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ABSTRACT

Available models apparently do influence childrens' behavior. Because of this, it is important for teachers to consider the philosophical, psychological, and sociological ramifications of their teaching behavior and their organization of the curriculum and learning environment. Teaching behavior hinges closely on the learning environment. In this century, the learning environment is constantly expanding, and a confluent, pluralistic curriculum is the only alternative for including this environment into the school situation. The teacher must now be initiated into this new type of curriculum in order to prepare students for an expanding learning environment. An expansion of methods courses in teacher education programs is being implemented to develop this expanded learning environment. Methods courses are being combined for flexibility. This flexibility allows the prospective teacher to work in learning laboratories, schools, and the community. Team teaching, special projects, and open-plan schools are being investigated. The methods courses focus on problem solving and creative expression. Self-evaluation by students in these courses promotes self-confidence and emotional growth which is necessary to facilitate change in curriculum. (BRB)

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INTEGRATED CURRICULUM IN METHODS COURSES

by

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### INTEGRATED CURRICULUM IN METHODS COURSES

If a person assumes some validity in the cliché "a teacher will teach in the same manner in which he was taught," then perhaps those of us in teacher-training should critically evaluate our methods courses. According to Bandura, Mischel, Wolpe, and others of the social-learning school of psychology, available real-life and vicarious models strongly influence the manner in which a person behaves. Bandura, for example, has shown that a movie with adults displaying anger and aggression will elicit increased levels of angry, aggressive behavior from children.<sup>1</sup> Joseph Wolpe, a psychiatrist, frequently uses models to demonstrate the behavior he wishes his patients to adopt.<sup>2</sup> Because these men and others have shown how available models affect learning, it may be argued that teachers-in-training will use methods courses and methods instructors as models.

Because available models apparently do influence behavior, we believe that it is imperative for teacher-educators to consider the philosophical, psychological, and sociological ramifications of their teaching behavior and their organization of the curriculum and learning environment. We may need to alter some of our current practices; to transform or even revolutionize the curriculum we present to prospective teachers; to assume different roles for ourselves as professors; and to create entirely new kinds of learning environments, both on and off campus.

Such changes may be necessary for a number of reasons. In our rapidly changing world mass communications make it a daily occurrence for our children to encounter a welter of facts, opinions, values, and cultural norms. Consciously and subconsciously they cognitively and affectively process this kaleidoscopic flux. From this multi-sensory exposure our children develop highly sophisticated views of the world-- a world which encompasses Viet Nam, the Presidential election, the IRA, local racial problems, Archie Bunker, Ann Landers, Charlie Brown, and so forth. In addition, our children may construct attitudes toward the world which tend to conflict with those of their elders. Consequently, the question centers around how a teacher can effectively work with these children.

About this matter Frank McLaughlin writes:

Marshall McLuhan suggests that the twentieth-century child is the hardest working in history because he must absorb more in order to master his environment....Mass communications has made his world small; he is often deeply involved beyond his own knowing. His consciousness is bombarded with subliminal advertising, "hip" philosophy punctuated by the big beat (via 45 rpm) records and by magazines and paperbacks of varying quality on every conceivable subject....

To be one more "fact dispenser," one more contributor to the welter of unrelated information seems insanity. Yet, isn't this what is happening? Couldn't we be just one faculty member who could stand with the student and help him interpret, analyze, and discriminate what is beamed at, through, and around him? One person who adopts the "let's explore this together" instead of the "listen and you'll learn something" approach. Being with them doesn't mean being their buddy; it means tuning into their world, finding out where they live, and establishing a live base for communication.

If teacher-training institutions are to prepare people who can effectively help children and youth handle what Toffler terms potential "future shock," then we believe it is mandatory to alter drastically the learning environment, the curriculum, and the roles of professors in our methods courses.

### LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

If we are to establish methods courses that serve as models, a revolutionary change in the learning environment must transpire. Gone must be the days when a student settled into a chair for an hour or so to hear a professor lecture on how to "teach science" and when an hour or two later the student appeared in another sterile classroom to hear how to "teach children music." Instead we believe that there should be a learning laboratory in progress continuously, open around the clock if possible. This learning laboratory integrating all content areas should house hundreds or even thousands of centers where ideas could be considered with their total implications instead of being fragmented into science, math, English, reading, and so on. And no rigid time schedule should separate learning into bits and blocks of thirty or sixty minute segments. Instead prospective teachers should be able to concentrate on an idea as long as they wish and, thus, learn to obey their own personal learning rhythms. They could explore an interest for a brief fifteen minutes, or they could undertake a project that would occupy them for six months, a year, or even longer.

At the center prospective teachers would be able to establish questions to investigate on their own; they could read, write, discuss matters of importance (and matters of little importance) with peers and professors, engage in micro-teaching, listen to tape-recordings, watch films, video-tapes, and slides, create music, manipulate art materials, work on simulations, progress through sensitivity training, and so forth. Because mass media, according to McLuhan, is causing the print hierarchy to falter, we need to think of learning in terms of the total realm of communication possibilities. Consequently, for every center that features reading or writing, we would recommend that there should be one that does not.

The displays at these centers should change frequently--daily in some cases, weekly in others. And the sensations a student would experience would resemble the ones we feel when we attempt to "do" the Smithsonian in a day. In other words, the learning center should be fashioned after the world, for it should present an abundance of experiences, facts, feelings, values, and norms for students to encounter, accept, reject, and synthesize. It goes without saying that no student would be able--or even expected--to master all that would be presented. Gone would be the day when a methods professor would assign three chapters on reading, and prospective teachers would feel "through" with it after they had mastered the content. Instead these prospective teachers would realize that for every chapter they read, there are

hundreds more written from entirely different points of view. Consequently, in the learning center a student would merely learn how to make sense out of a small proportion of the available stimuli that he chooses to investigate, but he would also realize the immensity of the burgeoning world of knowledge and feel more able to cope with it, knowing that no knowledge is secure and that only in the process of seeking is one secure.

In such a mind-expanding learning environment there should be physical space for large groups to congregate, for small groups to gather, and for individuals to find isolation when desired. In the midst of this parade of learning possibilities prospective teachers should have adequate time to imprint these experiences (to order them, to scrutinize them, to feel them, and to come to grips with them), to express their cognitive and affective reactions, and finally to communicate these reactions to others.

As Jablonsky wrote:

An effective learning environment is a place where people have the freedom to explore a wide variety of resources in order to find answers or solutions to self-initiated or well-motivated questions or problems.<sup>4</sup>

Because the community should be considered an integral part of the learning center, groups of students might elect to spend their time off campus as they work on various projects. And instead of duplicating community resources, the teacher-training center would use the available resources and augment them when possible.

## A CONFLUENT, PLURALISTIC CURRICULUM

In such an inclusive learning environment the curriculum must be confluent, combining the affective and cognitive domains and integrating subject areas in order to provide interactions among these elements. Confluence, such as we are describing, might emanate from showing a film like "Dunes" (a non-verbal film depicting desert sand dunes)<sup>5</sup> and afterward following up possible tangential strains of thought. Viewers of the film might discuss the sensory impressions of the film and write poetry or compose music. Or students might observe the film to determine the ecological system of the plants and animals. Or they might view the film from the point of view of a social scientist and pose the question: "If you found yourself in this area, what would you do to provide for your basic needs?"

It is obvious that such a confluent curriculum does not recognize fragmentation of learning. The child himself does not fragment his world into bits and pieces, but he unifies it and integrates it as the world assumes new meaning for him. In such a curriculum areas such as music, science, reading, language arts, social studies, and math can merge because the flux of ongoing experiences may lead in numerous directions.

This confluent curriculum must also afford the student an opportunity to deal with ambiguity. He must, somehow, learn that knowledge is tentative and that doubt must be a



necessary ingredient of any knowing. Yet, paradoxically, he must learn to act discriminatively on the best knowledge and be willing to alter his course as he progresses. Therefore, we believe that a confluent curriculum must offer much more than a student can handle, for he must learn to make choices, take risks, set priorities, and implement his decisions. He must encounter "Massive infusions of new materials and experiences reflective of the wide variety of human behavior, conditions, contributions, and values which go to make up the country and the world in which we live."<sup>6</sup> As this student sets about the tasks he establishes for himself, he will encounter other students who have made different decisions, set other priorities, and attained other kinds of understandings. Consequently, these prospective teachers would come to realize that other people with different learning backgrounds serve as additional resources for learning.

Another point we wish to make is that we must steer clear of a monolithic curriculum. One socio-economic point of view must not monopolize the scene; one teacher's point of view must not predominate; one textbook should not comprise the entire curriculum. Instead a pluralistic treatment of cognitive understandings, values, and norms must occur. By this we do not intend a sterile, token representation of different points of view; we do not mean altering the percentage so that culturally different people receive more space in printed material and talk time. We do mean that students

will have intensive exposures to a diversity of philosophies, cultures, values, norms, histories, and psychologies.

...Curriculum development in a pluralistic society must provide exposure to, and choice among a wide variety of values, content, and experience with protection of the student's right to examine, criticize, and/or reject....

Often the school finds itself in opposition to the many kinds of incidental learnings and hidden curriculums which students experience elsewhere.... There are signs of a dawning recognition among educators that we must really break down the walls between the school and the rest of the community and invite the influences of the home, the neighborhood, the religious and ethnic groups, and even the wider world of politics, into the classroom....<sup>7</sup>

We maintain that prospective teachers must learn to understand others from culturally-different backgrounds, be receptive to their cultural values, be able to relate positively with them, and be able to accept and increase their inherent human worth. As the teacher, emphasizing problem-solving strategies, guides students into critical examination of different cultures, students hopefully would realize the ambiguity of human experience--no one person, no one group, no one nation is ever totally right or totally wrong. In the pluralistic curriculum of which we are speaking a student could adopt ideas, principles, values, and norms from many alternatives and explore their worth for himself. We contend that a pluralistic curriculum should foster an openness to experience so that many points of view would be accepted as valuable and receive a broad-based support.

In this confluent curriculum students would also be exposed to a variety of leadership styles so that they may learn the value of each. Prospective teachers need to recognize when it is appropriate to be directive and when to be non-directive, to be authoritative or non-authoritative. For example, it is appropriate for a teacher, at some times, to precisely structure an experience and to insist that students follow directions to the letter. It might be advisable for a science professor to insist that his students demonstrate their competence in using the metric system. It might be incumbent upon a teacher of reading methods to insist that his students demonstrate competence in the diagnosis and correction of reading problems that can be tackled by a classroom teacher. On the other hand, at other times it is suitable for a professor to free his students from any restriction so that they may decide what they want to do for themselves. And, of course, a professor should provide many experiences between the two ends of the spectrum. We believe that only by experiencing--both as leaders and as participants--a wide variety of group environments can prospective teachers comprehend the value of different kinds of leadership styles and learn how to manipulate their own teaching behavior in order to promulgate the goals they have established for themselves and their charges. And only through experiencing these group interpersonal environments can prospective teachers understand how children respond to different styles of leadership and interpersonal atmospheres.

Finally, and perhaps most important of all, we argue that it is imperative that the curriculum be grounded in personal, emotional growth. For only as a person's needs of safety, security, identification, and esteem are satisfied, is he free to learn and free to help others learn. Therefore, a person's emotions, values, and attitudes as well as his reactions to other people and his interactions with them must form the core of the curriculum. Individual and group therapy--for those who need it or request it--should be an integral part of any teacher-training program. When needed or desired, personal growth experiences through creative expression, communication workshops, sensitivity training, and human relations training would receive emphasis. The individual personal needs and desires of the student would determine the objectives toward which he would work, and the burden of evaluation would fall on his shoulders--although professors and peers would provide some feedback for reality-checking. In our opinion the main goal of a teacher-training program should be to help each prospective teacher become more self-actualizing.

#### THE TEACHER

In such a kaleidoscopic learning environment with a confluent, pluralistic curriculum, the teacher must assume a new role. The primary characteristic of the model teacher is that he facilitates learning. Such a teacher has ceased

to be a "fact dispenser." Instead of construct situations that enable learning, he structures the learned problems to be solved. And he guides and group problem-solving tasks. One of the facilitator is to recognize non-academic needs. One child may be into long division; another child may be tired to do much cognitive learning; he suffering from the effects his father has on him. Consequently, the facilitator conditions which will be supportive whatever they are, so that cognitive development may transpire. It seems frequently teachers have focused on deficiencies and have been unresponsive to needs, such as the needs for food, safety, and belonging. Sometimes these needs loom so potently that they destroy the ability to learn, and a facilitating teacher must grow on whatever level necessary. The teacher is sensitive to the wide variety of needs in the classroom. According to Carl Rogers and others, this sensitivity to self and to others, and this ability to respond greatly on the personality characteristics. Ideally, the teacher should be one who



people with a democratic character structure, and in more teacher-training institutions will begin to recognize the importance of fostering emotional growth in pre- and in-service teachers.

### IMPLEMENTATION OF PHILOSOPHY

Because the two of us believe that the learning environment should be a mind-expanding situation, the curriculum should be confluent and pluralistic, and professors should be facilitators of learning, we combined our abilities in the spring semester of 1972 to investigate the possibility of developing a new model for methods courses. We integrated four methods courses so that we met with students from 9:00-4:00 twice a week. This combination of science, music, reading, and language arts provided a four-hour block of credit so that we were able to use time efficiently and to become fairly well-acquainted with our students.

To develop a learning environment of the type we previously described, we utilized the university as our base. There we had access to a science laboratory which housed a VTR unit; BBS, AAS, SCIS, and other science audio and video tapes; a super-8 projector; film and other audio-visual equipment. In order to have room for dance, dramatic improvisation, and so forth, we also available a large room with a stereo set, two pianos, harpsichord, rhythm instruments, and ample space for





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in the utilization of community resources. We hoped by modelling the possibilities of a classroom without walls, our students would be more likely to develop their classes along a similar philosophy.

In order for our students to observe an curriculum with an emphasis on human relations and creativity, we visited to the Martin Luther King Laboratory School in Evanston, Illinois. There the teams of teachers function on a collegial basis--in contrast to the differentiated staff at the local school.

Because many of our prospective teachers were unfamiliar with the library and its services, we spent several days at the South Bend Public Library. One day the children's librarian showed the class the available guides to children's literature, and then our students spent the entire day reading children's books and discussing them. Another day we held an "open classroom" in the library and set up learning centers where films, records, video-tapes, and books were available. Because our students from this section of northern Indiana are somewhat isolated, not physically but emotionally, from people of different cultures, this particular day at the library was devoted to learning about people from different cultures. The Director of Migrant Education in Northern Indiana spoke to our students about the problems of migrant children in schools; Baptists talked about the plight of the black man; Deacons touched upon the American Indian and the Appalachian mountaineer.

Since we believe in close personal relations between professors and students, we often met in Beaven's home. We felt that this informal setting would facilitate deeper communication among all of us. We drank coffee together, had lunch together, sang together, listened to music together, and met in small groups at learning centers set up in the areas of the basement, kitchen, living room, dining room, and around the piano. Because sometimes we did ~~not~~ for extended blocks of time, we discovered that changing ~~positions~~ and activities helped to sustain a high level of interest.

Other community resources we visited included: a local theological seminary where the organist explained the mechanics and physics of the organ and performed for us; the South Bend School Corporation's Curriculum Center where our students evaluated the latest commercial materials; the nearby river bank and local conservatory where we ~~illustrated~~ some of the ways these places could be utilized to promote integration of subject areas. As we furnished these ~~details~~ we hoped that our students would also be more likely to establish their classes on similar beliefs and activities.

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CURRICULUM

As we wandered from site to site, we attempted to provide a flexible, confident, pluralistic ~~environment~~. We offered a number of experiences for our students such as dancing, improvisation, art, creative writing, computer music, observing with all the senses. As we progressed through

these experiences and others, we posed questions reflecting the Gallagher-Ashner model of questioning, and most of the time we asked questions for which we knew no definite answers. Instead we requested our students to scan their own storehouse of information, and when they needed additional material, we suggested possible readings. For Dr. Baptiste the students prepared a Flanders' interaction analysis so that they would become more cognizant of the various teaching behaviors they exhibit, subsequently being in a better position to develop and improve their own competence in self-chosen teaching behaviors.

Because we had discovered that most of our students arrived in our classes convinced that they "could never teach" science or music and wondering how they would ever understand reading, we did not aim to pump them full of content. Instead we concentrated on developing in these prospective teachers a confidence in themselves to take risks, explore new territories, and reach out to others. In order to foster their risk-taking tendencies, we emphasized a problem-solving approach to learning, and both of us stressed processes such as observation, inference, classification, prediction, and so forth. According to Baptiste, process provides the structure for any area of investigation; it can be transferred from one branch of science to another; from mass media to music. In science, for example, Baptiste would have his students observe aquariums and draw inferences from their observations. In music students had to compose short percussive

pieces and decide on suitable instruments. In prospective teachers worked with children whom diagnosed their needs and interests, and planned instruction and evaluation. To help our students the possibilities in an integrated curriculum, questions similar to the following: "What kind activities using language could you provide aft with science?" "What kinds of reading skills we to comprehend this material?" "How could you r film to science and social studies?" "What can music in conjunction with this poem?" "How can this activity for first grade, for fifth grade, grade?" "What would be some appropriate intran and questions?" Frequently the students planned for the entire group; these activities had to in minimum of three subject areas. In our opinion became more confident in themselves as they fan capable of solving many varieties of problems in teaching and learning.

In addition to an emphasis on problem-solving curriculum accented creative expression. As Sil commented:

....The artificial separation of these aspe or modes of knowing--the false dichotomy be the "cognitive" and "affective" domain--can only cripple the development of thought and feeling. If this be so, then poetry, music painting, dance, and the other arts are not to be indulged in if time is lack over afta business of education; they are the business education.





Our students found themselves engaged in a myriad of experiences in creative expression. Both as individuals and in small groups, students wrote poetry, stories, essays, composed music, danced, sang, and worked with art and film.

To support this stress on creative expression, we provided many experiences capable of involving both the senses and emotions. Students went on trust walks, engaged in relaxation exercises, viewed evocative films, observed fascinating and intriguing projects and phenomena in depth, and participated in dramatic improvisation and role playing. As a matter of fact, almost every student in the course discovered that he could write poetry.

Our curriculum offered many ambiguous situations. Sometimes we did not know exactly where we would meet because we altered locations according to the needs of the day and even of the hour. Students who sought definitive right or wrong answers had to become accustomed to our open-ended questions. Beaven ran her part of the course on a contract basis for which she provided some guidelines but for which the students had to decide precisely what they would do in the areas specified. Baptiste provided a number of alternatives for most of his assignments. As for evaluation Beaven placed the primary responsibility upon the students themselves. To guide them, she provided self-evaluation forms, and only after the students had dealt with the ambiguity of their own experiences, did she provide feedback. Baptiste showed videotapes of classrooms in which the teaching was neither clearly good or bad; students analyzed these tapes and discussed their

perceptions.

Not only did we try to provide a confluent curriculum, but we also ~~many~~ many avenues to expose our students to different cultures. We spent a day at the library learning about culturally different people. The students spent two weeks dealing with the ~~development~~ development of sensitivity to self and to others; they read and discussed children's literature focusing on culturally-different backgrounds. They listened to music from various cultures and sang and danced appropriate numbers. They were also encouraged to read such books as The Autobiography of Malcolm X, Manchild In The Promised Land, Custer Died for Your Sins, La Vida, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee. The group discussed dialects and language differences and ways in which the schools could respect these differences without impeding the learning process or stamping on self-concepts.

One day Beaven brought slides of local migrant living conditions to class and used them to elicit comments from students. A video-tape camera caught these students as they uttered remarks ~~revelant~~ revelant with something known as white racism. Two weeks later after our open classroom and other studies devoted to culturally-different people, she confronted these prespective teachers with the evidence of their own prejudice. Then she and the students worked through most of the cognitive dissonance.

Finally, because we are convinced that personal emotional growth is essential, we did a number of things.

We requested our students to maintain a personal journal for a minimum of two weeks and to record whatever they felt significant. Many claimed this experience was a positive growth step for them. In addition, since we believe in close interaction among peers, we frequently arranged activities requiring students to work with partners or in small groups. In this way close friendships among students were able to develop. As professors, the two of us did what we could to encourage personal emotional growth. We tried to relate to our students on a person-to-person basis, and we tried to be as transparent as possible. Many students did come to us for personal counselling, and as a matter of fact, we referred seven of the twenty to local community agencies for therapy.

Because on their initial self-evaluations many students listed "gaining self confidence" as a goal for themselves, we provided a welter of experiences designed to increase concentration and spontaneity, vital ingredients of self-confidence; we stressed dramatic improvisation, pantomime, and dance. To increase self-knowledge, we introduced several mirrors of behavior. Baptiste used Flanders' interaction analysis while Beaven demonstrated the utilization of transactional analysis, the CERLI method of group analysis, the Seiberg method of content analysis, and other informal inventories.

Sincerely believing that teachers teach the way they are taught, the two of us tried to model facilitating teaching behavior. We acted as facilitators not only to our

students but to each other. Meeting frequently to discuss ideas, students, class projects, and our personal reactions, we were able to admit our strengths and weaknesses to each other. Because we had complimentary strengths, we decided to expose our students to different kinds of experiences and leadership styles. Thus, it was that Baptiste emphasized questioning strategies, sequencing learning, cognitive use of film and other media, demonstrations, lecturing techniques, and learning theories. Beaven, for her part, focused on personality development, affective learning, psychological growth, creative expression, small-group tasks and processes, individualization of instruction and diagnosis of individual needs and interests. In retrospect, the two of us firmly believe that our differences are vitally important. Baptiste, a black male, and Beaven, a white female, helped our students look at various matters from numerous points of view that would have been impossible if two people from the same racial or sex background were collaborating.

And how did our students feel? One recent letter from one of the women stated:

I want to tell you how much I enjoyed your course. I have never had a course that I benefitted from so much. I am now taking a course, "Principles of Teaching," at Columbia University Teachers' College, and I find myself referring to things we did in our class. I believe my fellow classmates and professor are impressed and surprised at some of my experiences in our class.

I also appreciate the interest you showed me when I spoke to you of my personal problem. I'm still trying to find a way to accept it and to free myself from some of the sorrow it has caused me. Your course made me aware of other aspects

of myself that I did not know. That awareness has been a help to me in my personal problem. ....I am grateful to you for opening my eyes.

In conclusion, it is interesting to note we have had similar letters from most of our students, and we are pleased that we were able to create a learning environment and a curriculum that promoted such growth.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Albert Bandura, Dorthea Ross, and Shiraz A. Ross, "Transmission of Aggression Through Imitation of Aggressive Models," (Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, XLIII (1961), 575-582.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Wolpe, The Practice of Behavior Therapy, (New York, Pergamon Press, 1969).

<sup>3</sup>Frank McLaughlin, "On Mediacy," Popular Media and the Teaching of English, edited by Thomas R. Gibling, (Pacific Palisades, California: Goodyear Publishing Company, 1972), p. 3.

<sup>4</sup>Adelaide Jablonsky, "Toward Curriculum Relevance for Minority Group Children," IRCD Bulletin (New York: Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute, Vol. V, No. 3, 1969), p.8.

<sup>5</sup>Dunes is distributed by

<sup>6</sup>Jablonsky, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>7</sup>Edmund W. Gordon, "Relevance and Pluralism in Curriculum Development," IRCD Bulletin, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup>Charles Silberman, Crisis in the Classroom: The Remaking of American Education, (New York: Random House, 1970), p.8.