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ABSTRACT

Where is an appropriate point of departure for instructional planning in the social studies? I advocate an approach based on the transaction between a student and his significant world. The Transactional Unit is that segment of the interactive phase of teaching which focusses on the transaction between the student and the display. In this context, the student can be seen as being engaged in the process of becoming, viewed here as a transactional affair. Becoming is entailed in the structuring of perceptual, preferential, and manipulative acts which elaborate/transform the ongoing relationship between student and action world. Steady-state change, morphogenic change, and their sub-concepts are some of the salient concepts embedded in our notion of transaction, and provide us with a shape of the potentiality of the concept of change as a focal point in the social studies. In a social studies program based on transaction, it is crucial that the student make as part of the program the nurturing of his control in the structuring of his perceptual, appraisive, and manipulative acts guided by designative, appraisive, and prescriptive questions to effect the desired change. The transactional approach to social education calls for students' participatory commitment to the processes of change. Thus a social studies curriculum focussing on controlled change calls for the totality of our students' transactional experience. (Author/JLB)

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CONTROLLED CHANGE: A CRUCIAL CURRICULUM COMPONENT IN SOCIAL EDUCATION

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INITIAL DISPLAY

(1) "It is the disciplines behind the subject matter that contains whatever life is there. I think that we should look toward the development of a whole series of new subjects, with old names: history, geography, mathematics, the sciences." (Foshay, 1962:10)

(2) "To the degree that we allow the school curriculum to be dominated by the disciplines proposal, we fail to offer the opportunity to become more than superficially acquainted with great public problems." (Foshay, 1970:351)

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(1) "The arch that bridges the gap between the learner and the discipline is the growing idea of bringing the child, from the beginning, right 'into the discipline'". (Wilhelms, 1962:29)

(2) "The fundamental mistake we make over and over is to start with subject matter of the disciplines." (Wilhelms, 1970:370)

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(1) "Learning should be designed to produce general understanding of the structure of subject matter." (Bruner, 1963:6)

(2) "Let students prepare plans of action, whether they be on issues in the school, on the local scene, or whatever. What is important is to learn to bring all ones resources to bear on something that matters to you now. . . .I would be satisfied to declare something of a moratorium on the structure of knowledge and deal with it in the context of the problems that face us." (Bruner, 1971)

In the Sixties the concept of the structure of knowledge together with the related sub-concepts of "the substantive structure" and "the syntactical structure of the disciplines", captured the attention of social studies educators throughout the North American continent. Many Social Studies experts as well as the not-so-expert sought curricular panacea in these concepts. As a result in the late Sixties and in the two years of this young decade, Social Studies programs have made their way into public view, many carrying prestigious labels of the disciplines. Here are a few of them: The Carnegie Mellon History Project, The Anthropology Curriculum Study Project, Sociological Resources for Social Studies, The Economics Curriculum for Elementary Schools, Bruner's MACOS. Scores more can be added.

Recent prescriptions by Foshay, Wilhelm and Bruner (see Initial Display) seem to be questioning the proposition implied in these projects: that the life-style of the disciplined scholar is a warranted model to which we can ask our Social Studies students to conform.

We are now told: "The fundamental mistake we make over and over is to start with the subject matter of the disciplines". (Wilhelms, 1970: 370) If the beginning point is not the disciplines, where then is an appropriate point of departure for instructional planning in the Social Studies?

Proferred are the following, both popular curriculum positions. One that pervades this Conference is the "Society in Crisis" approach,

calling for a Social Studies program geared to social action in light of the shock, doom, and hell that are already upon us. The advocates of this approach ask us not to take the future for granted, and posit that the critical state of our society dictates, whether we like it or not, the social action orientation of our Social Studies program.

Another curriculum position based on the principle of "child-centredness" and on the principle of "individualism" seeks the appropriate curriculum launching point in the "child". It is in many respects unobjectionable except that its individualistic emphasis is apt to provide us with a view which misses the point by decentralizing what ought to be central - the TRANSACTION between a STUDENT and his significant ACTION-WORLD. The individualistic view is characteristically monadic; the transactional view is holistic and is minimally dyadic. The monadic view is apt to lead us to a concept of a classroom as a heap of skin-bound individuals. In contrast, the transactional view can lead us to a concept of the classroom as a dynamic communication network.

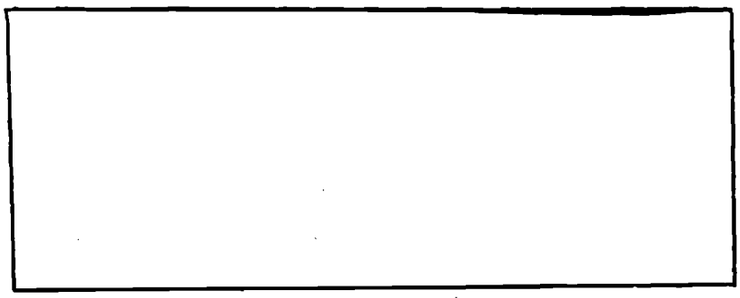
In advocating an approach based on the concept of transaction, what I am voicing here is a concern for our Western habit of looking at a group of people (e.g., teacher and students) as an amalgam of "individuals", when, in reality, the vitality of these people lie in the quality of their transactions. Here, I am reminded of Arthur Drexler, a noted architect, who in dealing with the field of architecture said:

> "We could think of architecture not as a thing, but as a process for perfecting the earth. . . .If you think of most buildings as a way of perfecting the earth, they need not exist before our eyes as discrete objects, as things set in the landscapes." (Drexler, 1971)

It is in this sense that the following representation of a city is made in

a book entitled Shelter: The Cave Re-examined:

THE INVISIBLE CITY



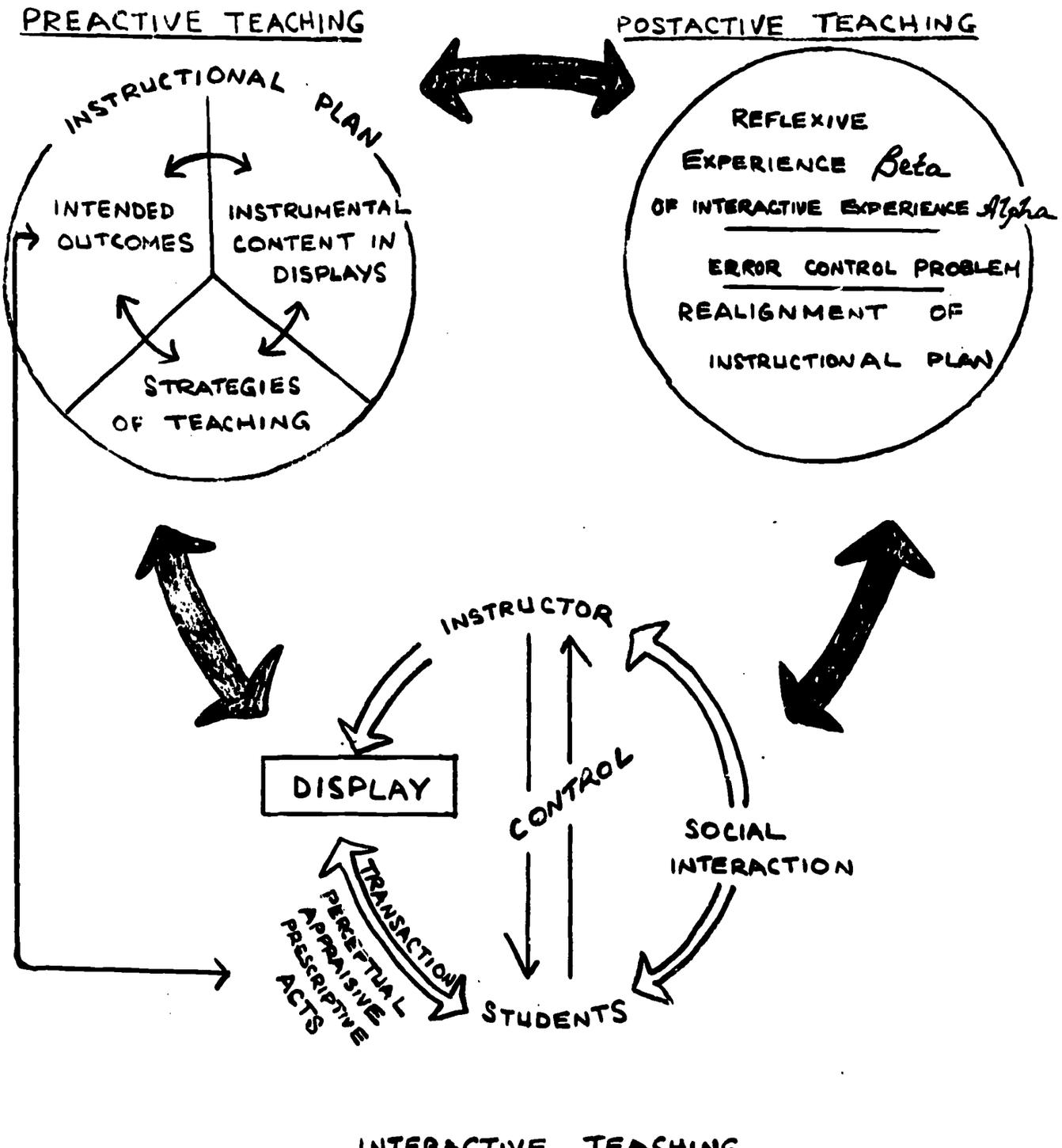
The above is exaggerated. But in this exaggeration, do you not detect a plea for a conception indicating that, often, in what is not too readily visible to the eye is found the significant?

Let us remind ourselves that here we are attempting to explicate the action-realm and the thought-realm of the social studies teacher, the realm of teaching. One such model is the three-phase model of teaching,* which includes (1) the pre-active phase of teaching, (2) the inter-active phase of teaching, and (3) the post-active phase of teaching. (See Figure 1) The pre-active phase is the phase of instructional Planning during which each of the three components (intended outcomes, instrumental content and teaching strategies) and their relationships are developed; the interactive phase is the action phase, in which the teacher performs, guided by three concurrent processes (according to M. Johnson*): the teacher-student and student-

*This is based on Philip W. Jackson's concept of pre-active, and interactive teaching described in "The Way Teaching Is" in the A.S.C.D., The Way Teaching Is. Wash.: the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1966, pp. 7-27. Here the author has completed the cycle by adding the third phase, post-active teaching.

*The components in the pre-active and interactive phases are adaptations from M. Johnson, Jr.'s conception of instructional planning and instruction. See Mauritz Johnson, Jr.: "Definitions and Models in Curriculum Theory" in Educational Theory, 17, April, 1967, pp. 127-140.

FIGURE 1



PHASES OF TEACHING

student social interaction, the two-way control influences between teacher and student, and the transaction between the student and the environmental display; the post-active teaching is the debriefing phase during which evaluation of the performance is assessed in terms of information about the consequences of the performance and information about the teacher-action-world relationship.

In this paper, we need to attend to only one segment of the interactive phase (phase 2) which focusses on the transaction between the student and the display, which for the student is his action-world. This segment is what I refer to as the Transactional Unit, the irreducible primitive set. The Transactional Unit's vital dynamism can be appreciated if we were to conceptualize the transaction arbitrarily as an interplay between two dynamic sub-systems: (1) the student viewed as an everchanging sub-system, and (2) the action-world of people, objects and events also viewed as an ever-changing sub-system. The complexity of the dynamics is overwhelming; enough for our purposes here to think of this complexity in terms of a single student in contact with his action-world. In this context the student can be seen as being engaged in the process of human <u>becoming</u>, which we here view as a transactional affair.

By focussing on the <u>becoming</u>, we are looking at time-dependent construct, without which, we are apt to lose sight of the significant dynamic. Thus, we see the student in his personal becoming, continually coping with his action-world by elaborating and structuring the variety of acts that link him with his action-world.

What kinds of acts are entailed in a student's transactional activity? Here I invoke Charles Morris's tri-dimensional model (See Table 1) in which

he posits three kinds of acts: (1) perceptual acts, (2) preferential acts and (3) manipulative acts. (Morris, 1964:22) Perceptual acts are guided by designative problems such as What was? What is? What will be?; preferential acts are guided by appraisive problems such as What do I want? What do I prefer? What should I want? What should I prefer?; manipulative acts are guided by prescriptive problems such as: What should I do, What should be done?

TABLE 1

TRI-DIMENSIONAL MODEL OF ACTS AND PROBLEMS

Acts	Problems
Perceptual	- Designative: What was? What is? What will be?
Preferential	- Appraisive: What is wanted? preferred?
Manipulative	- Prescriptive: What should be done?

The life-process of becoming is entailed in the structuring of perceptual, preferential and manipulative acts which elaborate and transform the on-going transactional relationship between the changing student and the changing action-world.

Thus, the view of transaction as becoming casts a futuristic orientation, for transaction can then be seen as a process of future building.* In this respect, the student's appraisive or value concern: What kind of a future do I want? determines the meaningfulness of the configuration of

*A point to be noted here is that the case for futurism in Social Studies developed here rests on the character of the transactional unit. The nature of the social condition, e.g., society in crisis, future shock, doomsday is near, etc. points to the urgency of the moment in dealing with the future and is conceptually a secondary matter.

the perceptual, preferential and manipulative acts. The question: What kind of a future do I want? entails the question: What kind of change do I want? The perceptual, preferential and manipulative acts all point to the kind of change wanted. Change, therefore, is a crucial ingredient in transaction.

The term "change" itself is a complex one subject to many interpretations leading to difficulties in communication among Social Studies people. It seems to me that the most glaring misconception prevalent is the notion of human and socio-cultural change associated with the concept of "equilibrium", a term social studies people have borrowed presumably from classical natural scientists. In social studies the state of equilibrium is often considered to be a desirable utopian state, a harmony of sorts, a consensual state. I feel that much unwarranted meaning has been added to the term in the transformation from its usage in the natural sciences to usage in the field of the social studies.

Think, if you will, of a mechanical toy with a spring and key in operation, gradually coming to rest. The mechanical toy's final state can be said to be in equilibrium, best understood in terms of entropy which is associated with a law in physics. Entropy entails the notion of change as an object moves toward a state of random organization, (disorganization) a state in which the object is no longer in transaction with the environment. Change, in this context, is achieved through transmission of energy, the expenditure of which leads to work done, but the exhaustion of which results in its final "death" state - a state of equilibrium. This mechanistic conception appropriate in describing change in mechanical systems appears to be inappropriate in describing sociocultural change, for humans and human

collectivities, are open systems, which because of their openness and interchange with the environment elaborate rather than dissipate the transactional organization of the organism* and its environment. That is to say, humans, human societies and cultures are typically not entropic. They are in fact negentropic - they continually attempt to move towards elaboration of the organization of the organism and its environment. Hence, the notion of "change leading to an equilibrial state" leads us to a dead end. We need to look elsewhere for our concepts.

One view of the dynamics of the transaction between a person, society or culture and its environment may be seen in terms of two types of change: Type 1 change to maintain the transactional relationship in a steady-state (often viewed as non-change), and Type 2 change to bring about a new organization of the transaction between an organism and its environment. (See Table 2)

TABLE 2

Type 1 change - (steady-state)	Change to maintain the transactional relationship in a steady-state condition. The popular notion of internalization or socialization learning, may well be at this level.
Type 2 change - (morphogenic change)	Change to bring about a new structure of the transaction between an organism and its environment. The popular notion of creation, innovations are at this level.

*For lack of an appropriate generic term to refer to organisms, social and cultural collectivities, the term "organism" is used in the generic sense.

Type I change is often misunderstood. We are familiar with unit topics such as "Stability and Change", or "Stability vs. Change", which by the very nature of the expression seems to deny change in stable conditions.

A communication theorist, M. L. Cadwallader, talks of social scientists who

> believe that stability and change are not only controversial ideas but that the processes themselves are totally incompatible." He points out "what has been overlooked is that stability depends upon and is the consequence of change."* (Underlining author's).

Cadwallader's notion of change to maintain stability is based on the principle that humans and socio-cultural system in contact with a changing environment either changes or perishes and that the only avenue to survival is change.

He goes on to illustrate:

> That Great Britain has survived through medieval mercantile, and capitalistic periods means that as a national state, it has stability. Any industrial corporation, such as International Business Machines or General Electric, that has survived the last fifty years of social change up the United States has done so through a process of self-transformation and not through the continuation of original organization and operational patterns. (Cadwallader, 1959:154-157)

So much for Type I change.

Type II change (morphogenic change) is the result of innovations leading to a change by the structuring of acts into a new organization the transactional relationships between the organisms and its environment.

I feel that what profoundly differentiates between Type I change and Type II change is the way in which "deviation" is dealt with. In

*M. L. Cadwallader, "The Cybernetic Analysis of Change in Complex Social Organizations", in American Journal of Sociology, 65:154-157, 1959.

steady-state change, effort is directed towards minimizing the deviation. In morphogenic change, effort is directed towards amplifying the deviation. How deviation is handled differentiates between the two.

It is important to note that neither Type I nor Type II change carries in itself positive or negative worth. It is conceivable that in a particular problematic situation, a steady-state type of change can be pathological or non-pathological; it is similarly conceivable that a morphogenic type of change can be pathological or non-pathological.

The morphogenic notion of change which calls for amplification of deviation points out an essential difference between human and non-human organisms. Whereas the bulk of the change processes of non-human organisms are governed by the natural genetic makeup, much of the change processes of human organisms are controlled ontogentically. That is to say, change in humans can be accounted for not so much by the initial genetic conditions but moreso by the character of the social-cultural interactive impact on the genetic codes during the transactions. This view reinforces the point that the crucial human factor is found not so much in the initial being or in the final state of being but rather in the becoming.

Another transactional principle may be referred to as the principle of progressive mechanization, which states that when a new organizational pattern is established, there is a tendency for a freeze to set in - the initial creative act has a tendency to set into a routinary steady-state pattern. We see this phenomenon about us - a fashion creation stirs innovative change, but as it takes hold steady-state change begins to occur. There is here a dynamic of becoming machine-like, the awareness of which may guide teachers and students in their perceptual, preferential and manipulative activities to counter, if so wanted, the process of progressive mechanization.

Steady-state change, morphogenic change, and their sub-concepts are, I feel, some of the salient concepts embedded in our notion of transaction, and provides us with a rough shape of the potentiality of the concept of change as a focal point in a social studies curriculum and instruction.

We need now to discuss, even briefly, the other key term in the title of the paper, "control", which, I find is a bothersome one. For instance, "teacher control" is a term that typically conjures forth not only an image of rigid discipline and regimen in a classroom but also an image of a manipulator, one in charge and in control, the dominant law-maker and maintainer of order. On the other hand, "teacher permissiveness" is a term which typically conjures forth not only an image of non-control and chaos in a classroom, but also an image of a flattened society of peers. These attest to the values we assign to the concept of "control". For some reason, perhaps historical, the term "control" usually carries a value valence, negatively freighted. It portends, I suppose, an image of the self-aggrandising, self-centred manipulator. This interpretation fits with the popular notion of "control" as a problem centering on how society orders, conditions and thus controls its membership. It focusses on conformity as a function of social organization.

However, the validity of the above conception needs to be questioned. In its root metaphor "control" is a matter of setting objectives and directing the transactional activities toward them. The issue, therefore, seems to be not whether or not control is desirable or undesirable, but rather a question of the kind of control that should be exercised. For this purpose, let us examine even briefly the notion of kinds of control.

In a social problematic situation, no matter which type of change is

desired, there will be need to exercise control to effect the desired kind of change. Our paradigm points out the need to keep in mind two modes of control: Mode 1 control is that mode of social control most frequently interpreted as a problem centering on how a person or society orders, conditions and controls its membership. Mode 2 control, on the other hand, is a mode of social control that can be interpreted as a problem of allowing a person or society to tap, organize and adapt its creative strength.

A major difference is that the first of these control modes emphasizes the functionality of social conformity as a product of social organization, while the second mode emphasizes the functionality of deviance in a transactive process of social organization. In Mode 2 control, deviation, which typically is relegated to a secondary role, is made primary. I feel that in our classrooms there is need to stress this latter mode of control, for we tend to underrate its importance. Our tendency to condone a most simple failing of mankind, his shortsighted tendencies growing out of inertia, leads us often to neglect to analyse carefully assumptions concerning the nature and desirability of conformity. A constructive view of "deviance" to complement the constructive view of conformity needs to be advanced in order to right the misplaced emphasis on the constructive view of conformity. I see here the desirability at times of letting deviance swing to its own rhythm. Each person, each society, each culture can be considered as having its own idiomatic transaction with its action-world, a transaction which may appear to some as a violation of the generalized syntax of the species. Too, we need to become sensitive to the destructive capabilities of both conformity and deviance.

Let us now return to our view of the basic TRANSACTIONAL UNIT. In

our social studies program dedicated to the nurture of the transactional capabilities of each of our students, it is crucial that the student make as part of the program the nurturing of his control in the structuring of his own perceptual, appraisive and manipulative acts guided by designative, appraisive and prescriptive questions to effect the kind of change he wants. This transactional approach is social education focussing on controlled change commits a social studies educator to a transaction oriented social studies program in which students in contact with their action-world continually adapt their perceptions, their wants and preferences and their manipulatory acts.

If a student is moved to conform to society's ways or to his own sub-cultural ways, it is essential that he become sensitive to what kind of transactional relationship he is entering into, in the process accounting for his move to conform. If he is moved to deviate from society's ways or from his own sub-cultural ways, it is also essential that he be sensitive to what kind of transactional relationship he is entering into, and he needs to account for his move to deviate. In both situations he needs constantly to ask himself: What is it I want? What is it we want? Is my want or our want warranted? This appraisive engagement is a search for values. Further, depending on the commitment to the values, he needs to become engaged in a prescriptive task in a search for a warranted way to achieve what he wants. Further, he needs to consider the translation of his decision into action.

The total process is a transactional becoming, an ongoing elaboration of the transactional relationship between the organism and its action world. Hence, in this sense, our view is more sociological than psychological. Note too that the transactional unit we are looking at is an attempt to view things whole, and therefore, spatially, it is field-oriented, or Gestaltic in perspective. In this sense we have a geographic spatial orientation. Yet, we insist, that the field view alone is inadequate, for it, in itself,

is incapable of accommodating the dynamics of change. Thus, we impose upon our field the dimension of time, and in this sense we appreciate the historical perspective. Yet, the transactional activity is viewed as a future building activity, more concerned with the questions: What will be? What could be? What are the consequences? rather than with the past oriented historical questions of what was? or What happened? Further, we are concerned not so much with the still-life image of society or of culture in which there is a freeze of motion, so often found in sociological studies of class, status, etc., or similarly often found in anthropological studies of subcultures.

When, in his "The Process of Education Revisited", Bruner called for a moratorium on the structure of knowledge, he was calling for the accommodation of the structure of knowledge within the context of the problems that face students. How can the structure of knowledge be dealt with in the context of the problems that face students? The favorite answer has been and is: Use the multidisciplinary approach, each discipline conceived in term of its purportedly unique substantive and syntactic structures of knowledge.

If the concept of "change" is made our focus of attention, there appears to be a new way of looking at the interrelationships among the disciplines. If we were to examine Clifford Geertz's notion of change that Anthropologists should be concerned with, or Kenneth Boulding's notion of the central processes involved in the economic system, or Easton's notion of the "flow" in the field of political science, or Magoroh Moriyama's notion of sociological change, or Gordon Allport's notion of psycho-social becoming, we begin to be able to cut through at least one part of the walls that separates the disciplines. They all deal with change, and here we may be

able to see isomorphs.

An information theorist R. L. Ackoff is of this belief and warns us:

> We must stop acting as though nature were organized into disciplines in the same way that universities are. The division of labor among disciplinary lines is no longer an efficient one. (Ackoff 1960:1-8)

Ackoff was concerned primarily with man's natural world. However, his statement seems equally applicable to the human, socio-cultural world. In fact, he stated that transactional systems "are not fundamentally mechanical, chemical, biological, psychological, social, economic, political, or ethical. They are merely different ways of looking at such systems." (Ackoff 1960:1-8)

The identification of isomorphs among the disciplines of our concern may indeed provide for social studies teachers and curriculum developers a new platform from which new approaches to instructional planning might be launched. Yet we need to caution ourselves for we may simply be making a fundamental mistake, again starting with subject matter. We must not forget the centrality of the transactional unit - the transaction between the student and his environment.

If Social Studies indeed cares for life, or moreso for living, then it behooves us to make relevant the subject matter of student to the social character of the dynamics embedded in the organism-environment transaction. In this transactional process, the students need to learn to cope with the basic types of inquiry leading to the kind of change wanted.

The transactional approach to social education calls for students' participatory commitment to the processes of change. Thus, a social studies curriculum focussing on <u>controlled change</u> calls for the totality of our students' transactional experience.

The transactional approach, directed towards action, is an attempt to seek a style of living in which connections are sought between the wants, perceptions and actions. It views becoming in terms of controlled change, and in this change, what matters is how students formulate their wants, how they pursue them and the consequences of their pursuit; how in their becomings, they become sensitive to the fact that their destination is inescapably bound up with the way.

The transactional approach rests on the assumption that it is possible to direct some change consciously, that we need to have students consider the anticipated consequences of change, and that we need to have students seek to control some of the anticipated effects of change.

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