Reich one of the mostimportant elements in the sexual act was making thepartner happy; this was one of the foundations of asatisfactory sexual experience. It was also the foundationof a non-repressive, non-authoritarian society. Self-regulation implied the ability to seek pleasure by trying togive someone else pleasure. The self-regulated characterwas one who was free of hostility, who owned himself orherself, who quested for pleasure and whose quest forpleasure meant giving happiness to others.

For Reich the heart of the sexuality problem was thecompulsory monogamous marriage. In a study of anthro-pological literature written in 1931, Reich argued that thehistorical development of the patriarchial family andmonogamous marriage paralleled the transition from aprimeval economic work-democracy to the capitalist state.The concentration of wealth within one stratum of societyresulted from the economic institution of marriage: inorder to keep wealth within the family from generation togeneration, the sexual activity of the female had to berestricted before and after marriage. Reich quoted fromEngels’ The Origin of the Family, “The first class-conflictthat appears in history coincides with the development ofthe antagonism between man and woman in monogamousmarriage and the first class-suppression with that of thefemale sex by the male sex. . . .”*3

The economic function of the family gave way to anideological function with the rise of the national state andindustrialism. The family became the primary educationalinstitution for training the child for an authoritariansociety. Reich referred to the modem family as a “factoryfor authoritarian ideologies and conservative struc-tures.”14 It was both the structure of the family and itsrepression of sexuality that prepared the child for thestate. In the middle-class home, Reich argued, the fatherfunctioned within the family as the representative

home, Reich argued, the fatherfunctioned within the family as the representative of theauthority of the state.

The educational function of the family, too, wasdirectly aimed at its own perpetuation. Children weresexually inhibited in preparation for future marriage.During the crucial ages of four to six they were usuallydenied the opportunity for sexual play and their attemptsat masturbation were frustrated and condemned by theirparents. Reich recognized certain class differences withregard to the treatment of children. In general, middle-class children were more inhibited than working-classchildren. This did not mean that working-class families

were sexual paradises. On the contrary, many problemsarose because of crowded housing and because of identifi-cation with the middle class.

An added problem for children within the familystructure was that they became targets for the hostilityand cruelty which resulted from their parents' own sexualrepression. For parents, and especially mothers, childrenbecame the only content of their lives—to the greatdisadvantage of the children. Children came to "play therole of household pets whom one can love but alsotorture. . . ,"15 Children within the family structure wereoften objects of sadistic love, leading to the developmentof even more hostility within their own characters. Withthe family playing a major role in the education of thechild, this relationship of hostility came to be perpetuatedfrom one generation to another.

This combination of sadistic love, authoritarian struc-ture, and sexual repression made the family the mostimportant institution for political education. On the onehand, its function was to reproduce itself by "cripplingpeople sexually." On the other hand, "[The family]creates the individual who is forever afraid of life and ofauthority and thus creates again and again the possibilitythat masses of people can be governed by a handful ofpowerful individuals."16 It was not accidental, Reichcontended, that conservative and reactionary youths werestrongly attached to their families while revolutionaryyouth tended to reject their families.

It was in the Mass Psychology of Fascism, published in1933, that Reich made his most brilliant statement of therelationship between compulsory sexual morality, thefamily, and the authoritarian state. The central question inhis study of fascism was why people supported a partywhose leadership was opposed to

of fascism was why people supported a partywhose leadership was opposed to the interests of theworking masses. In approaching this problem he madeimportant distinctions between elements in each socialclass which supported Hitler's authoritarian dictatorship.

Small farmers, bureaucrats and the middle class, whiledifferent in terms of economic situation, shared the samefamily situation—the very situation which, as Reich hadpreviously argued, produced the authoritarian personality.This family situation also promoted nationalism andmilitarism. The emotional core of ideas like homeland andnation, he argued, were the ideas of mother and family.The working class, however, had at one time displayed asomewhat looser family arrangement and thus had notbeen oriented so much toward nationalism as toward aninternational workers' movement. In the middle class, onthe other hand, the family indeed was a nation inminiature and the mother was the homeland of the child.Reich quoted the Nazi Goebbels: "Never forget that yourcountry is the mother of your life." On Mother's Day theNazi press declared, "She—the German mother—is the solebearer of the idea of the German nation. The idea of'Mother' is inseparable from the idea of being German." Asfor militarism, Reich argued that it represented a substi-tute gratification for sexuality:

The sexual effect of a uniform, the erotically provoc-ative effect of rhythmically executed goose-stepping,the exhibitionistic nature of militaristic procedures,have been more practically comprehended by asalesgirl or an average secretary than by our mosterudite politicians.

The forces of political reaction recognized this appeal,designing flashy uniforms and displaying recruiting posterswhich emphasized "foreign adventure" with the under-lying implication of sexual freedom.17

Working-class support of fascism, Reich believed, owedits origin to working-class identification with the characterstructure of the middle class. During the tremendousperiod of physical and economic exploitation of thenineteenth century, the proletariat maintained a character

structure rooted in the working class. In that periodworkers tended to identify with their own class; they wereconscious of themselves as workers. But by the

with their own class, they wereconscious of themselves as workers. But by the twentiethcentury, workers had alleviated their material condition—they had won shorter working hours, social security, andimproved income. But rather than solidifying the workers'movement, this led to worker identification with themiddle class. It was the purchase of the

lower middle class bedroom suite, the learning ofproper dance steps, the purchase of a "decent" suit ofclothes and the attempt to appear respectable bysuppressing sexuality that turned the revolutionaryand communist into the reactionary.

All of these banalities of life, Reich argued, had a "greaterreactionary influence when repeated day after day thanthousands of revolutionary rallies and leaflets can everhope to counterbalance." When the Depression destroyedthe middle-class world, the working class, which haddepended upon the middle class, turned to fascism. AsReich stated, "In times of prosperity this adaptation tomiddle-class habits was intensified, but the subsequenteffect of this adaptation, in time of economic crisis, was toobstruct the full unfolding of revolutionary senti-ments."1 8

Reich's analysis of working-class support of fascismcorresponds very closely to Freire's warning of how theoppressed identify with the oppressor; of how theinternalization of an alien consciousness comes to dom-inate the people in the subordinate classes. For Reichworking-class identification with the middle class resultedin a culture that was more stalwartly middle class than themiddle class itself. In a search for "respectability" theworking-class family became highly oppressive and authori-tarian. In a sense this happens to every apparentlyupwardly mobile group. For example, one could argue that

the blue-collar worker in the United States has followedthis path in an attempt to display middle-class respecta-bility. It is certainly possible that black people in theUnited States, in an attempt to gain access to thedominant culture will adopt the oppressive qualities ofwhite middle-class respectability, impose harsh moralcodes on their children, and attempt to do everything"correctly."

Reich believed that the Nazi Party was well aware thatits support was grounded in the family and sexualrepression. Mass individuals came to depend upon theFiihrer in the same manner as they had depended upontheir fathers. The German fascist gave strong support tothe idea of the family as the backbone of

German fascist gave strong support tothe idea of the family as the backbone of the nation andattempted to assure that the sexual act was associated onlywith reproduction in the national interest and not withpleasurable gratification. Reich quoted Adolf Hitler's 1932presidential election statement that a woman's ultimateaim should be the creation of a family: "It is the smallestbut most valuable unit in the complete structure of thestate," Hitler stated. "Work honors both man and woman.But the child exalts the woman."1 9

In 1928 Wilhelm Reich founded the Socialist Societyfor Sexual Advice and Study in Vienna as an attempt tobegin a major sexual revolution. Writing about this venturelater in his life, he reflected upon the revolutionaryimplications of sexual freedom. Important social andeconomic changes would have to be made to solve theproblems of adequate housing for adolescent sexualactivity and for economic independence from the family.The sexual revolution also implies

criticism of all political tendencies which based theirexistence and activity on man's essential helplessness;basic inner self-sufficiency of the human being; . . .self-guidance in children's education and in this waythe gradual attainment of self-sufficiency for grown-ups.2 0

In 1930 Reich left Vienna and went to Germanybecause of what he felt were negative pressures placed onhis social hygiene work. In Germany the Communist Partyagreed to organize an association on the basis of Reich'sideas. This organization, the German Association forProletarian Sexual Politics, issued a platform which con-tained the basic elements of Reich's plan. The programcalled for better housing conditions, the abolition of lawsagainst homosexuality and abortion, the changing ofdivorce and marriage laws, the issuance of free contra-ceptives and birth-control advice, health protection ofmothers and children, abolition of laws prohibiting sexeducation, and home leave for prisoners. Reich traveledthroughout Germany giving lectures and establishing sexhygiene centers. Under pressure from the Nazis, Reich wasforced to flee Germany for Copenhagen in 1933.

The year he left Vienna for Germany, Reich publishedhis first major statement on sexual education, The SexualRevolution. This book was written in reaction to whatReich labeled conservative sexual education and to whathe perceived as the failure of the Russian revolution.Conservative sexual education, Reich believed, wasattempting to remove the mystery from sexual relation-ships, and at the same

time maintain traditional moralideas. Venereal disease was stressed in most sex educationcourses in order to inhibit free sexual activity. Childrenwere told about the beauty of the human body and thesexual act, but were advised to reserve sexual activity forthe confines of marriage. For Reich there could be no suchcompromise between sexual education and establishedmorality. It had to be a vehicle for sexual freedom andself-regulation.

Reich traced the development of sex and marriage lawsin the Soviet Union from the radical policies of the earlyrevolutionary period to the authoritarian policies of thelate 1920 s and 1930's, which he termed "Red Fascism."

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This regression involved the attempt to re-establish thefamily as the center of education and authority. "In ourfight for self-government of the children and for theelimination of the authoritarian form of the schools, wecan no longer point to the S.U. [Soviet Union]." Heargued that the rise of a totalitarian state, the end ofsexual liberation, the re-establishment of the family as thecenter of the state, and the end of experimental and freeeducation were all part of the same phenomenon.21

Reich noted that as early as December 1917, Lenin haddecreed that the husband was to lose his power ofdomination over the family and that women were to begiven economic and sexual freedom and the right todetermine their own names, residences, and citizenship.Marriage was made a purely secular occasion —the power ofthe church was removed. The family structure was furtherweakened by the institution of liberal divorce laws so thatmarriages could be dissolved by mutual consent. Theeducation of children was to become a collective enter-prise.

One of the schools that impressed Reich most during avisit to the Soviet Union in the late 1920's was VeraSchmidt's psychoanalytical home for children in Moscow.The school, founded in 1921, was what Reich referred toas "the first attempt in the history of education to give thetheory of infantile sexuality a practical content." Thisschool emphasized the development of self-regulationwithin the context of a community of children. Socialadjustment would not be a product of moralistic judg-ment—which could not be understood by the child andonly served the interests of the adult—but of the real sociallife of

the children. Teachers at Vera Schmidt's schoolwithheld all praise, blame, and judgments about thechildren's behavior. No violent displays of affection, suchas embracing and kissing the child, were allowed, for theywere only a means for adults to live out their own

unsatisfied sexuality. Without disciplinary measures andmoralistic judgment there would be no need for "patchingup with kisses the harm one has done with beatings."2 2

Reich heartily approved of letting children work outtheir own social adjustment within a community of theirpeers. This removed them from the power of the family,which taught the child to follow authoritarian father andmother figures. Within the community of children theindividual learned instead to act on the basis of self-needand self-regulation. Reich found support for these ideas inhis study of anthropology. Among the Trobriand Islanders,who were one of Reich's fondest examples of a non-repressive sexual culture, children were given a great dealof freedom and independence from parental authority.Although parents would scold or coax their children, theywould never issue a command to them nor speak to themother than as equals. One of the important results of thisfreedom was the ability of the children to form their ownindependent community. Children of Trobriand Islanderseither remained with their parents during the day or joinedtheir friends in a miniature republic. This communitywithin the community functioned according to its ownneeds and

desires. It provided both a vehicle for sociali-zation which was free from authority, and a means ofcollective opposition to the parents.2 3

The most important element of self-regulation amongthe Trobriand Islanders and the children at Vera Schmidt'sschool was sexual self-regulation. At the psychoanalyticalhome no moral judgments were made with regard to sexualactivities and children were taught to treat them like anyother bodily function. Children were absolutely free tosatisfy their sexual curiosity among themselves, mutuallyinspecting each other and viewing each other's nakedbodies. This self-regulation of the sexual drives avoided thesexual anxiety and general pleasure anxiety which, led tothe development of an armored and authoritarian indi-vidual who could neither give nor receive pleasure.2 4

Freedom and community of the type found in thepsychoanalytical home was essential for any meaningful,positive social change. Reich wrote, "The history of theformation of ideologies shows that every social system,consciously or unconsciously, makes use of the influencingof children in order to anchor itself in the humanstructure."2 5 The method of sexual education, for in-stance, was directly related to the functioning of theeconomic enterprise. Self-regulated sexuality led to volun-tary, free-flowing productive work; instinctual suppressionled to work done as duty. It was in the context of thisdiscussion of sexual and social self-regulation that Reichraised the traditional radical dilemma of whether the childshould be indoctrinated into revolutionary beliefs.

The question was formulated in terms of how aself-governing and non-authoritarian society reproduceditself in its children. There were two possible methods ofdealing with the problem. One was to indoctrinate with"revolutionary instead of patriarchal ideals." The othermethod was to give up the idea of revolutionary indoctri-nation and concentrate upon forming "the structure of thechild in such a manner that it reacts of itself collectivelyand accepts the general revolutionary atmosphere withoutrebellion."2 6 Reich, of course, argued for the latterbecause the real meaning of an ideology is determined bythe character structure of the individual. A radical socialphilosophy could end in totalitarianism if preached andpracticed by authoritarian personalities. The most im-portant step for a self-governing society was to assure thatit was free of authoritarian character traits.

In the last chapter of The Sexual Revolution Reichoutlined the steps that should

be taken to provide socialand legal protection for infantile and adolescent sexuality.He called for the establishment of model institutions ofcollective education which would be the nuclei of the newsocial order. These institutions would function in a mannersimilar to Vera Schmidt's school, with scientific research

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being conducted to modify and improve techniques. Reichcalled for the distribution of birth-control devices on amass scale. He also argued that, "A repetition of thecatastrophic failure of the Soviet sexual revolution isunavoidable unless the room problem for adolescents andunmarried people is solved." This, Reich argued, could beaccomplished by the government establishing emergencyhomes for youth. The population would have to beconvinced that the government was uncompromisinglycommitted to ensuring the sexual happiness of all people.In addition to these changes Reich called for an extensivenetwork of sexological institutions which would bringsexual instruction and enlightened discussions to themasses of the people. Children and adolescents should beprotected against the implanting of sexual anxiety andsexual guilt feelings.

The ideal society of self-regulated character structureswas called a work-democracy by Reich. In this societypeople would rid themselves of dependency upon politicalstructures; rather, the formation of social organizationswould flow directly out of necessary work activity. ForReich politics and political parties were irrational mecha-nisms for the enhancement of personal power and thepromotion of dependency. The social irrationalism ofpolitics was evidenced by the fact that society gavepoliticians great power to exercise judgments in areaswhere they were without competency. The power of thepolitician was analogous to that of the mystic. “Apolitician,” he wrote, “is in a position to deceive millionsof people, e.g., he can promise to establish freedomwithout actually having to do so. No one demands proofof his competence or of the feasibility of his promises.”Politics in this sense functioned like religion and in factrepresented a substitute for it. A mystic, like a politician,“can imbue masses of people with the belief that there is alife after death—and he need not offer the least trace ofproof.”2 7

In a self-regulated work-democracy the irrationalism ofpolitics would be replaced with organizations growing outof the work situation. No government or political structurewould be required to organize a system of railroads orconduct a postal system; these organizations would growdirectly out of the social needs of transportation and maildelivery. People with self-regulated character

of transportation and mail delivery. People with self-regulated character structureswould not submit to the authority of irrational politicsand would demand social organizations which both serveda need and provided a rational means of getting aparticular task accomplished.

This dream, of course, was similar to the dream oftraditional anarchism—the end of politics and the return ofpower to the people. Reich's important contribution tothis debate was to highlight the importance of therelationship between personality and social structure. Thisbrings us another step beyond Stimer's call for ownershipof self and Freire's concern for an experiential awarenessof social reality. In essence he was saying that anatmosphere of freedom helped to create a personalitywhich demanded still more freedom. In the same manner,the ability to give love and pleasure depended upon theability to experience love and pleasure. Repression of anysort decreased not only people's own pleasure but theirability to give love and make others happy. For Reichthere could not be any compromise on this issue. If onewanted a society of self-regulated and non-sadistic in-dividuals, one had to raise children in an atmosphere freefrom moral repression, authoritarian control, and pleasureanxiety.

IN THE LATE 1940's Reich wrote The Murder of Christ.Reich's description of Christ was his most poetic statementof the traits of a self-regulated, free, loving and sponta-neous character. It was the "armored man (sic)" who killed

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Christ and transformed his message into a religion ofmysticism and repression. Christ spoke very plainly; hismessage gained mystery only because those

Christ spoke very plainly, hismessage gained mystery only because those armoredindividuals could not understand him. Christ must haverecognized this fact when he quoted Isaiah:

You shall indeed hear but never understand and youshall indeed see but never perceive. For this peoples'heart has grown dull, and their ears are heavy ofhearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest theyshould perceive with their eyes, and hear with theirears, and understand with their heart, and turn for meto heal them.

(Matthew 13:14, 15)

Reich wrote, "This is the ARMOR: No, they do not hearnor see nor feel with their hearts what they see and hearand perceive."

Christ was the symbol of the ability to love and givepleasure without robbing the world of joy. He was able tomove with the currents of life and make his own life a purestatement of love. "The expression of Christ," Reichwrote, "has the quality of a meadow on an early sunlitspring morning. You can't see it, but you feel it all throughyou if you are not plague ridden." It was the armoredindividual, the "Red Fascist" and the person of "petit-bourgeois sentimentality," who could not feel that radi-ance. The world of work-democracy and genital freedomwas to be populated with people who acted in the mannerof Christ. Christ

can laugh and scream with joy. He knows no restraintin his expression of love; in giving himself to fellowmen, he does not lose a grain of natural dignity. Whenhe walks on the ground, his feet set fully into the soilas if to take root with each step, separating again totake root again.2 8

A.S. NEILL HAD FORMULATED and practiced his ideason education many years before his encounter with Reichin 1937. Over the years of friendship following their firstmeeting, Reich provided a psychological argument whichpulled together many of Neill's ideas and influenced theself-regulative character of the education offered at Sum-merhill, Neill's school. Summerhill became the symbol forfree school movements throughout the twentieth century —certainly it had a strong impact on the development of thefree school movement in the United States in the 1960's."Free school" eventually came to mean a school aimed atdeveloping the self-regulative character structure in people.

Before meeting Reich, Neill claimed to have beeninfluenced by a wide variety of people, including Adler,Freud, and Homer Lane. He admitted that he did notstudy psychology in any concentrated manner but justbrought together those psychological arguments whichmade sense to him. His early philosophy was a blend ofpractical experience and popularized Freudian psychology.In the 1920's his dream was to spread the free school ideathroughout the world; he even wrote Henry Ford tosuggest that his factory might produce school caravans. Inthe 1930's Neill began to gain a critical understanding ofthe economics of capitalist society. It was this combina-tion of Freud and radical political and economic analysiswhich made Summerhill an important institution of radicaleducation in

the twentieth century.

In establishing and operating Summerhill, Neill wantedto provide a means by which the world could be savedfrom crime, despair, and unhappiness. His early work mustbe understood in the context of the sense of failure anddisillusionment that swept Europe after World War I. “Oureducation, politics and economics led to the Great War”;he wrote in the 1920’s; “our medicine has not done away

with disease; our religion has not abolished usury androbbery. . . The source of the world’s problems, and themajor problem with the education of children, was therepression of natural drives. Neill plainly stated in TheProblem Child, “I believe that it is moral instruction thatmakes the child bad. I find that when I smash the moralinstruction a bad boy has received he automaticallybecomes a good boy.”2 9

People, according to Neill, often found themselves in astate of conflict between the “life force” which is part oftheir nature, and the self which is created by moralinstruction. Every action must be seen in terms of thetension between these two components. Moral instruction,then, tended to produce its opposite. A mother whosuppressed a child’s selfishness, for example, was ensuringthat the child would be selfish. A person who stole wasacting in a way which could be linked to repressive moralteaching in childhood. In Neill’s identification of theexistence of moral authority and conscience as the sourceof civilization’s problems, he was following the tradition ofanarchists like Max Stimer. In an imaginary dialogue witha “Mrs. Morality,” he told this symbolic figure ofauthority that, “I believe there would be more honesty inthe world if policemen were abolished. ... It is the lawthat makes the crime.”3 0

While at Reich’s Institute in Maine during the late1940’s, Neill began to rewrite and condense his earlierworks, claiming that, “I sat down to read them, andrealized with something akin to horror, that they wereout-of-date.”31 The weaving of these early ideas intoReichian thought did not prove difficult. The concept thatmorality produces hostility, aggression, and unhappinessreceived added support from Reich’s concepts of characterarmor and pleasure anxiety. The one point, of course,upon which they immediately agreed was that a world freeof hostility and aggression depended on total freedom forthe child. Neill

[illegible] claimed Reich often chided him for not

going far enough and encouraging adolescent sexualrelations at Summerhill. “I told him,” Neill wrote, “that toallow a full sex life to adolescents would mean the end ofmy school if and when the government heard about it.”32

The one idea that Neill did not alter was the distinctionbetween freedom and license in a free school. Freedommeant freedom from moral teachings, not the right tocommit any action. In response to the question of what hewould do if a boy were pounding nails into a grand piano,he said, “It doesn’t matter if you take the child away fromthe piano so long as you don’t give the child a conscienceabout hammering nails.” In other words, he argued thatone can stop a person from doing something withoutmaking it a form of moral punishment. Another exampleNeill gave was of a child leaving a tool out in the rain. Inthis case the rain was harmful to the object but notmorally good or bad in an abstract sense. To providefreedom for the child meant to provide him or her withthe opportunity of growing up without an internalizedmoral authority or conscience.3 3

Neill’s concept of freedom was very close to Stimer’sidea of ownership of self. Neill wrote, “To give a childfreedom is not easy. It means that we refuse to teach himreligion or politics or class-consciousness.” Freedom wasthe right to own or choose one’s own ideals and beliefs;the function of a free school was to provide the necessaryinstitutionalization of this concept. Summerhill reflectedNeill’s statement of the 1920’s, “No man is good enoughto give another his own ideals.”34 It was to be a placewhere the individual could explore and make choicesabout those ideals.

By the 1930’s Neill had begun to link his educationalideas with radical political thought. For instance, in 1935 amagazine presented Neill and two other headmasters inEngland with a series of questions dealing with obedienceand authority in the educational process. They were askedto what extent they thought the free development of the

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individual clashed with the interests of the state, andwhether the desire for freedom could be combined with asense of responsibility. The two school officials replied ingeneral liberal terms about the school promoting coopera-tion and a sense of responsibility toward the state. Neillanswered with a statement that the state at that timerepresented a capitalist system which emphasized theinstinct of possession over that of creation. Within acapitalist state, he argued, ". . . there is no hope of creativelove as opposed to possessive love. Only under some formof Socialism have freedom and love and education achance." For Neill the answer to the question depended onthe nature of the state. If the state were capitalistic andauthoritarian, then the free development of the individualwould clash with its interests. On the other hand, "Thefree development of the individual will not clash with theinterests of the State if the latter is just and humane andloving."3 5

In 1939 Neill wrote The Problem Teacher, a book whichdetailed the relationships he was beginning to see betweenthe nature of schooling and political and economicsystems. In it he stated bluntly that, "The State schoolsmust produce a slave mentality because only a slavementality can keep the system from being scrapped." Hesuggested that there was a direct link between Hitler'smethod of control and an educational system whichproduced humble yesmen. In general his argument fol-lowed the pattern of the traditional radical critique ofschooling as a function of the interests of the state. InGermany and Italy national schooling meant fascism; inEngland it meant preparing each generation to fit into acapitalist economy. The English schools not only produceda slave mentality but also robbed the working class ofeffective leadership—a point which must be considered oneof the most important

criticisms of the development of thesecondary school in both England and the United States.“The master stroke in . . . educational policy,” he wrote,

was the secondary school, the school that tookchildren of the working class to white-collar jobs inclerking, teaching, doctoring and the other profes-sions. Thus it robbed the workers of its best men andwomen. . . ,3 6

Neill’s critique of schooling was now beginning toreflect some of the influence of his recent contacts withReich. The home, he argued, was the state in miniature,and it was because it provided this training in obediencethat every state gave so much emphasis to the home. ButNeill took Reich’s argument one important step further.He insisted that the power of the school was based on itsreproduction of family life. “Theoretically one wouldthink that schooling is an antidote to family influence. Itisn’t: it is family life on promotion.” Neill went on todraw parallels between the father as head of a family andthe teacher as head of a family of forty or more children.In fact, the situation within the school might be worsethan that in the family, because the teacher did notnecessarily have the love most fathers felt for theirchildren. Within the school the hostile side of the fatherwas emphasized through the teacher. “And this is true ofthe disciplinarian,” Neill wrote, “for he has no love to giveout, only hate.”3 7

This attack on the family and established schools didnot imply abolition of those institutions, but theirmodification through the spread of Summerhill-typeschools. Writing in 1944, he expressed hope that a socialiststate could be established and with it, a national system ofboarding schools. “Naturally,” he wrote, “I want tospecify that such a school will be a free school, withself-government and self-determination of the individualchild, that is, I visualize a nation of Summerhills.” Thespread of such schools would not eliminate the family butprovide a means for the child to escape the narrowconfines of the nuclear family. The small family, Neill

argued, was not good enough for the child. It was not onlyauthoritarian but repressive in terms of its lack of a broadcommunity of contacts. In schools like Summerhill, thechild would not only be free of the authority of the familybut would also be in the stimulating company of a widevariety of self-governing people. Neill sadly recognized thatmost people would not agree with his ideas: “Most peoplebelieve in discipline (for others); most think that a childshould be treated like a fruit tree and pruned regularly.”3 8

It should be emphasized that Neill, throughout theexistence of Summerhill, firmly held that freedom alonewas the only cure for most “problem children.” But likeReich, Neill was concerned about how mass therapy couldbe conducted. By the 1940’s he had come to theconclusion that analysis was not a necessary therapeutictechnique. The mere practice of freedom was the thera-peutic tool. Any person could help problem childrenprovided that person understood and believed in freedom.Like Reich, Neill came to believe that radical therapy didnot involve the treatment of individual patients but theremoval of those social conditions which caused repres-sion.

It was from this standpoint of radical therapy that Neillcriticized the general trend of Freudianism. The failure ofmost Freudians, he argued, was their unwillingness to linkthemselves with some social movement. “Psycho-analysishas linked up with nothing. It knows that the fathercomplex is evil, yet it does not begin a campaign to abolishfear and authority in the school.”39 Neill admitted thatwithout Freud, Summerhill would not exist. But whatSummerhill had accomplished, and where most of thepsychoanalytic movement had failed, was in bridging thegap between theory and actual social organization. Sum-

merhill was an attempt to establish an institution to ridsociety of the problems defined by Freudian theorists. Inthis sense, Summerhill represented radical social therapy.

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IN 1947 NEILL MADE his first trip to the United States,where he stayed with Reich at his Institute in Maine.During his stay Neill wrote The Problem Family. In thisbook he argued that socialism was not sufficient to ensurethe happiness and freedom of humanity. He echoedReich's ideas when he wrote, "I want Socialism plussex-economy, nationalization plus relaxed bodies, for ifthe body is relaxed the chances are that the psyche ispretty free."40 Neill rejected his previous leanings towardestablished socialist and communist movements; he alsorejected solutions based on politics and political democ-racies. What he accepted was a Reichian work-democracywhere self-regulated individuals would reject the irrational-ism of politics and form social organizations out of needand desire. The free life of Summerhill was now theprototype of the work-democracy.

In The Problem Family Neill reiterated his own idea—and Reich's—that the heart of civilization's problems wasthe organization of the family. Again he linked theorganization of the family to that of the state and theschool. Neill now defined schools as products of directclass interest, used

to discipline the workers in such a way that they aresymbolically castrated for life, the aim being tocontinue the privileges of the rich, who will be safewith an under class that has been unmanned andtherefore has not the guts to rebel.4 1

The problem for modem society was to choose betweenthe free and unfree family.

The free family was one in which children were freedfrom the internalized authority produced by moral dis-cipline. This could be done within the family. "In families

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many parents do it," Neill wrote, "and there are quite a lotof children living today who will never spank a child ormoralize about sex or give a fear of God."42 Freedomwithin the family would then be reflected in the schooland in

society in general. Freedom within the family, forexample, implied the abolition of compulsive marriage.Marriage would be held together only by the love of thetwo partners. The free family, Summerhill and work-democracy were all interrelated parts.

For both Reich and Neill education and upbringing weredirected toward encouraging the growth of free, self-regulated individuals. They did not use the word “free-dom” in the liberal sense of freedom before the law orpolitical freedom, but in the Stimerian sense of ownershipof self. One was truly free of authority when one was freeof guilt. Reich and Neill added a new dimension tolibertarian education by grounding the problem of free-dom in the actual psychic growth of the child.

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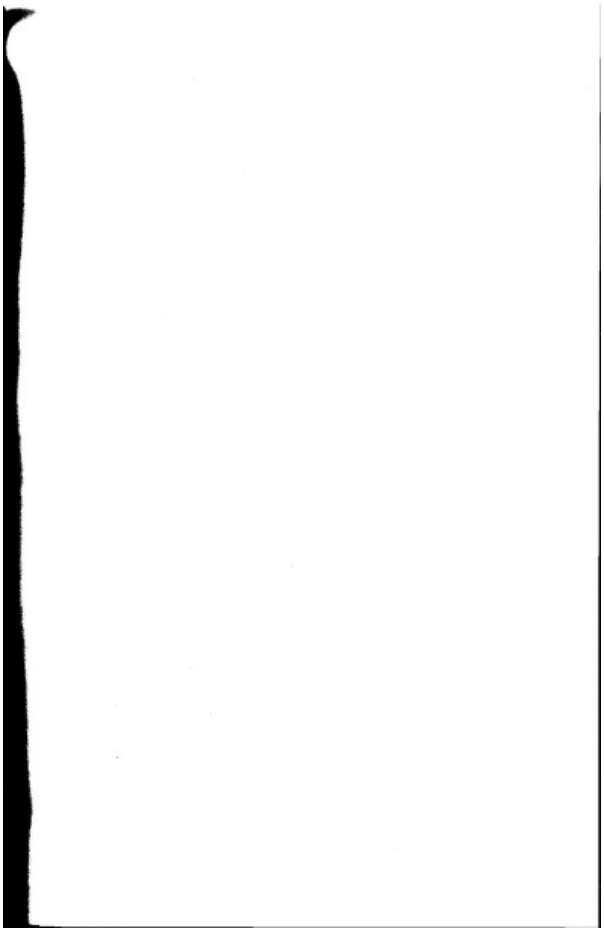

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FREEING THE CHILDFROM CHILDHOOD

WHILE WILHELM REICH and A.S. Neill consideredliberation of the child from the moral confines of thenuclear family, they did not consider liberating the childfrom the very concept of childhood. In their solutions theprocess of child rearing would simply be transferred fromthe nuclear family to a community of children. This meantperpetuating a period of childhood and youth duringwhich children would be kept in a state of dependency,isolated from the major social and economic forces ofsociety. Neill in a sense was trapped by modem conceptsof childhood and youth into assuming that abolition ofcontrol by the nuclear family required the substitution ofanother controlling institution. The solution he found inSummerhill left unanswered the questions of whethercollective child-rearing practices might not be as harmfulor more harmful than the nuclear family and whether theproblem of the nuclear family might not be solved only by

breaking through the confines of the modem concepts ofchildhood and youth. Perhaps any meaningful concept offreedom must include the actions and activities ofchildren.

One way of approaching the problem of the relationshipof the child and the family is to consider it in terms ofhistorically changing concepts of childhood and adoles-cence. One of the important historical arguments that hasbeen given for liberating the child from the nuclear familyand the modem concept of childhood can be found inPhilippe Aries' modem classic, Centuries of Childhood.Tracing the interrelated development of the concepts ofchildhood, family, and the school, he argues that theconcept of childhood is a very recent one in Westernculture. During the Middle Ages, as soon as an infant leftswaddling clothes she or he was integrated into the adultworld and shared the same games, social life, and styles ofclothing. Children were not segregated, nor were theydefined as a special category. Similarly, the family at thistime did not exist as a small nuclear unit. Marriage was notgiven much significance and was primarily an economicinstitution for passing on the family name and wealth. Ofmuch greater importance was the community, whichprovided the major focus of social activity and was themajor agency of socialization. It was this community,consisting of people of all ages, into which the child wasintegrated.

After the Middle Ages the concept of the child, theimportance of the small nuclear family, and the role of theschool all developed along parallel lines and reinforcedeach other. The school helped to mark off the special ageperiods of childhood development and taught the familythat it must direct special attention to the well-being ofthe child. The child was withdrawn from the adultcommunity and given a special status which includeddifferent expectations and a separate social life. The familybegan to define itself as a small, detached, nuclear unit.

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Aries concludes with,

Our world is obsessed by the physical, moral andsexual problems of childhood. . . . Family and schooltogether removed the child from adult society. . . .The solicitude of family. Church, moralists andadministrator deprived the child of the freedom hehad hitherto enjoyed among adults.

Prior to the modem family, an individual's social relation-ships were mainly within a broad community and thiscreated a greater degree of sociability. Conversely, Arieslinks the modem trend toward individualism with thedevelopment of the small modern family, going so far as tostate: "One is

tempted to conclude that sociability and theconcept of the family were incompatible, and develop onlyat each other's expense."1

What Aries' study suggests is that if we truly want tochange this type of family structure, we must get rid of theconcept of childhood and the idea that there should beinstitutions which attempt to make the child into someparticular moral or social ideal. This would mean theelimination of the school. In its place we would see thedevelopment of the child as an independent being and hisor her integration within the social structure.

Recent studies of the development of the concept ofadolescence and youth culture have tended to supportthese interrelationships found between the family, school,and specifically defined age categories. These studies alsotake up an aspect of the problem that Aries did not fullyconsider—one that has important implications for anyfuture planning—the effect of industrial organization onchanging concepts of childhood and youth. Concepts ofchildhood and youth, these studies show, can be directlyrelated to the changing value of these age groups in theindustrial process. In the nineteenth century children ofthe lower classes were an important element in the labor

supply for factories in developing industrial countries like theUnited States and England. Children of the lower class werewithout childhood in the sense that at an early age theyentered the industrial workplace. Middle-class children, onthe other hand, were needed for a developing white-collarclass. This required special training in schools, whichmeant they were withheld from the labor market and keptin a state of dependency upon the family.2

In the United States in the late nineteenth century acombination of factors resulted in the displacement ofmore and more children and adolescents from the labormarket. There was a feeling by industrialists that techno-logical changes no longer required the use of children infactories, a concern by labor unions that cheap child labordepressed the wage scale, and an increase in the need forwhite-collar workers. Beginning in the 1920's, increases inman-hour productivity were reflected in the displacementof more youth from the labor force and an increase in highschool enrollments. Young people were simply not neededin an economic system increasingly dependent onmachines.

One effect of these changes was the development of aconcept of adolescence

with its own psychology andcultural style. This was reflected in the development ofsomething called the “youth problem.” In the 1920’s “theyouth problem” was seen as part of the Jazz Age; in the1930’s it was called the Lost Generation; after World WarII it took the form of the Beat movement; and in the1960’s it was related to the Hippies and Yippies.3

Another important consequence of these changes wasthe extension of the child’s dependency on the family.While most people think of the school as threatening thenuclear family, in fact the opposite might be true. Aschildren and youth were removed from the labor marketand placed in school they became dependent on the familyfor a longer and longer period. By the middle of thecentury, in many families in the United States this

dependency extended until college years. The structure ofschooling required the maintenance of families as placesfrom which children were sent to school. Rather than theschool weakening the family structure by taking over someof its functions, the family was probably strengthened bythe increased dependence of children and youth.

GIVEN THIS CONSIDERATION of the historical develop-ment of the concept of childhood and dependency on thenuclear family, the collective child-rearing practices ofSummerhill appear in a somewhat different light. First,collective child-rearing practices certainly would weakenthe family in that the major responsibility for child rearingwould be transferred to a community like Summerhill. Butthis might not have any effect on family organization ifthe father and mother of the child were required to payfor their child’s care until adolescence or later. Thesituation would be similar to any other middle-class familysending its children to boarding school. The family wouldstill be required as a legal and economic institution untilthe child reached some socially defined stage of adulthood.The school would therefore only be truly effective inweakening the nuclear family if the mother and fatherwere freed from legal and economic responsibility for thechild while it was very young.

Second, collective child-rearing practices would have animportant effect on the social role of women. Freed fromextended periods of responsibility for child rearing,women would be able to enter the labor market on moreequal terms with men. The liberation of women was animportant concern to Reich and Neill, and is one of themajor forces shaping the present development of collectivechild-

is one of themajor forces shaping the present development of collectivechild-rearing practices like day-care centers. But again, thisonly had meaning if the mother is freed from economicand legal responsibility for the child.

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Third, collective child-rearing practices do free the childfrom the family but not from the state of dependencyinherent in the very concept of childhood: in this case,dependency upon a community, school, or the state. Thissituation carries with it a certain amount of irony.According to Aries, the development of the concept ofchildhood was a major force in the development of themodem family. Collective child rearing attacks the familywithout calling into question one of the importantelements which caused its existence.

From this perspective collective child rearing might beof more benefit to the parents than to the child. One ofReich's and Neill's hopes, of course, was that if childrenwere liberated from the moral structures of the family,they would develop non-authoritarian character structures.The important question is whether this would occur. Ifcollective child rearing were placed under governmentcontrol and directed toward the traditional aims of publicschooling, it seems unlikely that it would. These doubtsare confirmed by recent studies of the collective child-rearing methods of the Israeli Kibbutz. The Kibbutzrepresents an attempt to solve the problems of women'sequality and the family through collective methods. It is agood illustration of the inner dynamics of the problem andit suggests that solutions based on collective child rearingmight result in the creation of a non-rebellious and totallygroup-conformist type of personality.

The Kibbutz movement represents one of the mostimportant twentieth-century experiments in developing asociety that would provide equality for all its members. Ithas established agricultural communities with collectiveownership of the tools of production and democraticcontrol. Within the Kibbutz movement there has been anattempt to maintain economic and occupational equality.Collective child-rearing methods have been developed andthe nuclear family has been de-emphasized, partly in orderto establish equality for women and free them from theburden of child rearing.

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The evolution of and interconnection between femaleequality, changing family patterns, and collective child-rearing practices in the Kibbutz received its earliestconsideration in the United States in the work ofanthropologist Melford

earliestconsideration in the United States in the work ofanthropologist Melford E. Spiro in the early 1950's. In1951 he lived on a Kibbutz which traced its origins to theearly 1920's. It had been founded primarily by Jewishyouth of Polish origin who, coming out of the youthmovements in Europe, combined a pastoral romanticismwith radical rejection of traditional Jewish customs. Theyemphasized a rejection of city life for the hard work of anagricultural community. They also sought to replace thetraditional Jewish family with a form of cooperativeliving.4

When the Kibbutz was founded, one of the mainconcerns was the equality of women. The importance andcompulsiveness of marriage were reduced and the sexualrelationship was viewed as a personal affair, with neitherthe original union nor its termination requiring thesanction of the community. The marriage relationship wasannounced essentially by a couple asking for a joint room,and divorce by the couple asking for separate rooms. Bythe 1950's the Kibbutz had become part of the State ofIsrael and the law required that a child had to be born ofmarried parents in order to receive civil rights; therefore,official marriage on this Kibbutz occurred with pregnancy.

Reducing the importance of marriage, it was believed,would reduce the social and economic dependency of thewoman on the man. The abolition of the marriageceremony was meant to remove women's legal subjectionto men. The female did not assume the male's name norwas her legal status that of "his wife." Within this Kibbutza female's prestige was not enhanced by the fact that herhusband was a great worker or brilliant leader. Because ofthe collective ownership of property the female was noteconomically dependent on the male. The traditionalsexual division of labor was destroyed. Men and womenwere to have similar occupational roles. Spiro found,

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however, that the ideal of women's equality had beencompromised by what was referred to as women's "biolog-ical tragedy."

Over the long years of development work had becomedivided on the basis of sex. This was due partly to thestrenuous nature of some of the labor, but even moresignificantly to the fact that pregnant women could notwork for long periods in the fields and nursing mothershad to work near the Infant House. This meant that whenwomen were forced to leave vital agricultural pursuits,their positions were assumed by men. Consequently, onthe Kibbutz where Spiro lived, 88 percent of the womenwere involved in service jobs, the largest numbers workingin education and the laundry.5

Hand in hand with this reduction in the importance ofmarriage went a de-emphasis on the role of the family.Certain traditional types of family functions were collec-tivized. One important step was the establishment of acommon dining room. People were not to separate intonuclear families at mealtime—an occasion which hadtraditionally performed a unifying function for the family.In fact, the traditional family meal represented all thevalues the members of the Kibbutz wanted to reject: thefather sat as patriarchal leader of the family while thefemale displayed her subservient role by serving the food.In the collective dining room males and females shared thecooking and cleaning. The meal itself became a communityaffair rather than a family affair. In fact, the children atein their own separate dining facilities.

The emphasis on the family was also reduced with thecollective education of children. On this particular Kib-butz, collective education began four days after birth,when the baby and mother were released from thehospital. At this age the child entered the "Children'sSociety" in which it remained until graduation from highschool and election into the Kibbutz. As the child grew up it lived in a series

of “houses.” The Infant House handled a

maximum of sixteen infants ranging in age from four daysto approximately one year and was supervised by a nurseand three assistants drawn from the labor supply of thecommunity. The infants were not allowed to be taken totheir parents’ rooms until they were six months old, sothat most personal needs were attended to by the nurses.Infants were with their parents only during feeding time orduring parental visits to the Infant House on weekdayafternoons and Saturdays.

At the age of six months the children were allowed onehour a day away from the Infant House to visit theirparents’ rooms; at one year this was increased to two hoursa day and the children were taken from the Infant Houseto the Toddlers House. There they were placed under thesupervision of a new nurse, gradually toilet trained, andtaught to feed themselves. They learned to play withchildren of the same age group. The size of the socialgroup in the Toddlers House was about eight children. Atthe age of four or five years the children left this groupand entered Kindergarten. The size of the community ofchildren at this time was increased to sixteen. Thisestablished the social group the child would be with untilthe end of high school.

The children were therefore not raised in a family but ina community of peers. They lived in a dormitory, visitedtheir parents for two hours a day, and shared all the rest ofthe day with their peers. There was little differentiation bysex in this process. Boys and girls shared the same showers,toilets, and rooms. They were accustomed to sharingactivities and viewing each other's bodies. Sexual matterswere discussed quite openly and were not hidden from thechildren. However, sexual activity itself was discourageduntil the individual entered the Kibbutz.6

The importance of the Kibbutz education was that itconsciously attempted to maintain female equality byeliminating the importance of the nuclear family in childrearing. It was hoped that female equality would be

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insured by a collective education which practiced sexualequality and which abolished the social role of mother.

The question that must be raised about this process hasto do with the psychological effects of being raised in acommunity of peers. What does such a form of childrearing mean in terms of power and authority relationshipswithin a society? The psychological effects of child rearingon the Kibbutz have been studied by a variety of experts.7Probably the most important writing on the relationshipbetween child-rearing practices and social structure hasbeen Bruno Bettelheim's The Children of the Dream.

One of the important consequences of collective childrearing, Bettelheim has argued, is the development of acollective superego or collective conscience—what MaxStimer had referred to as the “spook” of internalizedauthority. Bettelheim recognizes that this developmentwithin the Kibbutz had important implications for otherWestern cultures. Within the Kibbutz, the source of thesuperego is no longer the parents but the children’ssociety. This is precisely the trend in other Westernsocieties like the United States, where the role of theparent is decreasing and the importance of the peer groupincreasing. “If this trend continues,” he writes, “thesuperego in our society, too, may come to be based moreand more on a morality that derives from the need tocooperate with the peer group, as is already true in thekibbutz.”8

For Bettelheim the superego which is the product of apeer group is less awesome, more familiar, and moreinescapable. In the middle-class family the source ofauthority is the parents, with support from other authorityfigures like the police or God. In the Kibbutz the superegois a product of collective demands and is less oftenpresented as a threat. On the Kibbutz the individual, aspart of the peer group, participates directly in the formingof her or his own superego. Since the individual ego helpsto form the superego, there is less of a tendency toward

the separation of the two and the development of conflict.There is also less guilt and anxiety, because to meet thedemands of the superego is to meet the demands of thecommunity. In other societies morality, particularly sexualmorality, makes demands that have no relationship to thereal life of the community, creating conflict for theindividual. With the collective superego, however, there isless conflict because the demands of the collective super-ego reflect the demands of the environment.

Bettelheim's argument suggests that the abolition of thenuclear family might have some very positive results interms of the reduction of individual emotional conflict. Onthe other hand, it might result in even more powerfulforms of control. Middle-class children can remove them-selves from their parents, hold them at a distance. ButKibbutz children never escape the watchful eyes of theirpeers; moreover, the individual on the Kibbutz is made apart of the controlling system. "We can never hide from acontrol system for which we are quite consciously a part,"writes Bettelheim. For the Kibbutz child "the commandsare more inescapable because there is nowhere a dissentingvoice to support one's own doubts or dissent."9

Being raised in a community of children also makes itdifficult to separate one's own ego from that of the group.In the Kibbutz little time or emphasis can be given toprivate feelings and emotions; children can rarely be aloneand outside the control of the group. According toBettelheim, "Group sanctions are all the more effectivebecause with no way to escape the group, there is no wayto escape its rejection."1 0 If one does try to run counterto the demands of the group, there are no supportingvalues for this revolt, no place to escape the values of thegroup. Growing up in a community of children providesvery few opportunities to experience oneself as beingseparate from the group.

Children of the Kibbutz also exhibit an emotionalflatness and an inability to express deep emotional feelings

that Bettelheim links to the process of collective childrearing. In the first place, group education allows verylittle time or opportunity for the experiencing of privateemotion or an emotion shared intimately by only one ortwo friends. Again, one finds no support for the privateexperience. Bettelheim suggests that

in the Kibbutz,

Emotion shared with only one other person is a signof selfishness no less than other private possessions.Nowhere more than in the kibbutz did I realize thedegree to which private property, in the deep layersof the mind, relates to private emotions.1 1

Second, group life often requires the repression of strongemotional feelings. This is particularly true during adoles-cence, when sexual relations on the Kibbutz are notsanctioned but at the same time adolescent girls and boysare sharing rooms, toilets, and showers. This conditionpromotes a high degree of sexual stimulation yet at thesame time requires the repression of that drive. Third,Bettelheim suggests that the range and possibilities ofemotional experience are limited in collective child rearing.The child feels a great deal more secure in the group thanin a nuclear family. On the Kibbutz the group is the godon which the person depends. In the family it is themother and the father. The Kibbutz child never feels theanxiety of possibly losing her or his source of security.Bettelheim argues that a middle-class child's dependencyon the parents and fear of losing them results in a processof introjection whereby the child internalizes the parentsas a means of possessing them. For Bettelheim, the processof introjection trains the child in the ability to assume therole of others and speculate about different ways of living.When asking Kibbutz youths questions like, "How do youthink you would have felt about kibbutz life if you'd beenbom and raised in the city?" he would receive answerslike, "I wasn't raised there, so I can't answer that." "To

move outside the self and take a look at it," Bettelheimobserves, "was not a stance common to theseyoungsters."12

Bettelheim's description of the effects of collective childrearing raises some very interesting questions. For instance,while the nuclear, triangular family can be viewed as asource of dependency on authoritarian figures, it can alsobe seen as providing an opportunity for the child toseparate herself or himself from the rest of society anddevelop a private self. This separation of self through themechanism of the family can be viewed in both a positiveand negative light. Negatively it can be argued that theindividualism spawned by the family leads to a selfishindividualism which works against social cooperation. Thisis one of the arguments given in favor of the collectiveeducation of the Kibbutz in that it

arguments given in favor of the collectiveeducation of the Kibbutz in that it fosters social coopera-tion. On the positive side it can be argued that the familysituation allows for the type of social separation andconditions basic to developing the mechanism of revolt.Revolt against the family is the first step in throwing offthe control of society.

One can argue from this perspective that the majorproblem with collective child rearing and the developmentof a collective superego is that this superego is all-controlling and does not provide mechanisms for indi-vidual rejection or revolt. This may make little differencein the Kibbutz, where there is collective ownership andcontrol. But in advanced industrial countries the spread ofcollective child-rearing practices would not necessarilyimply a total reform of the social system. If previousexperience is any guide, schools have always tended toreflect the inequalities of society.

The questions raised about the Kibbutz can be directedtoward Summerhill as well. Certainly Neill envisioned aseries of Summerhills as part of a socialist society. Thiswould supposedly make collective child rearing a part of ajust society. But it should be recognized that the dynamics

of Western society which are currently providing impetusfor collective child rearing are directed not toward theliberation of the child but toward the liberation of womenfrom the trap of the home. Within this context, collectivechild rearing simply institutionalizes the existing patternsof society as far as children are concerned. It is a drearyprospect to think of public schools operating child-carecenters. That would be the final triumph of the process ofschooling.

This also raises the question of whether present trendsin collective child retiring would only provide for women’sescape from the burden of the home and not for femaleliberation. Feminists like Emma Goldman argued thatthere could be no women’s liberation as long as societyretained its present form of organization. Writing in theearly twentieth century, she argued that it was certainlynot any glorious independence for women to be forced totype in offices, to sew in sweat shops, or to stand behindcounters in department stores. For Goldman work of thisnature was ample reason for women to rush into marriageat the first offer to escape their supposed “independence.”To liberate women would mean to liberate society from itsexisting social and economic structure.13

ONE SOLUTION TO THIS DILEMMA might be to reversethe problem and think of it in terms of freeing the childfrom the family, releasing the child from a state ofdependence upon controlling institutions. The problemwith the collective education of the Kibbutz is that itserves a particular end and does not allow for theself-development of the individual separate from thegroup. If the Kibbutz schools were eliminated and thechildren at an early age were integrated into the adult life

of the community, that might provide a partial solution.The fact that formal schools exist on the Kibbutz appearsas a cultural remnant of middle-class society. The foundersof the Kibbutz assumed that schools were a natural part ofall societies. But in the drive for women's rights, it shouldnot be assumed that the best solutions lie in the expansionof schooling.

This argument leads back to the possible solution ofsimultaneously liberating children from the modem cate-gory of childhood and emancipating women from theburden of extended periods of child rearing. This solutionsuggests two possible directions we might take. The firstpossibility is to organize society so that all people,including children, have a useful social role. In thetwentieth century the rise of schooling and the increase inearly retirement are directly connected to higher produc-tivity and advanced technology. Essentially our economyhas told young people and older people that they are nolonger useful. Youths are put into schools and older peopleare sent to retirement communities. To change this wouldmean viewing the child as a miniature adult, with all therights and status of adulthood. As Aries found to be thecase during the Middle Ages, the child would participate inadult activities and would be treated as an adult.

The second possible direction would be to accept theseparation of production and consumption that exists inour society for certain age groups—that is, to accept thefact that children and youth function as consumers butnot as producers. Right now, of course, this situation onlybreeds greater dependence; in the proposed solution,however, children and youth up to a certain age, such astwenty-one, would be given a guaranteed income whichwould allow them to leave home at an early age withoutnecessarily having to attend a custodial institution. Theyoung people would be allowed to spend that income inany manner they chose. This would destroy children's

dependency on the family and school, and would end theobligation of the woman to assume the responsibility for alengthy period of child rearing. The proposal would havean advantage over the previous one in that it might avoidthe exploitation of children and youth by the industrialprocess. It would have the disadvantage of possiblykeeping children financially dependent on the state.

While the above proposals are only speculative, they dosuggest possible goals. If the abolition of the nuclearfamily is an essential step in the drive toward women'semancipation, it would be better, and essential in the longrun, for the child to be liberated in the process than to besubjected to an expanded system of control throughschooling. This liberation requires that the barriers ofmodem concepts of childhood be transcended. At as earlyan age as possible the child must become a miniature adult,a person exercising all the rights and privileges that we nowconfer on adults.

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CERTAIN LIBERTARIAN GOALS might be achieved ifsociety broke through modem concepts of childhood.Such concepts treat the child as an object and not as asubject of the social process. Viewed as an object to beworked upon, the child becomes a focal point for theimposition of ideals and ideologies. In the United States inthe twentieth century we have witnessed repeatedattempts to solve social problems, ranging from poverty tovenereal disease, by attempting to shape the character ofthe child in the school. Because the child has been viewedas an object, childhood has become a dumping ground fora myriad of attempted solutions of social problems. Ifchildren became subjects or participants in the shaping ofsociety, they would become actors in the making of

history. As Paulo Freire suggests, the difference betweenbeing human and being animal-like is the exercise ofconsciousness and the participation as a subject in themaking of history. The child treated as an object is treatedas an animal. The child treated as a subject would betreated as a human being.

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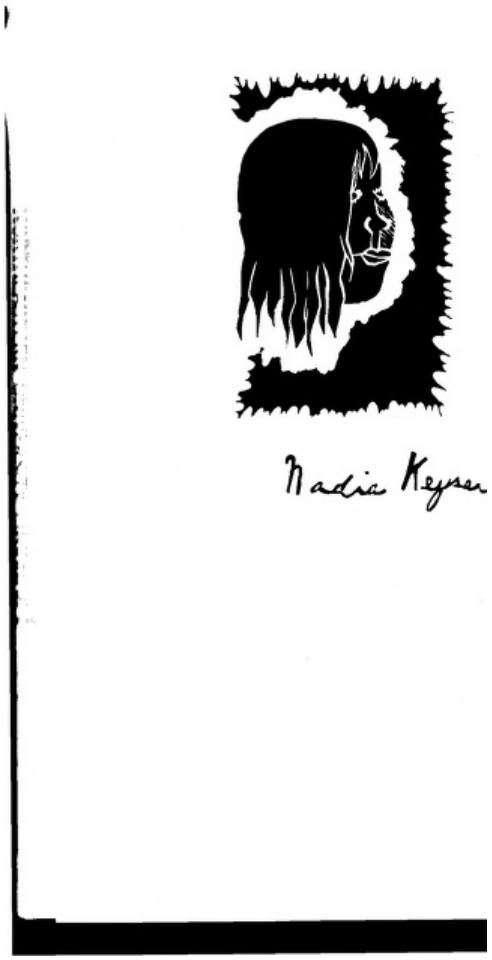

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PRESENT REALITIES ANDFUTURE PROSPECTS

THE THEORIES OF EDUCATION discussed in this bookrepresent one aspect of the battle for control of the mindof the child that has occurred over the nineteenth andtwentieth centuries. Any consideration of their value andmeaning must be made against the background of thepresent organization and purposes of education and anevaluation of the present possibilities of social changethrough the use of educational techniques. Radicaltheories of education have been based on an assumptioncommon to most modern societies—that one of the keyelements in organizing a society is the nature of theeducational and child-rearing system. It is this systemwhich shapes the future members of society.

The real disagreements, therefore, go beyond educa-tional technique; they involve the very nature of socialchange. Theories of education are just one very importantaspect of an overall theoretical perspective about how

important aspect of an overall theoretical perspective about how

society should change. We can identify fundamentaldifferences in theoretical perspectives about social changein different educational methods. Two distinct modelsemerge. One model has a technological and rationalisticorientation which seeks social improvement through moreorderly social planning and increased efficiency. This is amodel which in the twentieth century has tended to cutacross ideological lines; it has been embraced by liberal,fascist, and communist countries alike. This model isconcerned primarily with increased economic productivityand social stability. Society is conceived of as a machinewith the goal of efficient operation. People become“human resources” whose values are determined by theircontribution to the smooth functioning of the socialmachinery.

In this model the child is treated as an object to beworked upon and shaped for the good of society. As I havedemonstrated in another book, this is the model of the“good society” that pervaded the organization of thepublic schools in the United States in the twentiethcentury. The modem high school, vocational guidance, andtesting were all conceived of as means of increasing theefficiency of the social machinery. The raw humanresources of children would be classified, sorted, andshaped, then sent from the schools into their proper nichesin society.1

The nature of the other model of social change may bededuced from the philosophies of education considered inthis book. Here the concern is not with order andefficiency but with increasing individual autonomy. Thegoal of social change is increased individual participationand control of the social system. This model rests on theconviction that a great deal of the power of modem socialinstitutions depends on the willingness of the people toaccept the authority and legitimacy of these institutions.In this context the question becomes, not how to fit theindividual into the social machine, but why people are

willing to accept work without personal satisfaction andsocial authority which limits freedom. This condition ofacceptance, as has been argued in this volume, is primarilythe result of the ideals, beliefs, and ideologies in the mindof the child. As a result, the individual believes it is one’sduty to work for some good which might not have anyrelationship to one’s own needs and desires. The goal

which might not have anyrelationship to one's own needs and desires. The goal ofthis libertarian model is therefore an educational methodwhich will encourage and support non-authoritarian indi-viduals who are unwilling to bow to authority and whodemand a social organization which provides them withmaximum individual control and freedom.

An implicit assumption of the theories discussed in thisvolume is that changes in methods of education and childrearing can contribute to a radical transformation ofsociety. This assumption raises questions about the valueof these theories in our present society. Is it a waste ofenergy to direct one's concerns toward educationalchanges as a means of social change? Should one concen-trate on other social and economic changes and leteducational change follow in their wake? Will educationalsystems always be a mirror of the surrounding society?

One way of approaching these questions is to considerthe social uses of public education in the United States inthe nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the first place,it is naive to assume that the educational systems preciselymirror the surrounding society. Society has never beenhomogeneous and without conflicting interests. There hasnever been a consensus about the goals and methods ofpublic education. What has happened in fact is that thegoals and methods of education have mirrored the goalsand interests of those who have power in society.2

This situation has resulted in public education beingused primarily as a conservative force for the solution ofsocial problems. The use of public education as aninstrument of social improvement has allowed people toact as if they were doing good without making any

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fundamental changes in society. In the nineteenth andtwentieth centuries

education has been viewed as a meansof ending poverty, crime, and urban disorder by teachingthe child in the schoolhouse proper social attitudes andwork habits. This means the individual is told he or she isthe problem and not that the social system needs to bechanged. Everyone can rally around the flag of theschoolhouse without threatening the existing organizationof society. Certainly, this was the situation in the 1960'swhen President Lyndon Johnson translated the demandsof the civil rights movement into a theory of culturaldeprivation, arguing that salvation from poverty andracism could be found in an improved educational system.When in the 1970's everyone awoke to the fact that theeducational system had not eliminated racism or poverty,people began to argue that education had very little tooffer in the way of social change.3

This conclusion is correct if one assumes that edu-cation's role is what Paulo Freire has called the bankingsystem of education, which in fact tends to support socialrigidity. Certainly the theories considered in this volume,however, connect changes in education to an ongoingprogram of social change. Part of their emphasis is that nosocial change is meaningful unless people participate in itsformulation. And this applies, as well, to children.

THE WEDDING OF revolutionary thought to radicalpedagogy had its roots in a profound pessimism, a feelingthat revolutionary social and economic changes in thetwentieth century had resulted in totalitarian states—theSoviet Union, for example, where revolutionary impulseswere followed by a period of conservative dictatorship.Why the failure of this revolutionary endeavor? For peoplelike Reich, Neill, and Freire the answer lies in its failure toprovide radically new means of education and socialization

by which all people could be brought into the revolution-ary movement and become acting members of it ratherthan its objects.

From this perspective, a radical educational theorymakes sense only if it is seen as part of a totalrevolutionary endeavor. One of the most serious problemsfacing the present and future development of libertarianforms of education is the dangerous separation of educa-tional methods from a political and social ideology.Radical experiments in education tend to be trivialized asfast as they are developed. Paulo Freire's techniques Eireadopted by the Peace Corps and the free school methodsof Summerhill are introduced into the classrooms of thepublic school without any relationship to their underlyingradical ideology. What begins as a radical movement isquickly absorbed by the existing system; new techniquesare used, but only to accomplish the old objectives ofcontrol and

new techniques used, but only to accomplish the old objectives of control and discipline. The Summerhillian approach, triv-ialized within the public school classroom, becomes awarm, loving, and free method of teaching the samesubject matter and producing the same character struc-ture.4 One obvious example of this process is themovement for day-care centers. Once divorced from amovement to change the family and to free society fromthe authoritarian personality and state control, the day-care center becomes an instrument for dominating thepopulation. Day-care centers are now being used as ameans of controlling the poor by creating a new institu-tional family structure and by avoiding any major changesin the economic system by forcing the welfare mother towork. Day-care centers are provided not to relieve peoplefrom an authoritarian family structure, but to providethem with one that they are believed to lack.

The future of any radical endeavor in education dependsupon maintaining the link between educational methodsand a libertarian perspective. The social critique, theplanning, and the methods must all be kept together.

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Certainly, the greatness of John Dewey was his ability tolink a psychological definition of humanity to a totalsocial philosophy, and then to develop educationalmethods based on that concept of humanity and guided bythat social philosophy. All methods and content ineducation affect character and action. Consequently, alleducational techniques reflect some ideological position.For instance, Paulo Freire has certainly shown that theteaching of reading and writing might be the most politicalact in education. If education is pursued without aconscious radical perspective, it will do nothing but servethe existing social order.

It should also be clearly understood that there are twodistinct ways of talking about education’s potential tohave a radical effect on society. On the one hand,educational systems such as Paulo Freire’s can provide amethod which liberates individuals so that they will act tobring about a radical change in society. On the other hand,an educational establishment itself may directly affectsociety, as in the case of a day-care center which weakensthe family structure. Both approaches can be combinedwithin one system. A.S. Neill’s dream of a socialist statewith Summerhill schools was directed both at weakeningthe family and at creating the self-regulated individual

weakeningthe family and at creating the self-regulated individual.

While the above arguments would seem to demonstratethat there is something called radical education which canhave a meaningful role in radical social change, it does notanswer the question of whether it is worthwhile to directone's energies toward educational change rather thanconcentrating on other areas of social change. One reply,of course, could emphasize the essential role of educational change in any radical movement, as our theoristshave stressed. But this reply avoids the problem of theexistence of a tremendously powerful and complex educa-tional establishment with its increasingly effective mecha-nisms for absorbing criticism and utilizing any educationalmethod for its own purposes. This is not to suggest that

there is any conspiratorial group manipulating the educa-tional system. If this were true, the problem might bemuch simpler. In reality this educational establishment is acomplex web of often competing groups. In the UnitedStates these groups range from professional teachingorganizations and unions, through administrative organiza-tions, schools of education, publishing companies, andtesting organizations, to state legislatures, national policygroups, and the federal government.

Any attempt to make a radical pedagogy part of aradical political and social movement must come to termswith this educational establishment. The neglect ofattempts to change this educational establishment wouldmean the neglect of an entire generation which is held inthe custodial control of the school. Moreover, a very goodcase can be made for political and social movements to haveto direct some energy toward educational change since theschool is one of the major public institutions, second only tothe Defense Department in terms of public expenditures.If we talk about change in our social institutions, wecertainly cannot neglect one of the largest and mostintrusive of them. In fact, it is the one public institutionwhich has the most contact with all members of society.

The school, in short, must be approached first of all as apolitical and social institution. To give concrete meaningto theories of radical education—to that which can be—onemust begin by coming to terms with that which exists. Theone major shortcoming of radical educational theorists hasbeen their failure to deal with the reality of existingeducational systems and how their theories might beimplemented. For instance, it is fine for A.S. Neill toestablish a model

like Summerhill, but Summerhill haslittle meaning unless it can be implemented throughoutsociety. Neill was never very helpful about the strategiesone might use to convert an entire educational system tothat model. The failure of many free schools in the 1960's was a direct result of not making a concrete assessment of

the political workings of public schooling and developingof strategies to confront and change that system. Many ofthese schools just languished outside the system, withoutmoney or power. What this means is that if radicalpedagogy is to be made part of a radical movement, it cannot act as if it were creating a new educational system in avacuum. Strategies must be developed to confront thepolitical realities of the existing educational establishment.

LET US CONSIDER some possible strategies for radical-izing American education. Any plan for meaningful educa-tional change must affect the whole spectrum of educa-tional power. There must not only be alternativeeducational models, but also a legal campaign to changeeducational laws, a fight for a different system ofeducational funding, an understanding of the need forchildren's rights, an emphasis on women's rights andchanging the structure of the family, and a campaign tochange the nature and direction of research in the schoolsof education of major universities.

One of the first steps that could be taken would be theelimination of compulsory education.5 A campaign againstcompulsory education laws might be conducted, eitherthrough the courts or on the floor of state legislatures. Noradical educational plan can really be developed if allchildren are required to attend a school approved by thestate government. But at the same time compulsoryeducation laws are attacked, it must be recognized thatthey were originally developed to solve certain socialproblems, namely child labor and juvenile delinquency.Compulsory education does protect children from eco-nomic exploitation and does serve the custodial functionof occupying time. Thus, the end of compulsory education

would have to be accompanied by a change in theeconomic structure which allowed for the financial inde-pendence of youth.

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An economic change of this nature could have a directeffect upon the family. Because the increased duration ofschooling has prolonged the child's dependency upon thefamily structure, heads of household must earn an incomeabove their personal needs in order to support theirdependents—children or other non-wage-eaming membersof the family. To alleviate this economic dependence onthe family, the surplus income of the head of thehousehold could be rechanneled to the children. Thismight involve a plan which would levy a tax on adults forthe support of children. Accompanying this economicchange could be changes in the legal rights of children. Forinstance, children might remain within the custody of thefamily until the age of twelve or thirteen. Up to that pointthe child's income from the state would be used as aneducational voucher. The child and the family would makea decision about how the money should be used foreducational purposes. This would break the monopoly ofpublic schools and allow for the use of a wide variety ofalternative schools. Then, at the age of thirteen orfourteen, youths would be recognized as being legallyindependent of the family and allowed to leave home ifthey so desired. Income would be guaranteed by the stateuntil the age of twenty-one. Before the age of thirteen orfourteen children would be able to ask the courts toremove them from intolerable home situations.

Economic independence would allow for the changingof other laws affecting youth. Child labor laws could beeliminated because youths would no longer be vulnerableto exploitation on the labor market.6 Youths could choosejobs because of interest and desire to learn. There could alsobe a campaign to insure adolescent sexual freedom. Notonly could all restrictive laws be removed but birth-controldevices and information might be provided. Economic

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independence and legal changes hopefully would overcomewhat Wilhelm Reich referred to as the "housing prob-lems." Independent residences might be made available toyouths. Society, in short, could recognize the legitimacy ofadolescent sexual activity.

The economic independence of youth would represent amajor step in the liberation of women. Traditionally, girlsand young women have been under the control of thefamily for longer periods of time than their male counter-parts. Even marriage at an early age only results in a shiftfrom the control of one head

of the household to another.A major source of female dependence on the family is thelack of easy access to occupations which provide economicindependence. Combined with this economic problem isthe traditional attitude that women must be protected bythe home and denied the social independence of their malecounterparts. Providing women with equal economic inde-pendence would hopefully allow them the same type ofsocial freedom and opportunity for development.

The elimination of compulsory education and theshifting of educational funding from the level of the schoolto that of the individual could break the power of theeducational bureaucracy. It should be recognized that inthe United States, control of the school does not reallyreside in the local boards of education.7 Such importanteducational issues as curriculum, content of textbooks, andrequirements for teacher certification are decided withinan interlocking educational bureaucracy which includesprofessional organizations, state officials, universities, andpublishing companies—not to mention the new learningcorporations like IBM and Educational Testing Services,which represent the most important and rapidly growingparts of this bureaucracy.

One way to weaken the power of this educationalbureaucracy would be to avoid any supervision of educa-tional spending, leaving decisions about how the moneyshould be spent completely up to the individual. That

would mean parental supervision until the child was twelveor thirteen; after that, the individual youth would haveabsolute control over the spending of the money. If agovernment body were established to supervise the spend-ing, it would be likely to fall under the power of the samesocial and economic influences which have surrounded theschool. Instead, we could develop a democratic systemwhich placed control in the hands of the individual. Thepractice of freedom is the best exercise in learning how touse freedom. What little money might be lost orsquandered at an individual level would be nothingcompared to the amount of money wasted and squanderedwithin the existing educational structure. The history ofgovernment control and regulation in the United States hasbeen one of creating what has been called a “socialism forthe rich.” We could exercise a traditional Americandistrust for government organizations as sources of powerfor those in control, and instead place our faith inindividual actions.

The demise of the existing educational structure couldbe accompanied by the

recognition that the concept of theschool is out of date in modem technological society. Theschools in the nineteenth century was viewed not only as asource of social control but also as a center where all thematerials of learning, books and teachers, could beconcentrated. With mass media and urban living there is noreason why a person should not be able to learn the basicskills of reading, writing, and arithmetic just by growingand interacting within the community. Ivan Illich's De-schooling Society has certainly offered path-breakingsuggestions in this direction.

One of the immediate questions that occur when it issuggested that the school be eliminated is: What happensto the poor? Is not the school their only hope? How willthey learn growing up in a culture of poverty? Without theschool will there not be even greater social class dif-ferences? In response, it should be clearly recognized that

schooling has not eliminated poverty in the past nor will itin the future. To use the school to solve problems ofpoverty is to seek a conservative solution without directlychanging the social structure which created poverty. Itshould also be recognized that schooling as a system ofsocial selection has tended to reinforce the existing socialclass structure. But to get rid of the school is certainly notgoing to eliminate poverty. In other words, having schoolsor not having schools is not going to make that muchdifference because schools are not at the heart of theproblem of poverty. But if the school were eliminated andat the same time children and youth were given economicindependence, the problem of poverty would be con-fronted directly. Poor children would have enough moneyto explore and enjoy the advantages now reserved for themiddle class.

The next question, of course, is whether the culture ofpoverty doesn't hinder and limit the type of choices madeby the parents and youth. The answer, of course, is yes.But this "yes" must be qualified in two ways. First, thepoor are better judges of how their educational moneyshould be spent than the traditional leaders in theeducational bureaucracy. Second, the legal and legislativecampaign directed against compulsory education andeducational funding could be accompanied by the radicali-zation of the schools of education in major universities.This would provide a center for dealing directly with theproblems raised by a culture of poverty by utilizingcommunity education programs based on methods likePaulo Freire's and by developing techniques of radicaltherapy.

The radicalization of faculties of education wouldinvolve completely changing their conception of their ownfunction. The educators would have to raise a whole newset of questions—questions very different from thosewhich have occupied traditional pedagogical theory. AsWilhelm Reich suggested in the 1920's, nothing of major

consequence can be accomplished by treatment at anindividual level. If repression exists on a society-wide level,the solution is not individual treatment but changing thosesocial conditions and institutions which cause repression.Individual therapy is essentially conservative because itleaves untouched the source of the problem. The samedifficulty exists with schools and the faculties of educationwhich have served those schools. Treatment of socialproblems has tended to be at an individual and conserva-tive level. There is an attempt to overcome the culture ofpoverty by treating the child within the confines of theschool. The real solution lies in directly attacking thesocial conditions which keep a person from learning andgrowing in our society.

One of the major obstacles in radicalizing faculties ofeducation will be their traditional relationship to theprocess of schooling. Education departments and schoolsof education have tended to see their function primarily asone of serving the needs of the public schools by supplyingteachers and services. Very often a large number ofuniversity people studying education have come from theranks of public schooling and consider the department ofeducation as an extension of the public schools. Histori-cally, that is the reason for the establishment of normalschools and colleges of education. The consequence of thisprocess has been a severe limitation on the study anddevelopment of meaningful educational processes.

The results of this narrow focus are reflected in thevarious disciplines within education. Today all such dis-ciplines are directed toward serving the schools. Teachertraining is designed primarily to prepare a person to teachstandard subjects within a public school classroom. Thenature of education courses is governed by the require-ments for state certification. Educational psychology as adiscipline in education tends to focus on the psychology ofclassroom management. It sees itself as supplying thescientific tools for teaching within the classroom and

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managing a captive audience of students. Both the researchand content of instruction are centered on learning withinthe context of the classroom. Educational sociology tendsto follow the same path and concentrates on classroomand school social interaction and the handling of culturaldifferences within the school. The teaching of educationalhistory, like United States history in the public schools, islargely a matter of selling certain ideas and beliefs.Educational philosophy has tended to get lost within theprocess of defining and clarifying the goals of publicschooling.

Radical groups, students, and faculty could begin toplace pressure on faculties of education to rechart thedirection of American education.8 This pressure could beapplied internally, through the teaching and research ofindividual faculty members, and through the demand bystudents for a different type of educational program.Outside groups, such as alternative schools, could placepressure on the universities to supply the same types ofservices as are extended to the public schools. The demandcould be made that universities not exclusively serve theneeds of public schooling but begin to look at theeducational process within the framework of a broadcultural perspective.

One of the first things that might be done would be toseparate teacher training from the state certificationrequirements. This might initially involve proposing twoseparate courses of study in teacher training. One of thesewould lead to state certification and the other to thedevelopment and implementation of methods like PauloFreire’s. This second course of study would provide a basefor the collection of material and training of workers forcommunity action. Teachers trained in methods likeFreire’s could go into poverty areas and establish educational programs outside the public school system todevelop social consciousness. The teacher training pro-grams could also provide facilities for training minority

group leaders, like Native Americans and blacks, inFreirian or other techniques.

Educational sociology and psychology could worktogether to accomplish what Wilhelm Reich called radicaltherapy. Both of these disciplines could begin to look atthe problem of why certain people within our societycannot learn without relying upon the authoritarianstructure of the school. If such dependency does not exist,we can safely abandon the school and rely on everyindividual to grow and learn in his or her own manner. Butone suspects that at this stage, there are still many barriersto free and independent learning. This might be partic-ularly true in cultures of poverty. The job for psychologyand sociology would be to identify those barriers whichcreate a state of dependency in the learning process. Is theproblem, as Reich suggested, mainly centered around theexistence of the nuclear family? Is the problem moredirectly related to the economic conditions of poverty? Is ita result of the structure and the conditions of our modemurban environment? These and a host of otherquestions immediately come to mind. Sociology andpsychology could then go on to identify those socialconditions which would allow people to live and grow inthe world without the authoritarian control of the schools.They could develop a radical therapy which would resultin major changes in our society. If children cannot learn,one must not stop with just helping them to overcometheir immediate problem. One must identify those socialconditions which hinder their learning and directly attackthose conditions.

Educational sociology could also assume the extraburden of studying the nature of control and economicexploitation in education. At a local level studies need tobe made of the relationship between local elites andcontrol of education. Such studies, linking the ideology ofthe school with the ideology of a particular social class,would follow in the tradition of George Counts' early

studies on the social composition of school boards. Inaddition, students might be mobilized to study thefinancial dealings of local school districts and watch forpossible conflicts of interest. What needs to be done on anational level is a study of the national power elite ineducation. This would include a study of the educationalleaders who move easily between foundations, publishingcompanies, universities, educational organizations, and thefederal educational establishment. It would be interestingto study the ideology of this power elite and its effectupon education.

The history and philosophy of education could begin tostudy the relationship between ideology and educationalpractice which includes the whole socialization process.Any theory about the socialization process is based on aconcept of human nature and directed toward a vision ofwhat ought to be. Theories of the family, community,school, city planning, and other related parts of thesocialization process would be defined in terms of theseunderlying ideologies. History and philosophy could makethese ideological assumptions explicit, examining themboth in their historical context and in their present manifes-tations. It should be the responsibility of these twodisciplines to assure that educational methods do notbecome isolated from their political and social roots.

WHILE ALL THE ABOVE STRATEGIES are tentative,they do represent the kinds of practical things that mustbe considered if radical education is to have any meaning.There must be a clear development of how theory can beput into practice in the modem world. For years Americaneducators have wondered why the educational philosophyof John Dewey has so little influence on the dailyworkings of the public school classroom. Part of theanswer can be found in Dewey's own writings. While

Dewey certainly translated his philosophy into classroommethods, he never suggested ways the educational estab-lishment could be changed so that his methods could beput into practice. Dewey's method became a topic ofdiscussion but not a practical tool. In the same way,radical pedagogy could become just a topic for discussionunless it orients itself politically toward die realities of theexisting educational structure.

One hundred years ago it would have been difficult toconvince large numbers of people that changing educa-tional institutions was a necessary part of political andeconomic change. Today this is equally true because social andeconomic forces have made schools one of the centralcontrolling agencies in society. For this reason schoolsmust become a part of any attempt at major socialchange. This does not necessarily mean an extension ofschooling; it could as easily mean the limitation orelimination of schooling. What must be kept in mind isthat mass schooling is a product of a particular set ofhistorical forces which has made it into one of the majorinstitutions for planned socialization.

What must also be kept in mind is the distinctionbetween schooling and education. Schooling has been aplanned method of socialization designed to produceobedient workers and citizens through a system ofinstitutional controls. On the other hand, education canmean gaining knowledge and ability by which one cantransform the world and maximize individual autonomy.Education can be a source of individual liberation. One ofthe internal contradictions within the present system ofschooling relates to this distinction. Modem workers doneed basic skills and some degree of understanding of theworld and, consequently, must be given some education. Itvery often happens that this education raises the level ofawareness enough to cause rebellion against the process ofsocialization or schooling. This has occurred in the last tenyears in student protests and demands for protection of

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individual liberties and rights. Unfortunately this hasoccurred mainly in middle-class schools where there is stillsome semblance of education. Poor children have beenprimarily well schooled and not well educated.

Presently in the United States there is a movement toeliminate all vestiges of education in favor of somethingcalled “career education.” The career education movementholds as a basic tenet of faith that all learning must bedirected toward the needs of some future occupation.Learning is made subservient to a future social role and thesocialization process of the school. Knowledge is notpresented as a means of understanding and criticallyanalyzing social and economic forces but as a means ofsubservience to the social structure. “Career education”could represent the logical outcome of the controllingpower of schooling.9

What must be sought in the future is a system ofeducation which raises the level of individual consciousnessto an understanding of the social and historical forces thathave created the existing society and determined anindividual’s place in that society. This must occur througha combination of theory and practice in which both changeas all people work for a liberated society. There should notbe a blueprint for future change but, rather, a constantdialogue about means and ends. Education should be atthe heart of such a revolutionary endeavor.

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FOOTNOTES

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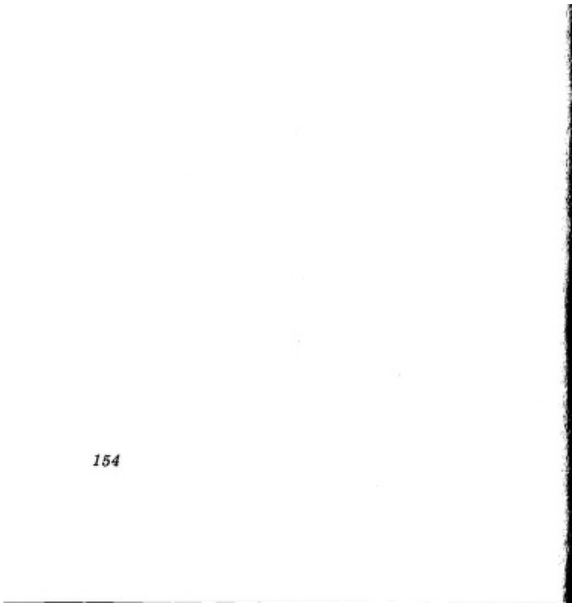

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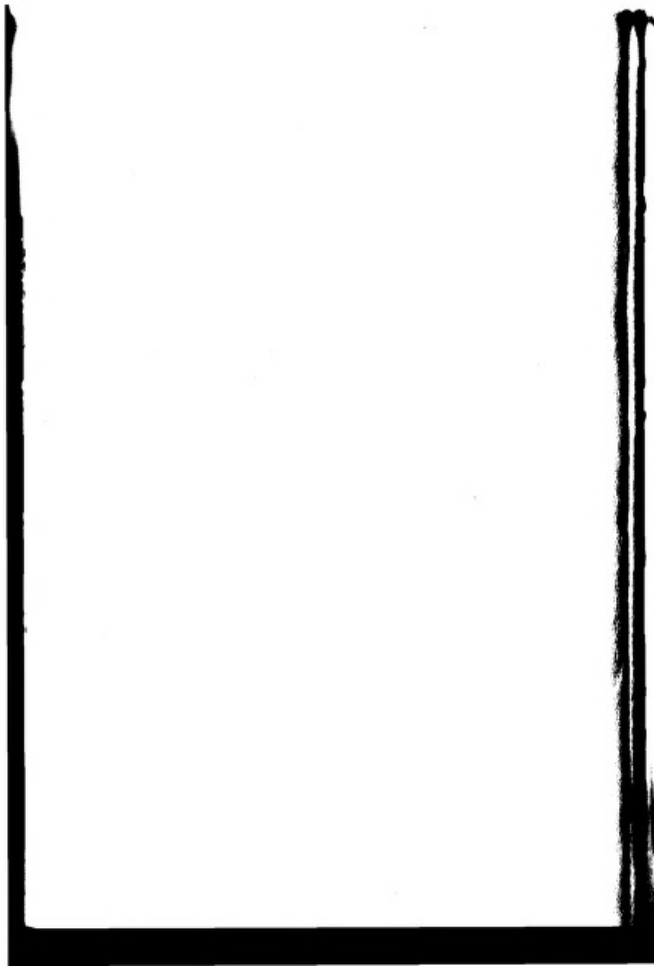

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Free Life Editions would like to thank the following peo-ple who helped in various ways to make this book possible:Renna Draynel, Kathy Brown, Marcia Salo Rizzi, WalterHeitner and Faculty Press, our friends at Black Rose Books,and our own staff—Chuck Hamilton, Diane Radycki,Bertch, and Mark Powelson.

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