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ABSTRACT

This presentation explores the dimensions of interaction, engagement, and collaboration possible between clinicians and teachers as it relates to changes in education necessary for our time. The authors attempt to identify educational goals, based upon our changing concepts of man as a social being, to serve in considering the contribution of behavioral scientists to the future of education. Toward this end, the educational process itself is examined, and the relevance of affectively charged, experiential learning for man is discussed. Finally, ways are examined in which behavioral scientists may have both the opportunity and skills for participation in the changes evolving in education. The authors conclude that the behavioral scientists' understanding of child development and the learning process means that they have particular insights to contribute to the planning of the educational process. Their understanding of conflict and of conditions essential for forcing change without violence may hopefully influence the development of curriculum if suitable means can be established for collaboration with educators themselves. A discussion by Portia Bell Hume, M.D., and response by Wilson Yandell follow the presentation. (Author/JLB)

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EDUCATION FOR TIMES OF CONFLICT AND CHANGE

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EDUCATION FOR TIMES OF CONFLICT AND CHANGE*

Wilson Yandell and William S. Jose II

The forces for radical change are upon us. Counterforces mount. It is imperative for us to identify accurately both the societal problems which require our attention, and the choices open to us. Multiple controversies characterize efforts to reappraise and redirect our educational system -- crisis-ridden with racial tension, financial problems, disagreements about values, and curricula which fail to involve youngsters in the excitement of learning.

In this presentation we wish to explore the dimensions of interaction, engagement, and collaboration possible between clinicians and teachers as it relates to changes in education necessary for our time. Our interest has evolved from some years of work by one of us (Yandell) as a psychiatrist serving as consultant to teachers and school psychologists; and of both of us in the work of the Diablo Valley Education Project, a local effort to explore and catalyze change in education about problems of conflict and war. In the course of these efforts, we have been encouraged to learn more about forces moving in education. We have been equally motivated to seek more effective ways for engaging teachers in understanding conflict

*Read at the annual meeting of the American Orthopsychiatric Association in San Francisco on March 24, 1970.

as it is expressed in life experience, and in dealing with affect-laden situations in the classroom.³⁰

The difficulties encountered in engaging many teachers and school administrators in presently available techniques for exploring the affective involvement of their students, much less themselves, remain for most of us, considerable. It is generally true that educators in their training have a lack of confrontation with affective processes. Their training is primarily cognitive, and does not include training in the use of "self" in the process of teaching. These facts have been observed by Nadine Lambert,²³ who also suggests that teachers are those within our educational system most in need of behavioral change if present educational challenges are to be met.

We will try to identify educational goals, based upon our changing concepts of man as a social being, which may serve us in considering our contribution as behavioral scientists to the future of education. Toward this end we would like to examine the educational process itself, and to discuss the relevance of affectively charged, experiential learning for man. Finally we will examine ways in which behavioral scientists may have both opportunity and special skills for participation in the changes evolving in education.

Culture, Adaptation and Learning

We are increasingly recognizing that man's greatest problem is dealing with man himself. Contributions from ethologists²⁵ and

anthropologists,²⁷ psychoanalytic insights, and most particularly those understandings of psychosocial development and encounter enunciated by Erik Erikson,¹⁵ are leading us to new understandings of the nature of man as to his instinctive drives of aggression and his tendency to use violence. We are coming to view biological aggressive drives more as instinctual cravings than as adaptive necessities.^{16,17} They and those psychological forces active in the shaping of man may be equaled in importance for his development by the impact of man's evolving culture and institutions of social organization (the latter so infested with the conflict and compromise equally present in individual human character).

Yet, until we can devise new socio-cultural norms, and new and more satisfying means of adaptation to man's prolonged childhood, and his need to explain his world and his relationship to it, we may assume that conflict will characterize man's experience at all levels. The institutions currently existing in our society are inadequate for the achievement of creative and successful adaptive methods of conflict management on a broad scale. These especially involve those institutions of authority whether of government, justice or law enforcement. The prerogative of individual integrity and freedom cannot exist in the absence of legitimized authority based upon values which transcend the power available by mere force alone.²⁸ The maintenance of such a system, based upon democratic values, requires individual responsibility and participation in the decision making process of society which in turn requires an informed and educated citizenry. The individual autonomy of such a citizenry

requires that sense of personal mastery that can be present only in the context of a sense of personal identity and group identity based upon freedom of choice, confidence through experience, and self-acceptance within a community of tradition and ritual we know as cultural form.¹⁸

Much of human behavior may be seen as an attempt to adapt to conflict, the roots of which remain concealed from awareness. This effort often serves more as a defense against overwhelming anxiety than as an effective response to the situation stimulating conflict. The effect of intense individual anxiety or collective panic may be that of paralysis and immobilization, or disintegration. Various individual or collective mechanisms in defense against such paralyzing anxiety may become operative. Prominent among these are those of denial, displacement, distortion, rationalization, and resort to fantasy. Dehumanization, externalization and projection as mechanisms may particularly set the stage for response by violence. Often more destructive than frank and direct violent action is that behavior symbolic of violence once-removed, in which the contrived significance of acts viewed as non-violent may be treacherous and devastating.⁵ Warfare has been institutionalized by society as group violence licensed and rationalized by multiple criteria often remote from the emotional experience of its actual participants and victims.

Unfortunately the elimination of conflict is seldom possible, and we must content ourselves to adaptation, accommodation, and the tension of conflict management more often than to comfort, equilibrium,

and peace. Yet the very disequilibrium which results forces engagement, interaction, and effort toward resolution out of which has come much of man's social progress. Thus we may learn to identify in states of conflict opportunities for creative advance,¹⁴ whether in personal achievement, technology, or social welfare.

While the overall process of growth, development, learning, and social adaptation is one burdened by multiple sources of frustration and disappointment leading to inner states of conflict, we can identify several characteristics of the learning process which seem particularly important for the development of solid conviction and freedom for creative endeavor, hinging primarily upon learning experiences which promote an accepting self-awareness, the capacity to recognize and tolerate dissonance in concepts and problems, and a sense of partaking actively of the tasks of learning by doing, seeing, and being.

The Process of Education

Present day educational thought began in the 18th Century with the ideas of Rousseau who first appreciated both the special role of childhood in the human life cycle, and the necessity for involvement of the child in an active learning experience appropriate to his individual stage of development.⁹ By elaboration and extension of these views particularly in Dewey's efforts to assimilate the traditions of naturalism, empiricism and pragmatism, education in modern times has been seen as the sum total of interaction of the individual and his environment toward an understanding of his society and his cultural heritage.⁶

Well known to this audience will be the revival of concern about our educational system following World War II led by James Conant and spurred on by early Russian achievements in space technology in the 1950's. It was not until the now famous Woods Hole Conference in September, 1959, however, that psychologists, many of whom had devoted the major part of their professional careers engaged in research about intelligence, learning, remembering, thinking, and motivation, were brought together with leading scientists to discuss the problems involved in teaching and the learning process. The report of this conference by its chairman, Jerome Bruner, provides us with a guide to the basic elements and the principles for their implementation in The Process of Education.⁷ Bruner sets forth the dictum that "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development." (p. 33)

In his own work subsequent to the Woods Hole Conference, Bruner constructed a theory of instruction around four basic problems: 1) factors that predispose a child to learn effectively; 2) the optimum structuring of knowledge; 3) the optimum sequence required for learning; and 4) the nature and pacing of rewards and punishments, successes and failures. Bruner chose as his subject content Man, his nature, and the forces that have shaped and continue to shape him. In "Man, A Course of Study," there is an attempt to arouse in students the questions: What is human about human beings? How did they get that way? How can they be made more so? The curriculum is structured around five great humanizing forces: tool-making, language, social organization, management of man's prolonged childhood,

and man's urge to explain his world.⁸ As Bruner has sought to explicate the relationship of the course of intellectual development and pedagogy, he has recognized,⁸ "the issues to be faced [as] far broader than those conventionally comprised in what is called 'education' and 'child rearing.' Our proper subject is, of course, how a culture is transmitted -- its skills, values, style, technology, and wisdom -- and how in transmission it produces more effective and zestful human beings." (p. 149)

Bruner sees as essential to this goal a shift in emphasis of the social studies away from the "chronology" of history to a study of "process" in human behavior, values, and organization. He sees as essential to this task the participation not only of able scientists and scholars, but also of students of child development, in collaboration with experienced teachers.

Goals for Education and Their Implementation

Bruner would seem to have offered us in his statement of purpose and in his curriculum itself, a format for implementation of much that we have identified as the task of education. We ourselves have pointed to the need for individuals to learn to be free to express themselves creatively and with imagination toward the achievement of mastery of themselves and adaptability to changing conditions of life. We have pointed toward the need for human beings to understand the interplay of forces within man himself, his society, and culture; and for his need to engage in on-going conflict management without resort to violence or war, adapting the institutions of society through democratic process based upon authority and a system of traditional values.

Willis Harmon, Director of the Educational Policy Research Center, Stanford Research Institute, in defining long range goals for the planning of change in education points to our need "to educate ourselves":²⁰

- "1. to emotional as well as intellectual awareness of the ineluctable fact that we are one race, on one planet, and that only we can take responsibility for the fate of both, for the stewardship of the future;
2. to the shift in basic premises and operative values necessary for a tolerable future, and to the evidence that such a shift is also congruous with the essential nature of human beings;
3. to the realization that even if such a transition is made, the strains on the social structure in the decades ahead will be of such magnitude that a strong binding force will be required to hold it together." (p. 71)

Both Bruner and Harmon recognize that an educational process which attempts to achieve and support such goals of social change must invoke feelings as well as intellect. However, Bruner considers at length the difference between defending against anxieties and coping with affectively charged issues. He expresses concern that unconscious impulses, unconstrained by awareness and the sense of play, can be quite the contrary of creative. He concludes: "What poses the eternal challenge to the teacher is the knowledge that the metaphoric process can when put under the constraints of conscious problem solving, serve the interests of healthy functioning. Without

these constraints, they result in the crippling decline that comes from a specialization on defense."⁸ (pp. 147-148)

Harmon, however, suggests that if people are to become differently motivated,²⁰ "emotional and cognitive faculties must be engaged...educational experiences must be contemplated which are akin to psychotherapy in that they aim at bringing the individual into closer touch with himself, to where he makes his own discoveries that result in felt realization of the inevitability of one inseparable world, and felt shift in the most basic values and premises on which one builds his life." (p. 71)

This is radical doctrine indeed, likely to be resisted by educators and clinicians alike. It remains for Richard M. Jones in his book Fantasy and Feeling in Education,²² to address himself in a more satisfying manner to the relationship between education and psychotherapy. In answer to the question: In developing instructional methods of cultivating emotion and imagery, should we model our efforts after the more polished and practical methods of psychotherapy? Jones answers "yes". However, by this he is careful to indicate that he does not want the schools to be given over to mental health clinics or group therapy sessions. It is rather the case that both education and psychotherapy deal with some of the same concerns, albeit from different perspectives and with different goals in mind. The psychotherapist treats anxiety, which, Jones suggests, is produced when imagination is coupled with aloneness and helplessness. Instruction also begins with imagination, and when coupled with a sense of community and mastery produces creative learning.

Jones states: "In clinics, issues which are known to be emotionally charged are raised for the purpose of creating conditions

under which emotions can come to be controlled and expressed. In schoolrooms, conditions are created which invite expression of controlled emotions for the purpose of imbuing curricular issues with personal significance. The power of emotion to generate interest and involvement in subject matters which would otherwise find children uninterested and uninvolved lies in their deep personal familiarity -- such familiarity being a consequence of emotion having been integral to every phase of personal development from infancy on. The value of emotional involvement in the learning process thus lies in its potential for aiding assimilation of new or remote experiences in idiomatically illuminating ways." (p. 174)

In his work, Jones then urges that innovation in curriculum be accompanied by more conscious use of the metaphoric process in the service of creativity, acknowledging that this requires special training for teachers. While respectful of Bruner's work, he sees his own view as complementary to rather than a contradiction of Bruner's emphasis on the cognitive aspects of learning.

George E. Leonard in his book, Education and Ecstasy,²⁴ offers us a vision of education in the future in which free play of emotions is actively encouraged. There would be no structured program, nor teachers as such, but total freedom by the student in special learning environments to choose among stimulating materials with help and encouragement from educators as requested. Leonard sees as tools for such achievement not only expanded concepts of programmed learning, but widespread use of encounter groups, meditation and training in the control of the brain wave and other

autonomic body functions. By achieving expanded states of consciousness, "self-actualized" (to use Maslow's term²⁶) learning would lead to those "peak learning experiences" (again Maslow) which would be viewed as the real ecstasy of life. Concomitantly social goals would be altered to those of human relatedness, affective freedom and the pursuit of lifelong learning for its own sake.

Educational Goals and the Clinician

The educational goals to which we have spoken can only occur concomitantly with major shifts in broader social goals. There will continue to be intense resistance from many sectors of society against such change. From the ranks of behavioral scientists have come many contributions to education not only in the realm of understanding disorders of behavior and learning, and not only in the growing tradition of mental health consultation, but toward educational innovation. We have focused on those understandings which we think may contribute to planning for the future of education, and described some of the efforts of educational psychologists, particularly Bruner and Jones, who have participated so creatively in curriculum development and its implementation within the social sciences.

Out of his work with teachers seeking ways to implement Bruner's experimental curriculum, "Man, A Course of Study," Jones finds himself directing attention to the need for teacher training in work with the affective response of youngsters, in the service of commitment to and involvement in the curriculum itself. He has demonstrated his imaginative capacity to encourage the utilization

of feelings evoked in the educational setting for what he calls "outsight" instead of insight, with attention clearly on the task of learning.

Among many educators there remains an uneasy suspicion that psychiatrists will somehow expose them or attempt to treat them. We have not sought to include a discussion of the traditional mental health consultation model as developed and described by such workers as Caplan^{10,11} Berlin,^{1,2,3,4} Hollister,²¹ and others. We would note particularly in the context of our discussion, however, Berlin's urging that consultants recognize the "theme" of the consultation session comparable to that of the therapeutic hour, and the importance of transference-counter transference phenomena in the process of consultation. His emphasis on the mobilization of these phenomena in the process of consultation, to the discomfort of the educator-consultee and uninitiated consultant, provides insight into many reasons for failure in attempts at consultation. Their understanding is of central importance in any effort at implementation of Jones' recommendation of special training for teachers, and problems attendant to that goal.

Among those teachers who have seemed most creative with ideas for innovation in the classroom in response to present disengagement of many youngsters in the learning process, there has been emphasis upon unstructured situations and free exploration of the environment. These may produce exciting results where youngsters have failed to receive early affectional and intellectual stimulation and attention, or who are inhibited and constricted. For those who have failed to

establish internalized impulse control, however, such unstructured situations may lead to increasing anxiety and destructive behavior disruptive to learning.

We have suggested that teacher change is essential if educational goals vital to social change in our society are to be achieved. Are there any practicable means to educate teachers to the kinds of awareness of which we speak? Ojeman²⁹ is one who has reported an encouraging response to efforts to teach teachers an understanding and appreciation of behavior dynamics. Thomas Gordon has developed extremely interesting and apparently rewarding programs in "Teacher Effectiveness Training" and "Parent Effectiveness Training."¹⁹ In each, groups of teachers or parents (as the case may be) meet with a psychologist to explore problems in their respective interactions with children and each other, with a didactic format for examining problems in relating.¹² The effectiveness of this effort surely depends upon the wisdom of its focus which is designated as three tasks: Identify the problem; determine to whom the problem belongs; and consider alternatives available to each participant in dealing with the problem situation and each other. As can be immediately observed, here are structured the basic steps in objectifying conflict-ridden dilemmas.

Two concerns evolve for us about implementing those changes referred to earlier which Leonard foresees and recommends. It seems to us that we need first to develop in ourselves far greater ability to discriminate ever more precisely about the difference between freedom of feelings and license in behavior by individuals, about

requirements for inner versus external restraint of behavior involving interaction with others, and about techniques for conflict management within society which eschew violence, both at direct and symbolic levels.

Secondly, while admittedly lacking direct experience with encounter groups, we have with our colleagues observed in some of our patients and acquaintances the destructive effects of at least some such efforts. In our view, this has seemed to result from behavior within the encounter in which symbolic violence, we assume unrecognized as such, has proceeded in force against one or more group members, without restraint from group leaders. Perhaps the technique of the encounter group deserves more rather than less discriminating exploration, however, precisely because the requisite changes in awareness to which we have spoken above remain so difficult of achievement.

We urge more involvement of clinicians with consultative training and experience, in the in-service training of teachers and educational psychologists as well as at the early level of teacher training. We urge continuing exploration of efforts to enhance teacher awareness of the dynamics of behavior and its immediate effect upon the teacher, as well as opportunities for the teacher to increase student awareness and involvement in the learning process. The engagement of affective experience and its positive influence upon the quality of learning needs increasing attention. Regardless of these recognitions, the process of emotionally charged confrontation of teacher and student will continue during these times to

present a need for more widespread ongoing consultative effort by means of traditional mental health consultation, as well as efforts at innovation which we have focused on in this presentation.

Conclusion

Our understanding of child development and the learning process, and its psychosocial and cultural roots, would mean that we have particular insights to contribute to the planning of the educational process. Our understanding of conflict and of conditions essential for forcing change without violence may hopefully influence the development of curriculum if we can establish suitable means for collaboration with educators themselves.

In our effort to deal with omnipresent conflict and the resultant dilemmas affecting our individual and collective lives, we must, as Erikson has pointed out,¹⁶ seek ever more inclusive collective identities truly embracing man as one race, as one with nature, bound to his spaceship earth even as he characteristically seeks to escape its limits. And we must explore and refine those limits of the application of non-violence in men's affairs exemplified by the "truth-force" of Gandhi in search of more stable and mutually considerate acceptance of the presence of ongoing conflict.¹⁷ We will need new social institutions, not least among which will be those for the implementation of these educational goals, founded upon principles which require insights regarding human behavior that we may be uniquely qualified to contribute.

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DISCUSSION* OF "EDUCATION FOR TIMES OF
CONFLICT AND CHANGE" by Wilson Yandell and William S. Jose II

by

Portia Bell Hume, M.D.**

When a child psychiatrist and a social scientist come to grips with "Education for Times of Conflict and Change", they repeatedly imply in their paper that our educational institutions themselves are experiencing both conflict and change, not only as evolutionary phenomena, but also as crises or revolutions in educational theory and practise. This symposium on "Teaching about War, Peace, Conflict, and Change" might as well be called "Learning About War, Peace, Conflict, and Change", since teaching and learning are the two faces of the educational process. I truly believe that we are mainly concerned here today with the interface of teaching and learning in searching for clarification of the nature, dynamics, and content of the educational process in response to conflict and change. As I view this interface, it can perhaps be best understood in terms of working relationships between teachers and students, between teachers and school administrators, and between educators and their consultants.

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Nearly half of the paper under discussion presents material on curriculum-planning and innovation as conceived by research consultants, educational or social psychologists who aim either (1) to improve the cognitive aspects of learning by restructuring the content, sequence, and format of the courses; (2) to introduce fantasy and feeling into the curriculum by inviting "expression of controlled emotions for the purpose of imbuing curricular issues with personal significance"; or (3) to force change by promoting the "ecstasy" of life-long learning for its own sake through "widespread use of encounter groups, meditation, and training in the control of brain wave and other autonomic body functions", while simultaneously eliminating all content from the curriculum, along with the teachers. Such measures, ranging from fairly drastic reforms of the curriculum to complete overthrow of the educational system, sound like somewhat desperate attempts to apply correctives or cures to an educational system perceived as a rigidly structured, monolithic, and stereotyped organization with the utmost resistance to change.

In both the introductory and concluding parts of their paper, on the other hand, the authors express their wish to explore "the dimensions of interaction, engagement, and collaboration possible between clinicians and teachers", as well as between teachers and their students, for the purpose of promoting the potentialities of an educational system in dealing with the nuclear subject of conflict. Thus the section of the paper on educational goals and the clinician is most interesting, because it suggests that the long-range objectives of an educational system are intimately related to the methods employed,

when attention is focused on the educational tasks shared by educators and students. What the authors seem to imply is that an educational system need not be modeled along traditional bureaucratic and autocratic lines. Neither does it have to innovate exclusively in accordance with the "human relations" model so dear to many social scientists. Rather, it is desirable for an educational system to be organized in ways that maximize the human resources of both the providers and the consumers of educational services -- that is, the educators and their students.

Bruner's experimental curriculum entitled "Man, a Course of Study", Jones' use of the "metaphoric process", Erikson's illumination of psychosocial development, Ojemann's encouraging results in teaching educators about the dynamics of human behavior, and the work of Caplan, Berlin, and Hollister as mental health consultants to educators -- all of these are cited by the authors as providing a firm foundation for encouraging the development of working relationships between clinicians and teachers in behalf of students. At this point, further clarification of what the authors mean by the word "clinicians" is in order. I believe they mean that psychiatric clinicians are useful to school systems, not merely as clinical consultants in actual cases of emotional or mental breakdown, but more importantly as mental health consultants offering indirect services to students through the educators in ways that forestall breakdown or alleviate conflict.

Mental health consultants certainly need to be clinicians, but the respective functions and methods of psychotherapy and of mental

health consultation are different. This is not the time or place to go into the technical differences, except to point out that mental health consultation involves a coordinate relationship between the consultant and one or more consultees, who, in this instance, are educators and not patients consulting a clinician. Furthermore, mental health consultation is concerned with either the consultee's students or the social system (i.e. school) in which the consultee-educator is employed. In short, mental health consultation to schools deals with the work-problems of educators that may be due to insufficient psychological insights and knowledge, to disturbing interpersonal relationships, or to "them interferences" derived from the personal unconscious of the individual consultee or appearing as a consciously shared custom, attitude, prejudice, or stereotype in a group of consultees. In either case, there is a psychological roadblock that interferes with the consultee's performance of his or her educational task. The commonest consequence or expression of a theme interference is a sense of failure and frustration that may be accompanied by a self-fulfilling prophesy of doom.

The context within which the mental health consultant can best serve education in times of conflict and change has to be conceptualized within a framework that encompasses the dual processes of teaching and learning, the inter-relationships between teachers and students, and the social milieu of a particular school system and its inhabitants. From the point of view of a mental health consultant, a school is a complex social system which is part of a

larger community, but which is itself a community populated by two sorts of inhabitants: first and foremost, the students for whom the school exists, and secondly a school staff made up of administrators, teachers, and a variety of other personnel. Obviously, the population inhabiting a school system reflects the values, customs, traditions, conflicts, and controversial policies of the larger community which supports the school system. But to some extent, each school system is unique and reflects the values of the top administrator who has the power to hire and fire, and to take disciplinary action with respect to any member of the school community.

As a rule, the chain of command in a school system is neither as conspicuous nor as accessible as it is in the Army. Another difference is that the span of control tends to be broader and looser than management experts advise for effective communication and other purposes. Supervision in a school system may be so cryptic that it is practically non-functional for sharing educational responsibilities or for staff development. Under these conditions, an educational system may be too easily shattered by internal strife, poorly adapted to extramural conflict, and ill equipped to tolerate or to plan for change. While it is not the responsibility of a mental health consultant to reorganize or to restructure a school system, it is his responsibility to deal with some of the symptoms of conflict which interfere with the delivery of educational services. In the process of mental health education and consultation, the mental health consultant becomes alert to

disturbances in staff relationships and to any other signs of malfunctioning of the system which diminish the capacity of educators to perform those mental health functions which coincide with their educational functions. Berlin has found that one of the most fruitful methods of consultation for school administrators is to demonstrate to them by example how a mental health consultant deals with the work problems of school personnel due to intrapsychic, interpersonal, or social conflicts between teachers and administrators or between teachers and their classes.

The experiences of Berlin, Parker, and Haylett as mental health consultants to schools all point to the possibility that education for times of conflict and change can be approached in other ways than by modification of the curriculum. The Diablo Valley Education Project is indicative of some of the ways in which teachers can be helped to learn the language of conflict, the manner in which the active conduct of conflict is a method of effecting change, and the value of objectivity in differentiating between facts, feelings and opinions when a specific example of social conflict is under discussion in the classroom.

To the extent that rigid attitudes of teachers towards students reflect, not only intrapersonal problems, but also the rigidities of the school system and its administrators, conflict is immediately experienced in varying degrees by everyone who is a member of the educational community. The familiarity of clinicians with intrapsychic conflicts plus the growing understanding

of mental health consultants with respect to the intramural conflicts of school systems and school personnel offer the possibility of adding still another approach to both teaching and learning about conflict, namely, actual practise in the conduct of active conflict within the educational system itself. Personal, successful experiences with conflict management in the microcosm of the classroom or the principal's office would surely reinforce any other approaches to education either for times of conflict, or for the orderly and satisfying planning of change inside or outside of school systems.

RESPONSE TO DISCUSSION

by Wilson Yandell

Dr. Hume has focused upon our purpose and hopes in presenting this paper in statements of enviable clarity. Her concern for clarification of our use of the term "clinician" is fully justified by our lack of explicit definition, but here too she has perceived our intent correctly. In bringing to her discussion an exposition of the function and methodology of the mental health consultant, she provides us a dimension and viewpoint that contributes greatly to the whole of our subject, although consciously omitted in our presentation. Our awareness of the latter contributed to our choice of Dr. Hume as our discussant.

We very much agree that mental health consultants have much more to offer to educators than contributions to curriculum. In bringing to this audience our focus upon curriculum innovation and the radical change in our educational system foreseen by some and urged by others, we have two primary purposes that may need clearer definition:

First, to repeat a point we gave too little emphasis, "Among those teachers who have seemed most creative with ideas for innovation in the classroom in response to present disengagement of many youngsters in the learning process, there has been emphasis upon unstructured situations and free exploration of the environment. These may produce exciting results where youngsters have failed to

receive early affectional and intellectual stimulation and attention, or who are inhibited and constricted. For those who have failed to establish internalized impulse control, however, such unstructured situations may lead to increasing anxiety and destructive behavior disruptive to learning." We join Bruner and Jones in pointing to ways for educational systems to approach the engagement of youth in the excitement of learning, not by altering the structure of the classroom situation as a primary means, but by altering curriculum and the manner of its presentation as a response to the urgency of these times.

Secondly, while we may not have made ourselves sufficiently clear in this respect, we hope to arouse more clinically trained persons in the behavioral sciences to seek training in mental health consultative skills, and to gain experience in assisting school personnel with those ongoing problems of conflict management throughout our school systems to which Dr. Hume refers.

Finally (to end on the note with which Dr. Hume begins), the venture of the Diablo Valley Education Project from which this effort has developed, has, for each of us, indeed been one of "learning about war, peace, conflict and change", and how to find a place for constructive contributions through responsible participation.