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ABSTRACT

Many social studies curricula are based on John Dewey's principle that education should start from what the child knows and work outward from there. This paper suggests that social studies educators will make the pursuit of social studies knowledge more interesting if they tailor curriculum content to students' developing cognition. A three stage model of ideal cognitive development during the school years is described. The first stage, mythic, occurs during elementary school. It is characterized by pupil preoccupation with imaginary realms described in myths and fairy tales. Curriculum content at this stage should be arranged in story form, provide a precise affective orientation, have absolute meaning, and involve emotional and moral confrontations between good and evil. The second stage, romantic, occurs in the lower secondary school grades when students begin to develop abstract thinking capabilities. Students employ romantic association techniques to explore the limits of reality with emphasis on fantastic and spectacular events. At this stage, a crude mass of knowledge about a wide variety of things seems important for further educational development. The third stage, philosophic, is characterized by laws of nature, human psychology, social life, and historical development as well as by their own romantic choices. By focusing on general principles, educators can help students reduce the chaotic particular knowledge about the world to manageable proportions. (DB)

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

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INTRODUCTION

One of the primary purposes of doing research in the area of Social Studies is to enable us to design a curriculum and be able to teach it effectively. In order to do research we require the guidance of a theory. One of the reasons typical research in this area tends to give little practical guidance to decisions about how and what to teach in Social Studies is that we seem to lack an appropriate theory that can guide us to our central concerns.

If we look at the general shape of the present typical Social Studies curriculum it is hard to discover what kind of theory is articulated through it. We might expect to find logical and psychological principles evident. There does seem to be one clear logical principle, that derived from John Dewey's insistance that we must start from what the child knows and work outward from there. This indeed seems to be the dominant principle that shapes the Social Studies curriculum. Except in as far as this principle may also be considered a psychological one -- that children's minds best understand material organized on an expanding horizons model -- we seem to lack any clear theory of psychological development that can give structure to the Social Studies curriculum. We have seen a number of attempts quite recently to extrapolate from Piaget's developmental theory in the direction of the Social Studies curriculum, but these attempts have a crucial weakness. That weakness lies in the dubious status of Piaget's theory. There is not room here to criticize Piaget's theory, but it is worth noting that those aspects of it

which educator's tend to draw on are being shown to be increasingly insecure.[2]

What I want to sketch in this paper are some logical and psychological principles related to the Social Studies curriculum that might move us in the direction of a theory, with implications for Social Studies research. In designing a curriculum both logical and psychological considerations are necessary, but this does not mean that our resultant theory need be logical or psychological; it should rather be educational.[3] It should, in order to help us decide what and how to teach at each stage of a student's educational development, talk about the psyche in terms of the kind of knowledge appropriate at each stage. That is, it seems proper for an educational theory to be articulated in that somewhat ambiguous realm between mind and knowledge.

Below, then, I will outline a three-stage model of an individual's ideal development in Social Studies understanding during school years. I call the stages mythic, romantic, and philosophic.[4] In each case I will characterize what seem to me dominant aspects of children's minds from the perspective of Social Studies understanding, and I will then make suggestions about curriculum content for each stage. The particular curriculum content suggestions, and recommendations about how that content should be organized, reflect principles both about how to make the content most accessible and interesting to children and about how content should be organized in order to best further their educational development.

THE MYTHIC STAGE

John Dewey recommends two major principles for what we may call curriculum planning. First:

> *"It is a cardinal precept of the newer school of education that the beginning of instruction shall be made with the experience learners already have; that this experience and the capacities that have been developed during its course provide the starting point for all further learning;"*[5]

and second: that there be

> *"orderly development towards expansion and organization of subject matter through growth of experience."*[6]

In elaborating this second principle, he notes that it is

> *"essential that the new objects and events be related intellectually to those of earlier experiences, and this means that there be some advance made in conscious articulation of facts and ideas.*[7]

If we consider the typical Social Studies curriculum as an interpretation of Dewey's principles put into practice we may be led both to seeing how superficial an interpretation the "expanding horizons" curriculum represents, and see an alternative way of interpreting the principles. The "expanding horizons" Social Studies curriculum begins usually with concepts of homes and families and sets about expanding these, then it deals with neighbourhoods, then larger communities, interactions among communities, then on to the child's country, then continent, then outward to the rest of the world. The truism of beginning from what the child knows best is interpreted in terms of the content of their daily experience, of mothers and fathers, homes and

neighbourhoods, and so on. That is, it is the content of their experience which is focused on, and which the curriculum is designed to elaborate.

What alternative is there? If we don't build on the content of experience, what else do we have to build on? Underlying the content are the capacities children have developed to derive meaning from experience, the fundamental categories they use in making sense of experience, the structural forms they use to give order to experience. That is, if one were to ask what children know best one might focus on the categories they use to organize content rather than on the content itself. One may say, for example, that children know love and hate, good and bad, more securely and clearly than they know about the organization of towns and neighbourhoods. Underlying and giving meaning to, content are such fundamental moral and emotional categories as good/bad, love/hate, fear/security, misery/joy, and so on.

Where might this take us? If we interpret what children know best in content terms we are led to a curriculum whereby access to the world and experience is organized along lines of content associations moving gradually out from families, homes, communities, and daily experience. If we interpret what children know best in terms of basic emotional and moral categories then we may provide direct access to anything in the universe that can be expressed in those terms. Clearly this matter of interpretation is not trivial in its curriculum implications.

Is there any reason to think this alternative interpretation makes sense? Consider what engages young children's minds most powerfully -- witches, dragons, and talking animals in bizarre places and strange times. Children clearly have direct access to these, they do not need to "expand" from everyday reality

into these weird imaginary realms. Why are these stories so engaging to young children? In part, because they are organized on those fundamental moral and emotional categories children know so clearly -- love and hate, good and bad, fear and security, and so on. If one listens to five-year-olds talking and tries to remember oen's own mental life at age five, one must be struck by how prominent are these fundamental categories in the way children make sense of the world and experience.

It must surely be admitted, then, that interpreting the truism derived from Dewey's principles in terms of emotional and moral categories does make sense. Whether it allows us to say anything sensible about the curriculum is another question, and one I want to turn to.

Above I have just indicated the most evident polar opposite categories children use in making sense of the world and experience.[8] Before turning to looking at curriculum implications, it should prove useful to enlarge the characterization of children's thinking, and try to identify some additional structuring principles underlying and organizing content.

Let us return to the example of fairy-stories and see whether some further structural principles might be derived from their power to communicate clearly and engage children's interest. Such stories may raise two questions: why do children find talking animals and trees, etc. so interesting, and why do stories as such hold interest so powerfully?

The strange monsters and humanized animals that inhabit children's stories seem similar to the creatures found liberally in myth-stories, and a similar explanation for both seems reasonable. Following Levi-Strauss,[9] we may see this "confusion of categories" (a "natural" animal behaving like a

"cultural" one) resulting from a basic pattern of thinking, whereby phenomena are initially understood in terms of polar opposites, and then are elaborated or qualified by mediating between the poles. In learning the continuum of temperature, for example, children first learn "hot" and "cold", and then mediate between these to learn "warm." Gradually a continuum is perceived between the poles. Roman Jakobson suggests this pattern is also basic to the acquisition of language.[10] Children, and myth-users, mediate between notions of "nature" and culture" to produce creatures which are, as it were, half-way. There is apparently no continuum from nature to culture, and learning the impossibility of these imaginary creatures is a part of the process of learning the discontinuity between nature and culture.

Whether or not Levi-Strauss is correct in claiming this polarizing and ediation is fundamental to all human thinking, it is clear that it is prominent in young children's thinking. That is, children seem to grasp things initially in terms of polar opposties -- good/bad, fear/security, love/hate, and so on -- and elaborate and qualify them by mediation, developing a sense of a continuum between the poles. By the early years of school, children typically are well on the way to elaborating continua, but still the simple polar terms provide easiest access to a subject; that is, things that can be initially expressed in terms of good and bad, big or little, brave or cowardly, allow children to make sense of them most fully.

A further feature of young children's thinking is its lack of a clear sense of the world as autonomous and objective. The world is not perceived as an impersonal, objective entity. Such a conception is the achievement of a mature rationality, and depends on the secure development of what have been

called concepts of "otherness" -- historical time, geographical place, causality, logical relationships, etc. The child's world is full of entities charged with, and given meaning by, those things the child knows best: love, hate, joy, fear, good, bad. Things are often perceived as feeling, willing, and thinking like the child. The world is, as it were, absorbed into the child's vivid mental life. Much more than is normally the case for an adult, children's imaginative life colors and chrges their environment with a meaning derived from within. Piaget has expressed this well in the observation that at this age there is "a sort of confusion between the inner and outer, or a tendency to fix in objects something which is the result of the activity of the thinking subject."[11]

It has often been observed that children tend to demand absolute explanations for things, even where such explanations are wholly inappropriate. They seek, we may say, intellectual security amid the varied and changing world they are learning about. When they seek clear meaning, they are not just looking for rationally secure "scientific" explanations; more importantly, I think, they want to know how to <u>feel</u> about whatever is being learnt. This need helps to explain the importance of the story form in young children's mental lives. Why should this be so?

First, it is worth noting that analyses of the stories that most powerfully engage young children's interest have underlying characteristics similar to some of those outlined above as basic characteristics of children's thinking.[12] The Grimm-type stories lack realistic concepts of action, place, change, causality, etc., they make little call on the simultaneous combination of ideas; the number of characters is small and homogeneous; the characters are composed from one

or two outstanding characteristics (big and bad, beautiful and industrious, etc.); the characters are differentiated by simple contrasts, or binary opposites, (rich or poor, big or little, obedient or disobedient, clever or stupid, etc.), meaning is always clear, in the sense that it is always clear who is to be approved or disapproved of, and what one should feel about the events.

That is to say, fairy stories derive their power from being more or less pure embodiments or reflections of those characteristics basic to young children's thinking. These are preeminently the terms in which children make sense of things; they understand things put in these terms.

But why is it that the story form can help children to know what to feel about what they are learning? Consider the event, "He shot Tom." By itself this event is not very meaningful, we don't know how or why or where he shot Tom, or who he and Tom are, or, most important, whether to feel glad or sorry that he shot Tom. The only linguistic unit that can answer all these questions finally is the story. The story as Aristotle pointed out, has a beginning that sets up an expectations, a middle that may complicate it, and an end that satisfies it. The meaning of an event in history cannot be fixed in any ultimate way -- no-one can establish finally whether it was good or bad that, say, the French Revolution took place -- because history has not ended. As new things happen, we constantly reassess the meaning of all past events. Especially we reassess how we feel -- whether it was good or bad, whether we are glad or sorry this or that happened. With a story, however, the meaning of events may be ultimately fixed. Each event has a place in the whole, and we know we have reached the end of a story when we know what to feel about all the events that compose it.

When we begin to organize a unit or lesson, then, for very young children, our first question is not, "How do scholars typically organize this?" or "What are its logical characteristics?" or "What are the most interesting bits?" or "What aspects of the content will children already have been exposed to?" Rather we should try to see it "through" the categories of the young child's mind. How does it become organized?

From the above fairly casual examination of children's thinking the following organizing principles may be derived.

Young children require a story form. They require a beginning that sets up an expectation, a puzzle, a problem (or what writers call a sense of "tension"). A unit should begin, then, as a story begins; it must engage interest, and that interest must be so central that it can be developed and sustained, and resolved at the end, but not before the end. Developing a concept or conveying a specific body of knowledge without creating such a central expectation that is, in the end, resolved, prevents children from knowing how to feel about the concept or content. A story-like unit, in other words, provides precise affective orientation to the material and conveys it, accordingly, in a way that children understand.

Young children require binary opposites, so we will look for the two most powerful and basic conflicting forces or elements or concepts or characters in our topic. The beginning, then, will set up an expectation from the dramatic conflict between these binary forces. Because children make sense of the world primarily in terms of those things they know best, the forces should be embodiments of a primary conflict between good/bad, big/little, brave/cowardly, etc.

The conflicting forces should be personified to some degree. Causality, for example, should not be represented in abstract logical terms, but in terms of actions being willed by the major forces. Of course, young children increasingly realize that, for example, countries do not feel and think the same way that they do, but the concepts they use to understand their own behavior are the only ones they have available to understand that of countries. Using such personifications should present no confusions at this stage; the degree to which children have developed the distinction between their own behavior and that of, say, countries will simply be reflected in the degree to which they will understand the personified concepts as having a metaphorical meaning.

So the main principles for organizing a unit derive from: story form; binary oppositions; absolute meaning; lack of concepts of "otherness" and sense of autonomous, objective world; emotional and moral categories.

These then are some important tools and categories children have with which to make sense of the world. Initially the world becomes known in terms of the basic structures and categories of the child's mental life. It could hardly be otherwise. Learning, we may then say, is a process of connecting the know categories to the "outside" world, and fitting the things in the world to them. The clearer the connection between categories and things in the world, the more successful should be the learning. Learning, thus, is firstly a process of making sense of the unknown world "without" in terms of the know world "within", and gradually using knowledge about the world to expand the initial set of categories.

Without seeking any more elaborate or precise picture of children's mental life, let us turn to see what curriculum implications may follow from

this interpretation of the truism that one should start from what children know best and build on that. In Dewey's terms, I have focused primarily on what he called the "capacities" that have been developed during the course of early experience and not the everyday content that may have led to the developing of those capacities.

I have tried somewhat casually and intuitively above to identify some prominent characteristics of young children's thinking. Clearly I have not presented a comprehensive picture, and I am not very concerned for present purposes whether it is very accurate, as long as readers agree that I am not just arbitrarily inventing something that has no empirical referent.

The first thing to note is that if we accept that the more important foundations from which children's experience can be expanded are these underlying structural categories, rather than content about things familiar in their local environments, then any content that can be organized in terms of these basic categories can be made accessible and comprehensible to young children.[13] If we start with specific content and have to work out from it along lines of content association, then our principle of "expanding horizons" must determine very heavily what content is appropriate for the curriculum. If we start with structural categories the particular content of the curriculum will be less determined by our principle, and more open to decisions based on what kind of content seems best able to promote the development of the basic categories or capacities, or put another way, what content the optimal development of these categories seems to suggest.

To begin with the most general conclusion, one should note that by the time children arrive in school they have well begun the great adventure of

trying to make cognitive sense of the experience of being human in the world. Their most basic implicit question is "What's it all about?" Now, we know what it's all about. There is no need to be handwringing, limpwristed, or pettifogging about it, or, worse, to try to hide it from children by keeping them in a never-never land of provincial trivia. What it's all about is a life and death struggle against ignorance, fear, poverty and hatred; it's a struggle for security, love, confidence, and knowledge. And at its heart, whether one is atheist or religious, it is infused with mystery -- most basically the mystery of why there is existence rather than non-existence. Children can have access to all of this in one form or another; to the sense of mystery at the heart of things, to the knowledge of good and evil, to the fears and struggles and failures and successes in building and sustaining a society and a culture, to the fallibility and strength of individuals. Again, educational development comes in the elaboration and refinement of the most fundamental perceptions; we do not build towards these fundamental perceptions by means of provincial trivia.

When children first come to school, the main categories they have for thinking and learning are those formed in the titan struggles of early physiological adaptation and in early learning of the customs and relationships within their families and maong their friends. The content they are most familiar with typically -- unless they have come from families that have systematically introduced them to fairy stories and other kinds of knowledge about the outside world -- is about the customes, manners, and facts from their local environment. The initial educational task is to destroy the tyranny of this local knowledge over children's imaginations by introducing them to knowledge about the world that is in its dramatic power and human significance

analogous to their own earlier inner struggles. That is, it is important to show children that the outside world offers precise analogues for their titanic inner struggles, and that the world can be understood clearly and profoundly in those terms, by use of those categories that the child has already developed. For example, the struggles for survival, security, and relative independence that the child has gone through are analogous to the struggles that civilization, cultures, nations, and the careers of individuals have gone through. We may refine and elaborate such notions as we develop educationally, but the most fundamental understanding, that which makes the concepts meaningful, is there to be used and developed in the earliest grades.

The greatest present danger to children's educational development seems to me to be the prevalence and growth of a curriculum which seems intent on suppressing, burying, atrophying children's vivid mental categories in local detail and trivia. What life in the world is all about is not primarily the secure surface of daily routines and local custom. Underneath this is a history of titanic struggle. We do no service to children by introducing them only to the secure surface and not letting them see that what they have gone through as individuals, their society and culture has gone through in its own way.

The kind of content that might deal best with these fundamental matters would be the story of civilization. We could present it in a variety of ways utilizing the categories developed above. To sketch an arbitrarily chosen way, we could organize the history of civilization as a conflict between good and evil. Zoroaster's representation of the universe as a dramatic struggle between light and dark has been one of the most powerful and influential ideas

in history. We might borrow it, and secularize it, to find our binary conflict. So the story of civilization can be presented as the struggle between knowledge and ignorance, which, using Zoroaster's terms in a metaphorical sense, can be visualized as light and darkness. (These are hardly unfamiliar terms, being basic to the way so many people in the west have viewed history.)

Our beginning must introduce the drama in such a way as to create an expectation, a sense of tension, a puzzle. We may begin, then, with an image of primitive people involved in a daily struggle against hunger, disease, natural disasters, the destructive ambitions of others, wars, and the usual human vices that undermine civilized life. Civilization is the story of people cooperating to defend themselves against these varied threats. The darkness constantly threatens to overwhelm the frail defences of the light. Our unit will look at various civilized groups, some of which were obliterated by the darkness, some of which managed to throw out a spark that caught and lit elsewhere, some of which flickered and glimmered, and blazed, and spluttered again.

The middle will involve a variety of smaller stories about specific ways people gathered together and kindled the light of knowledge and tried to defend it. In each case the struggle to preserve the light of knowledge against external threats, internal vices, institutional ossification will form the focus of attention. Ignorance of soil exhaustion for instance, the sack of Rome, various demonstrations of human greed, fear, hate, anxiety, will all be forms of darkness that threaten the light of knowledge and civilization. The love and joy of St. Francis, the energy, courage, nobility of Pericles, Alfred and Charlemagne, for instance, will all be sources of light. The end can come in a consideration of the greater defences civilized light has built against

darkness during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; in enormously expanded knowledge, a scientifically based technology, and the liberal and humane institutions of modern societies. We might add that while we are more secure than people have been in the past against hunger, disease, the greed and ambition of others, and so on, our security is still quite fragile.

THE ROMANTIC STAGE

As students enter their secondary schooling we see the development of somewhat rudimentary but serviceable concepts of historical time, geographical space, physical regularities, logical relationships, causality, and so on. Concepts, that is, on which an understanding of other places and other times in some real sense becomes possible; concepts that seem to be integrally related to the development of what we tend to call vaguely abstract thinking. This development seems to begin in some students as early as nine or ten years and in others around twelve or thirteen years -- that seems to be roughtly the range of normal.

The development of the concepts of "otherness" leads to a sense of an autonomous world that is separate from and indifferent to the students' thinking. With this development comes the students' need to reestablish their connections and relationships with this newly perceived world. They have to establish their intellectual security and sense of identity within it. How do they do this?

It seems to me that the main tool used is what I will call "romantic association." That is, they initially overcome the threats of this new and alien world by associating with those things in it which most clearly transcend

the threats the world poses, i.e., with the powerful, the noble, the courageous.

An association/with the ingenuity and courage of Ulysses or Captain Kirk of the Starship Enterprise, or with the nobility and determination of Florence Nightingale or St. Teresa of Avila, involves the student's ego in the implicit claim that "I could do that too," or, rather, "I am doing that too." Students no longer need to fear the vast mysterious world that is opening up before them because they can transcend every threat by means of romantic associations. By such means the threats are transmuted into adventure.

This process of romantic association supports and indeed glorifies the immature ego. Romantic students essentially deify themselves. And this seems necessary for the establishment of a first security within a world of alien reality. It is not a fault or vice that needs to be eradicated as quickly as possible. It seems sensible to feed it with knowledge of the powerful and transcendent in every discipline, both to help students develop through this stage, and to help them feel in themselves the power and glory of the real world. Their glorified identities derive simply from identifying with the glorious.

While involved with these romantic associations -- "hero-worship" being the most obvious example -- students have also to be engaged in the somewhat conflicting task of accommodating their thinking to how the world in fact works. That is to say, students have to develop their "romantic" sense of identity within the context of reality. The typical method by which students seem to to set about discovering what is real and possible in the world is to search first for its limits, to find the borders within which reality exists.

A defining characteristic of the move into the romantic stage, then, is the development of a quite sudden fascination with the extremes of what exists what is known. In the earlier stage, for example, the sense of scale pays no heed to the limits imposed by reality; going towards the King's throne, the hero may have to pass a series of guards, the biggest of which is three miles high and the smallest of which is no larger than your thumb nail. At the romantic stage, students' interest in scale similarly focuses on the extremes, but is constrained by reality. Thus, The Guinness Book of World Records fascinates the romantic student, with its accounts of the biggest, the smallest, the fastest, the highest, the furthest, and so on. It is between such extremes that students locate reality, and within them that they construct their identity.

I call this stage romantic, then, because it shares with romanticism the tension that comes from the desire to transcend a threatening reality while seeking to secure one's identity within it.

An important characteristic of knowledge that engages students at the romantic stage is that it tells them something about what is real and possible. The impossible fantasies of the mythic stage are quite suddenly treated with contempt as "stupid kids' stuff." A further characteristic required for knowledge to be engaging at this stage is that it be different, different from everything mundane and conventional, different from everything the students have known and experienced. Just as romantic exploration of the real world begins with the probing of its limits, so it is the fantastic and spectacular that the romantic perception highlights. Von Daniken and Velikowski are more interesting guides to history than even Toynbee or Marx.

This romantic search for limits enables students to explore the vastness of the worlds of nature, culture, and history, to get a sense of their size and scope, and a sense of what is real within them. This is the period of sniffing around and establishing boundaries; only when boundaries are securely known does one turn and explore the world within them.

One reflection of students' desire to explore limits and to form personal associations with whatever is to be learned leads students to want to know "What was it like then, or there, or doing that?" They want to sense different forms of human life, but not in the way that a typical scholar might. Their concern is to feel different forms of life, to try them on. Realistic detail becomes important. And the more different from the student's experience, the better. Incas and an imaginary Martian Colony have a head start over the histories and lives of their grandparents. The association is made personal not through proximity of relationships or physical familiarity, but through those human qualities that lead to a transcendence over the everyday and commonplace world. Grandparents' lives can, of course, be made engaging by these principles, but in general it seems to me much easier to engage typical teenage students at a romantic stage with a medieval scholar/saint like Ramon Lull than with knowledge about grandparents' lives. On the same grounds it is not the development of their own society that will be most engaging, but that of the most exotic and bizarre societies. Having established a sense of the limits of possible societies, they will have a framework to begin making sense of their own. Before developing such a framework, details of their own society will remain largely meaningless in any educational sense.

A further aspect of students' search for limits during the romantic stage is evident in the development of obsessive hobbies and pastimes. There is a

desire to learn something exhaustively or collect something completely; to know the score of every football game played by the team with which an association is formed; to collect every postage stamp of a particular era and place; to know every detail of the life and collect every photograph of a film-star or member of royalty; to know the shape of every leaf of every tree; to know everything about Saturn; or about costume through the ages. It is a kind of intense specialization, but I think it is more properly seen as a further expression of the desire to find the limits of things. By exhaustively knowing something, one gets a sense of the scale of everything.

Another important conceptual development, and one which seems integral to how students at this stage make sense of things, may perhaps best be seen in the kinds of stories that appeal to students during this stage. A "romantic story," in the sense of I mean it, is one in which a hero or heroine (or institution, nation, idea, etc.) with whom or with which the reader may identify struggles against odds to a glory and transcendence over threatening nature (or events, institutions, ideas, nations, etc.), in which glory the reader may then share. Such stories have a crucial characteristic that makes them ideal for this stage -- they are ego-supporting. They allow, and encourage, the reader to associate with some noble and powerful force that achieves success against a threatening world. Occasionally they allow the hero or heroine to die or lose, but only in a context which enables the reader deliciously to share the hero's or heroine's moral or other superiority, which is not recognized by the unfeeling world.

Buhler calls the stories that most appeal at this stage the "Hans Christian Anderson-type." They have more complex plots than the Grimm-type stories

which appealed at the previous stage. They are "realistic." Even when they deal with imaginary worlds, there is always a concern with realistic detail or plausibility. They have clear and powerful heroes and heroines. They tend to have exotic, though realistic or plausible, settings. They are often concerned with the differences between people who have more complex motives than in the Grimm-type stories. Their meaning is always clear, in the sense that readers know clearly what they should feel about the events and characters. Buhler mentions Robinson Crusoe as a paradigm of this kind of story. One might add much of science fiction, adventure stories, animal stories, and so on.

Stories are apparently one of the few cultural universals. Everyone, everywhere, seems to have used stories. What are they used for? Stories are the linguistic unit which alone can fix the emotional, or affective, meaning of events.[14] They are thus important not merely as entertainment, but because they give us clues about how students best make sense of the world -- make sense of the kinds of events which constitute a large part of the social studies curriculum. That is, we can learn from the form of the stories that appeal so strongly to students at this stage something about the form in which we should organize social studies content in our teaching. This is a theme which will be elaborated below.

I have suggested three general principles that move us towards a characterization of students' cognition at this romantic stage: "romantic associations" with elements that transcend mundane reality; a search for limits and extremes to get a sense of the scale of the real world; and the use of the story-form to establish a clear emotional meaning for events.

What follows for the design of the social studies curriculum from the principles outlined above? There seem to be two major kinds of implications;

one concerned with the form and organization of material so that it may be most meaningful to students at the romantic stage, and the second concerned with particular content.

The most general and profound implication for the form or organization of curriculum content, and indeed for the structure of the curriculum itself, follows from seeing the romantic stage as the period during which students explore the limits of the reality with which they have to deal. The kind of curriculum structure this seems to lead to contrasts quite starkly with the "expanding horizons" principle that underlies social studies curriculum at present. The "expanding horizons" curriculum (most evident in the elementary grades, but still informing the secondary) is based on the assumption that students discover the world by progressively moving further "outwards" along lines of content associations, whereas the characteristics outlined above suggest that students explore reality by first making contact with its most extreme limits and then working "inwards."

It is perhaps not surprising that this stage of intellectual wonder and excitement is also the stage of most acute boredom. If the mind is not caught up and flying in wonderful realms, it has to descend into the everyday world against which it has developed little conceptual defense. The mind at the romantic stage largely lacks the means to derive much meaning from the everyday world. It does not yet know the context in which the everyday and commonplace are meaningful. For this reason alone, a curriculum that focuses on local matters and shuns the distant and different will likely lead to boredom, and those well-meaning teachers who try to engage students in what is "relevant" assume that the "relevant" is found in their everyday environment, are simply

helping to alienate students from the world by denying them the route of access to it which they most need.

While indulging in polemic I might equally criticize those scholars and teachers who have a precise sense of how their discipline should be studied, and who consider the kind of knowledge that engages students at the romantic stage as in some way disreputable. Romantic-stage students seem like wide-eyed tourists interested only in the spectacular sights, and bored by the background and detail that most interests these scholars and teachers. Such teachers find their educational duty in ridiculing the romantic search for the extreme and the kind of knowledge that this entails, and they concentrate on trying to turn students into mini-researchers. It is hard to pursuade some people that the immature require immature concepts and methods of inquiry, and that this romantic engagement with the awesome, the wonderful, the different, is not only acceptable but necessary for students' educational development.

At a more particular level of organizing a unit or a lesson, however, this same principle has important implications. It suggests that, instead of seeking out whatever is familiar and developing our lesson or unit from that, we should seek out the most distant and "different aspect of the topic, then connect the students with it by means of their romantic association with transcendent qualities. For example, in typical units on the Industrial Revolution teachers often begin from things which seem to have an immediate content association with the students' experience, so they may elect to deal first with children of about their students' age working in coal mines. The principle outlined above suggests finding something distant from their experience -- a Victorian engineer like Isambard Kingdom Brunel, perhaps -- and then "connecting"

he students with him, engaging their interest in him and the Revolution he made, by giving examples of Brunel's fascination with doing only the impossible, with his courage, energy, confidence, power. That is, one connects the students with those transcendent forces which they have access to and a craving to associate with and which are the forces that are embodied in the Industrial Revolution.

Similarly, when teaching about ancient Greece or Rome, teachers focus on those aspects of ancient life that have something in common with today (for example, family life and homes), or with things that have left a direct and clear mark on the present, like words derived from Greek and Latin. A criterion for selecting what is to be studied in the past, is what "content" students may be familiar with in the present. Some teachers who find these content associations trivial, argue that knowledge of ancient Greece and Rome is thus "irrelevant" to typical modern high-school students. Other teachers frequently defend the "relevance" of Greece and Rome on the grounds of these content associations with the modern world. What seems to follow from the above characterization is that content has little to do with relevance, which may be achieved at this stage by romantic association with some transcendent human quality. And, to run the risk of overstating the point, the more alien the world with which students can be connected, the more "relevant" is knowledge about it to their educational development.

The potential obsessive fascination with detail once "connection" has been made with any topic must determine some of the learning activities that will form a unit. The tendency to "cover" a body of material at the same level of detail must, it seems, be resisted. At the romantic stage the student requires

both a general context that engages interest, and an opportunity to fasten onto some area in minute detail. If one is teaching a unit on the Renaissance explorers, for example, it would be well not to be concerned solely with who went where when, but to look in minute detail at how a ship was stocked, exactly how much and what kinds of food would be on board, what kind of people formed the crew, what were their backgrounds and expectations, what was the detailed structure of a typical ship, who slept where, what facilities and powers did each member of the crew have, and so on. One might want to compare in such exhaustive detail a ship and a voyage of an English venturer, like Drake, with a Portugese or Spanish exploratory journey, or with Columbus' voyage to America. This, of course, requires that the teacher makes available the sources students can go to for this kind of information. Initially, the more attractive the source materials the better but once students become interested they will ransack the dullest sources with a sense of excitement that is fed rather than diminished by the dullness or relative inaccessibility of the source.

The remaining implication about form concerns the story-form. Stories have beginnings that set up expectations, often by the conflict of opposite forces, they have middles that develop or elaborate these expectations, and they have ends that satisfy them. Stories are unlike reality in that they have beginnings and ends; they hack out of reality an aritificially distinct chunk, and this allows the establishment of determinate meaning in the events that make up the story. We know we have reached the end of a story when we understand the meaning of all the events that make it up. Stories, as I have said above, are our machines for determining how people should feel about particular events. Students at the romantic stage require some quite clear affective

orientation to the events they are learning in order that they be most meaningful. Thus, it seems to follow, content organized to be best understood by students at this stage needs to be organized within a story-form. I do not mean that students need to be told stories about content, or as a part of the unit, but that the unit must be organized by using the basic principles of the story-form.

The principles outlined for the romantic stage seem to say more about matters of form than they do about particular content. But we can draw some implications about the choice of the particular content that should make up the curriculum for this stage.

In general we will look for that content which is most "romantic" in the sense developed above; that is, things that are in some sense most vivid, most transcedent, most distant from students' mundane experience. We will look, in history, for the major expressions of human energy and creativity -- the greatest things done and thought; the building of the pyramids and cathedrals; the careers of the greatest "heroes" and "heroines"; the most dramatic conflicts; the most moving events; the bravest exploits; and so on. It will be a curriculum full of drama and vividness, but which makes little attempt to convey a systematic and synthetic view of the general historical process -- that should be the concern of the next stage. Our concern during this romantic stage should be to give students access to the widest range of knowledge, and encourage their development of a sense of the romance of the human intellectual, as well as other, adventures.

A study of geography, or economics, or sociology , or political science, should follow the same principle and search first for the dramatic and vivid extremes of the subject. In geography one might focus on the titanic forces

that formed the planet as we know it. While I have forgotten most of the geography I was taught, I retain a vivid sense of the processes and results of glaciation, because it was taught in such a way that the mighty forces of the retreating ice were made almost tangible.

Content at the romantic stage seems to be most engaging if access to it is provided through human beings and especially the transcendent qualities which are a part of certain people's characters. Much otherwise "dull" knowledge in, say, geography can be made dramatic and engaging by conveying it through the "biography" of the person or people who originally discovered it. At its most trivial this might involve teaching Canadian geography, say, not as a finished body of knowledge all laid out for the students to learn, but as a discovery made step-by-step through the adventures of the people who first discovered the various features. To see the physical features through the hopes, courage, endurance, despair of people, is to make them humanly meaningful.

A final principle that seems to have implications for the content to be taught during this stage comes from one of the characteristics of the philosophic stage it seemed that the power of the general scheme students will develop will be determined by the amount and range of knowledge accumulated during the previous stages. A crude mass of knowledge about a wide variety of things seems important for further educational development. Apart from its value in moving into and through the next stage, such crude accumulations of knowledge have an aesthetic value of their own for the individual. Only people without such treasures depreciate their value, and it is inappropriate to accept the advice and guidance of the ignorant in matters of education.

THE PHILOSOPHIC STAGE

There seems to be quite a profound change in the kinds of social studies content many students are engaged by during the later part of their secondary schooling. This change seems to take place in some students at about fourteen or fifteen years, and in others not till their college years --- that seems about the range of normal.

The main feature of this change seems to be that at the romantic stage, students' perception focused on the extremes, on the most fascinating bits and pieces, on vivid "true" stories, on dramatic events and ideas, on bizarre facts, on heroe and heroines, and on some particular areas in great detail. There was, of course, the realization that all these were parts of the same world, but the connections between the parts were not a matter of much concern. Students "connected" themselves with these elements directly, by means of romantic associations. One aspect of the move from the romantic to the philosophic stage may be seen in the strengthening realization that all the bright bits and pieces are interconnected parts of some general unit. History, for example, is increasingly seen as less a set of stories, a set of styles of living, and more as a continuum of styles, a single complex story.

With students' perception of the world as a unit, in which everything is in some vague way related to everything else, comes the realization that they too are a part of the unit. Instead of retaining a romantic transcendence over the world, they come to realize that they are largely determined by their place in it. That is, students begin to sense that they are what they are, not as a matter of their romantic choices, but because the laws of nature, human psychology, social life, and historical development apply to them as to everyone else. The

direct romantic connections to the bright bits and pieces are dissolved in the growing realization that their proper "connection" to the world is by means of enormously complicated causal chains and networks. This shift involves the realization that they are not as free as they had thought; they are entrammelled in the world as in a spider's web.

As with the transition to the romantic stage, this is a period of critical educational importance. The relatively rapid decay of the romantic world view requires that students establish a new kind of intellectual security within this newly perceived world. To do this they have to establish their place and their roles in the natural, social, and historical processes of which they are becoming aware. From being transcendent players, they have to become agents.

The means whereby this new security is established follows from students' perception of themselves as parts of complex processes. If they are parts of complex processes then the way to understand their proper roles within them is to find out the truth about these processes. The major defining characteristic of the philosophic stage, then, is the search for the truth about human psychology, for the laws of historical development, for the truth about how societies function. That is, the philosophic focus is on the general laws whereby the world works. By knowing these, the students will know their proper place and roles, and so they will securely know themselves.

Whereas at the romantic stage students developed a sense of the limits of reality, a sense of its scope and scale, at the philosophic stage they turn inward and conduct a general survey of the real world, and begin to chart a mental map of its general features.

In The Poetics, Aristotle distinguishes between history on the one hand and poetry or fiction on the other, on the grounds that the former is concerned

with establishing particular truths whereas the latter is concerned with more general or "philosophic" truths -- the historian is concerned with whether this or that happened whereas the "poet" is concerned with what happens of necessity, with the general laws of things. It is on the basis of this distinction that I call this stage philosophic. Students' interest is little engaged by particular knowledge for its own sake; it is primarily engaged by the kinds of pursuits Aristotle thought proper to the "poet," that is, finding very general truths about natural, social, psychological or historical process.

The endless particulars which students learned during the romantic stage, and which were made meaningful by romantic association, now threaten to be merely chaotic bits and pieces littering the mental landscape. To be made "philosopically" meaningful requires that they be organized within some general scheme. The first move of this "mantal map-making stage is to establish a sense of the main features and their relationships and locate the particulars within the general context.

At the philosophic stage, for example, a student might be attracted by a fairly simple form of Marxism because it offers a means of readily organizing a vast range of particulars. It provides an enormously general scheme by means of which all history, all the phenomena of the past (and present and future, too) can be reduced from their unmanageable diversity to a relatively simple process. Once one understands the process, "the laws of history," then the details may be swept up, slotted into their places in the process, and so be made meaningful. All that knowledge learned at the romantic stage about knights and peasants and the great artists of the Renaissance, suddenly is endowed with a new meaning as part of the decay of feudalism and rise of the bourgeoisie.

That is, the meaning of the particulars is now derived primarily from their place within the general scheme.

Such a general scheme, which determines the meaning not only of the past but of the present and future as well, also provides students with a means of understanding their proper roles as agents within the historical process. If they accept the simple Marxist view, for example, they know that their proper role in Western societies should involve them in exacerbating the contradictions of capitalism, hindering the plans of reactionary bourgeois forces, and furthering the cause of the proletariat. If they accept a liberal progressive view, their roles as agents will involve them in defending and strengthening the liberal institutions of their society.

The philosophic craving for generality is the means whereby chaotic particular knowledge about the world is reduced to manageable proportions. This urge towards the general leads students to develop the abstract intellectual tools necessary for imposing order on the most complex phenomena.

Thus, quite suddenly, very general concepts -- like "society," "culture," "the mind," "evolution," "human nature," and so on -- become prominent in students' language and thinking. The complex of social interactions, of institutions, of people and their jobs and families, of buildings and forms of transport, and a million and one other things, are reduced to concepts like "society" or "culture," and may be juggled with a few equally general concepts to establish for the students enormously general principles about how the world works. From these they form ideologies and metaphysical schemes; intellectual tools with which they can organize, simplify, and reduce even the greatest complexities with casual confidence. Ideologies and metaphysical schemes

represent the boldest lines that give order to the students' mental map of the world. They become the fixed coordinates by means of which all particulars and details are located and given meaning.

Another reflection of this urge towards imposed order is the development of hierarchies. If one begins to appreciate music at this stage, the philosophic impulse is to ask who is the best composer (or football player, or actor, or, which is the best automobile, or whatever), and the second best, the third best, and so on. The impulse at this stage is towards discovering the most powerful criterion that will allow one to organize all composers (or football players, or actors, or automobiles, or whatever) by slotting them into place in a hierarchy. Frequently this leads to the imposition of single-criterion hierarchies where they are inappropriate, where multiple-criteria should be applied.

The philosophic students' prime requirement, however, is to get some kind of control over the bewildering, and threatening, diversity of the phenomena under consideration. The philosophic impulse is to establish a first general ordering on some useful criterion. The refinements, and sophistications can only follow an initial general ordering.

This search for the criteria by which things may be ranked in hierarchies is a development from, but also different from, the romantic collecting and organizing of something in great detail. The focus of interest at the philosophic stage has moved from the particulars to the principles by which the particulars may be ordered. At the romantic stage, the particulars and their immediate relationships provide the focus of interest. The "philosophic" concern with recognizing "the best" composer, is not a romantic search for extremes, rather it is a part of the philosophic search for a criterion whereby all composers can be ranked.

This might seem a regression rather than a development. The "philosophic" generalizations might seem very crude and simple-minded compared with the complexity of the "romantic" organization of some phenomenon. But it is the generation of very abstract "philosophic" ordering concepts that will eventually permit much more powerful and refined organization. Romantic stage organizing lacks the power of "philosophic" general schemes, and lacks the potential for bringing diverse phenomena into complex processes.

Once one has identified the right criterion for evaluating and ranking composers, or comedians, or novels, or football players, or once one has found the ideology that shows the truth about the historical process, one can feel confident in dealing with particular composers, novels, or historical facts and events; it becomes a simple job of slotting them into place. It is a characteristic of students at the philosophic stage to be confident, or over-confident, that they know the meaning of everything. Indeed, the abusive observation often made about students at this stage is that "they think they know everything." This is precisely so. They do think they know the true meaning of everything, even of things they have not yet learned. That is, they think they understand the general principles from which the meaning of particulars is derived; thus knowing the truth in general, learning and organizing the particulars is seen as essentially a trivial task.

At the romantic stage, students' prime means of access to knowledge was by association with those things that helped them feel transcendence over the treatening complexity of the world.. The prime means of access to knowledge at the philosophic stage is a development from this. Security now is sought not in transcending the world, but in finding one's proper place

within it, and this is discovered by understanding the truth about it. The primary association at the philosophic stage, then, is the Truth.

Similarly, students' interest at the romantic stage was engaged by those things that supported a sense of transcendence. At the philosophic stage, students' interest is engaged primarily by the knowledge which helps "body forth" the general schemes which they identify as expressing the truth about historical, psychological, social, or natural processes. For example, if one accepts the simple Marxist ideology, then one's interest is focused by that onto the particular knowledge that best clarifies and supports it.

The intellectual achievement that establishes the student in the philosophic stage is the relatively rapid transition from romantic interests to finding very general principles or "laws." The success of this transition turns on the power or sophistication of the general principles of "laws" that the student generates. By "generates" I don't mean that students formulate such principles of laws for themselves, or originate them. There is, however, a sense in which students "make them their own" by adopting them to the particular knowledge, values, attitudes and so on, that individual students organize. I mean "generate" in this restricted sense.

The power or sophistication of the general principles turns largely on the amount and variety of particular knowledge the student has which the principles are generated to organize. This seems to lead to a most unfashionable conclusion: to a significant degree, educational development beyond the romantic stage depends on the student knowing a lot. That is, a sheer quantity of knowledge is educationally important.

Educational development through the philosophic stage may be characterized in terms of the increasing sophistication of the student's general schemes. What causes the schemes to become increasingly sophisticated? Primarily, it seems to me, more knowledge.

It is the constant interaction between general scheme and particular knowledge that fuels the student's development through this stage. The general scheme demands further knowledge to clarify it, the further knowledge demands refinements and revisions in the general scheme, which in turn requires further knowledge to more fully body forth the newly refined or revised vision. The "fuel" of this process is nothing less than the difference between reality and the general scheme which seeks to mirror it. Between reality and the idea lies the fuel of "philosophic" inquiry.

Why does not the particular knowledge simply "body forth" the general scheme satisfactorily, and so not fuel constant further inquiry? Because additional particular knowledge will usually contain what I will call anomalies for the general scheme. The more knowledge the student acquires, the more likely it is to generate anomalies, and so require revisions in the general scheme, which in turn will require further inquiry, the accumulation of yet more knowledge, which in turn will contain further anomalies which will lead to increasingly sophisticated general schemes.

What is an anomaly in this context? If for example, a student developed a fairly simple Marxist view of the historical process and looked for particular knowledge to support it, things like the modern persistence and growth of western bourgeois societies or the apparent survival and enrichment of some of the English landed aristocracy during the seventeenth century present anomalies.

To account for the knowledge the student acquires about these need not destroy the general scheme, rather such knowledge will normally lead to a more sophisticated Marxist vision. To use different language, one might say that the growth of particular knowledge sets up a dissonance that can only be corrected by altering the general scheme.

Again, I need to qualify somewhat my claim about a simple quantity of knowledge being needed for development through this stage. In addition, knowledge that is anomalous, or creates dissonance, for the student's general schemes is most valuable. I want to defend my insistence on the need for a large quantity of knowledge, however, because it seems that, as it were, a critical mass of knowledge is required to get the dialectical process between general scheme and particular knowledge moving, and a good deal of further knowledge is required to keep it going.

One of the problems that follows from accumulating only a relatively small amount and range of knowledge at the romantic stage, and consequently generating only very crude general schemes at the transition to the philosophic stage, is that very crude general schemes hinder the process whereby anomalies lead to increasing sophistication. The problem with a crude general scheme is not that it does not organize enough knowledge, but rather that it can organize anything. If it is crude enough, everything becomes evidence to support it, and nothing challenges it. With such crude general schemes formed at the critical transition stage, students may thereafter increase their knowledge, but that knowledge will not force revision and sophistication of their general scheme, and so will contribute nothing to increased understanding. Such knowledge will tend to remain, to use Whitehead's term, "inert." In

cases like this, students will establish only a to-hold in the philosophic stage.

I have, then, suggested four general principles that move us towards a characterization of students' cognition at this philosophic stage: the perception of general processes in the world rather than bright romantic bits and pieces; concern with the truth about these processes; meaning derived from the general scheme; and the fuel of the developmental process through this stage being the accumulation of knowledge which contains anomalies to the general scheme.

Here again we may consider the curriculum implications of the characterization of the stage under the headings of form and content.

The most general implication concerning the form of content at this stage leads to a paradox. I have suggested that students' focus of interest, and source of meaning, at this stage is the general or paradigmatic, but also that this is the stage for detailed study of particulars. The paradox is resolved, I think, in the dialectical process where the general scheme stimulates particular inquiries, and anomalies among the particulars stimulates elaboration of the general scheme. The implication, then, is that this should be a stage of specialization but that the specialization be open constantly to general laws, theories, ideologies, metaphysical schemes, etc. Sensitivity, and knowledge, will be required for the teacher to be able to guide students to specialize in a topic that, firstly attracts students because it will help to "body forth" their general scheme, and secondly will produce the kinds of anomalies that will best ensure revision and elaboration of their general scheme.

As for the content at this stage the kind of unit that is suggested by the outline of students' cognition might involve, for history, a study of

what we might call meta-histories. If the students' are concerned with forming or developing general schemes, we might provide them with a variety of such schemes from which they might choose one, or combine features of a number.

An important principle for such a unit is that the various schemes should not be simply laid out dispassionately as a kind of smorgasbord, as all equivalent and equivalently false, the way an atheist might study comparative religions. The students may be expected to make a commitment to the truth of one, or a composite of their own making, so they must be presented as important and conflicting theories about the historical process -- which is, after all, what they are.

The unit could be divided into sections, each one of which outlines, elaborates, and then applies a general scheme. One might begin with a Thucydidean notion of history as a tragic process, in which, human nature being what it is, political harmony will always be undermined by greed, self-deception and folly, and destruction will result. An outline of Thucydides' account of the fall of Athens could introduce the section. With selected readings from his History one could present his image of the Periclean far-sighted moderation that led to Athens' glory; then the crazy ambitions of Cleon and Alcibiades which led to its destruction in the campaign that finished so unbearably in the harbor at Syracuse. With use of media one could vivify the movement of armies and shifts of alliances and power. Role-playing of crucial speeches to the Athenian Agora and the terrible Melian dialogue, can bring life and drama to the ancient conflict between Athens and Sparta. This needs to be organized to emphasize Thucydides' "philosophic" message about the historical process.

Having developed a clear sense of the tragic general scheme, students may be asked to consider whether it is true of some other complex historical event, like the fall of the Roman Empire. That is, one must first choose to elaborate students' sense of the general scheme by using it to organize a phenomenon that may be fairly easily fitted to it. Thereafter students may be asked to consider how far it is true of any other civilization they may wish to examine.

In similar fashion other sections of the unit might consider a Rankean notion of a God-guaranteed progress of nation-states towards greater power and harmony; a Toynbeean image of rising and falling organic civilizations; and Hegelian/Marxist image of dialectical progress through class struglle; a Spencerian evolution; a Spenglerian vision of the declining west. A teacher could choose among these or other general schemes.

In addition the teacher might throw in the occasional enormously general "philosophic" idea. For example, civilization may be seen as the product of some kind of energy whose center has been traveling westward around the world at increasing speed. It began slowly moving from China, through India to the ancient middle eastern empires, then passed on to Egypt, then to Greece,and the Roman empire. After the fall of Rome, it passed to the Frankish Empire, and then to the most westerly European empires of Spain and England. They drove westward to the Americas, and their decline saw the rise in power of the eastern part of North America. More quickly it passed across the continent to the west coast. The teacher may ask students how well such an "idea" fits history, what it means, what kind of energy it is, and whether the focus of energy seems due to reach China again in the near future. Similar ideas might

involve seeing the development of civilization from the perspective of weather cycles, food production, and epidemics and control of diseases. A focus on the dynamic of historical change will stimulate "philosophic" interest.

Such meta-histories should always focus on the nature of man as an historical animal, his role in the causal network of events, and should also allow speculation and projection into the future, and concentration on the meaning of the present in each scheme. After each presentation of a scheme, students should be assigned to apply it to some other area of history. Debate, argument, discussion among students should be encouraged. Once students develop a commitment to some general scheme, they should be asked the kind of probing question about some particular historical event or period that will stimulate the dialectical interaction that will carry them through this stage.

Similarly for other areas of the social studies, one should approach the detail through the most general principles, theories, laws, etc. The world should be presented as a series of processes, which involve the student as an agent within them.

I have already stressed the importance of a sheer quantity of knowledge seeming to be important for educational development into this stage. For example, if students know very little history, they may simply be unable to generate any principles of "laws" useful for imposing general order on the historical process. If they know equally little about other subjects too, and so are unable to generate equivalent principles to organize them, then they will lack the means to develop educationally beyond the romantic stage. That is to say, having enough knowledge to be able to generate from it some general

vision of a complex process, some ideology, or metaphysical scheme, is a prerequisite for moving beyond the romantic stage and into the philosophical stage of educational development. Similarly, to continue developing through this stage, an increasing accumulation of knowledge is necessary to provide the anomalies that will lead to establishing the general schemes.

CONCLUSION

My main concluding comment on the status of the theory sketched above can best be expressed in the words Plato used about his educational theory: "heaven knows whether it is true; but this, at any rate, is how it appears to me."

So, to return to our beginning, what seems to follow for the social studies curriculum from starting with a characterization of students' developing cognition is a sturcutre and content which appears quite different from what we have today. Indeed, it appears so different that one is daunted. Perhaps this theory is wildly inaccurate in its characterization of students' developing cognition, or perhaps the implications I have drawn from the characterization to the form and content of the curriculum is extremely sloppy. If not, it is our current curriculum that needs radical reform.

The main argument against the present curriculum, made by implication from above, is that it is miseducative. It fails first to destroy for children the tyranny of the local over their imaginations. It provides little access to the romance of things, and consequently fails to stimulate that sense of intellectual vivacity which is necessary to make the world and knowledge interesting. It only by chance provides access to metahistories or general

schemes, which feed the developing student's ability to seek the recurrent, the typical, the essential in things.

The above sketch towards a theory of social studies education is designed as a preliminary step to empirical research. Ideas must precede data; ideas, theories tell us what data to look for, and how to assess their value once we find them. The above sketch is obviously largely prescriptive -- in itself this is not inappropriate for an educational theory. (An educational theory is properly a prescription for a curriculum that will produce a particular kind of educated person.[16]) But it also makes a number of empirical claims, testing which should provide knowledge of use in designing a Social Studies curriculum.

Notes.

1. This paper is a combining and reworking of ideas which have been expressed in my "What Children Know Best", Social Education (Feb. 1979) and "The Student and the Secondary Social Studies Curriculum", Theory and Research in Social Education (Dec. 1978). These in turn are reworkings of ideas expressed in my Educational Development (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.) I am engaged on a further development of these ideas, and I hope this paper might stimulate criticism of the developmental model presented within it. I would be most grateful to receive any critical comments you might let me have.

2. See Patricia Teague Ashton, "Cross-cultural Piagetian Research: An Experimental Perspective", Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 45, No. 4, November 1975, pp. 475-506; Charles J. Brainerd, "Learning Research and Piagetian Theory", in L.S. Siegel and Charles J. Brainerd (Eds.) Alternatives to Piaget: Critical Essays on the Theory:(New York: Academic Press, 1978): Charles J. Brainerd, "NeoPiagetian Training Experiments Revisited: Is there any support for the cognitive-developmental stage hypothesis?" Cognition, 1973, 2, pp. 349-70; Margaret Donaldson, Children's Minds (London: Croom Helm, 1978); J.G. Wallace, "The Course of Cognitive Growth", in Ved P. Varna and Phillip Williamson (Eds.) Piaget, Psychology, and Education (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976.

3. See my Psychological Theory and Educational Practice: Plato and Piaget, (forthcoming).

4. A fourth stage, the ironic, is described in my Educational Development.

5. John Dewey, Experience and Education (New York: Collier Books, 1963,) p. 74.

6. John Dewey, Experience and Education, p. 74.

7. John Dewey, Experience and Education, p. 75.

8. This is not to say that they are not also fundamental to adults' thinking too.

9. See Claude Levi-Strauss, The Savage Mind (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), and Structural Anthropology (New York: Basic Books, 1963.)

10. See Roman Jakobson and M. Halle, Fundamentals of Language, (The Hague: Mouton, 1956.)

11. Jean Piaget, "Children's Philosophies", in C. Murchison (Ed.) Handbook of Child Psychology (Worcester, Mass.:Clark University Press, 1931) pp.377-91.

12. See, for example, K. Bühler, The Mental Development of the Child (trans. Oscar Oeser (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1930.)

13. This may seem to echo Bruner's famous dictum: "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development," Jerome Bruner, The Process of Education (New York: Vintage Books, 1960,) p. 33, and clearly it is similar. As an exploration of structure, however, it derives as much from the child's forms of understanding as from the structural characteristics of subject matter.

14. For an elaboration of this, see my "What is a plot?" New Literary History 6, (Spring, 1978), pp. 454-73.

15. Plato, Republic VII 517, trans. F.M. Cornford (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), p. 231.

16. See my Psychological Theory and Educational Practice: Plato and Piaget.