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ABSTRACT

The current interest in values and social conventions stems mainly from an uneasy feeling about people whose behavior fails to live up to the social conventions that are upheld in society. Many people are calling for values and social conventions to be reasserted and education is expected to make an important contribution to this process. Education should pay attention to its pedagogical task. This paper attempts to demonstrate that there are many different ways of thinking about values and social conventions and about the associated task of education, rather than emphasizing the enforcement of social conventions. The paper prefers to see more attention given to the development of values and the development of social conventions. The paper explains values and social conventions and the changes in how people think about them with respect to education in particular, and also discusses social developments. It presents a humanistic perspective on education and outlines the contours of a pedagogical approach that stresses the development of values and social conventions. (Contains 66 references.) (BT)

Moral Education from a Humanistic Perspective.

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MORAL EDUCATION FROM A HUMANISTIC PERSPECTIVE

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There is currently a great deal of interest in values and social conventions and in the role education might have to play in this matter. The interest in values and social conventions stems mainly from an uneasily feeling about people whose behaviour fails to live up to the social conventions, that should be upheld in society. Many people, in society as a whole and in politics, are calling for values and social conventions to be reasserted. And education is expected to make an important contribution to this process. Education should again pay more attention to its pedagogical task.

In this paper I will attempt to demonstrate that there are many different ways of thinking about values and social conventions and about the associated task of education. Rather than emphasizing the *enforcement* of social conventions, I would actually prefer to see more attention given to the *development* of values and the *development* of social conventions. I will start by explaining values and social conventions and the changes in how people think about them with respect to education in particular, and will then go on to discuss social developments. I will then present a humanistic perspective on education. Finally, I will outline the contours of a pedagogical approach, which, more than is currently the case, stresses the development of values and social conventions.

The difference between values and social conventions

In the public debate, the terms values and social conventions (standards) are usually mentioned together, although they are actually two very different concepts. *Values* are opinions based on an idea of what is good and bad. They refer to concepts of the 'good life'. Values are not personal preferences based on taste, but are more or less explicit and fully developed ideas about how a person relates to his or her environment. Values are affectively loaded cognitions related to behaviour. These values drive behaviour (Berkowitz, 1995; Oser, 1997; Veugelers & Vedder, in press). Values are personal choices and are located on the cultural level. People who subscribe to the same values may congregate in subcultures, ideologies or religions.

Social conventions (standards) are values that are encapsulated in rules. Social conventions are standards which are based on values, and are highly context dependent and have the attributes of agreements (Joas, 2002). Social conventions are developed within every group in society. The development of social conventions is a process in which the values of the dominant group are elevated, to a greater or lesser extent, to the standard of the group. In other words, social conventions are like values that are imposed on all concerned. Social conventions may be formulated very broadly, but may equally be very restrictive.

Social conventions are implicit and explicit agreements on behaviour, while values are developed by an individual, in a process of giving meaning to life.

Citizenship as an educational objective

It is possible to identify different perspectives on values and value development. Values may be oriented towards adaptation, to personal emancipation or to a more collective emancipation (Giroux, 1989; Veugelers, 2000). For the past ten years I have conducted much research into values in education, often together with Ewoud de Kat. The studies present parents, teachers and pupils with a wide variety of values; and these people are then asked whether these values are or should be educational objectives. We consistently find three clusters of objectives:

- '*Adapting and disciplining*' where the objectives include obedience, good manners and self discipline;
- '*Autonomy and critical opinion forming*' where the objectives include forming a personal opinion and learning to handle criticism;
- '*Social concern*' where the objectives include taking others into account, or showing respect for people with different views, and solidarity with others.

These clusters of objectives have many similarities with the three fundamental characteristics of moral behaviour identified earlier by Durkheim (1923): discipline, attachment to or identification with the group, and autonomy.

The different perspectives on values are also to be seen in the different types of citizenship that people can aim for (Giroux, 1989; Van Gunsteren, 1992). Citizenship relates not only to the formal political domain, but also to the everyday life world. Citizenship is concerned with how a person stands in society, the giving of meaning to life on the personal, the interpersonal and the sociopolitical levels.

I make a distinction between three types of citizenship: a adapting citizenship, a calculating citizenship, and a critical democratic citizenship (Veugelers, 2000). The calculating and the critical democratic citizenship are two variants of an autonomous citizenship. The calculating type reasons more from the actual individual, whereas the critical democratic type reasons from an involvement with others.

The above mentioned clusters of educational objectives may be linked in a specific way with the three types of citizenship:

- The *adapting* citizen attaches great importance to disciplining and social concern and relatively little to autonomy;
- The *calculating* citizen attaches great importance to discipline and autonomy and relatively little to social concern;
- The *critical-democratic* citizen attaches great importance to autonomy and social concern and relatively little to disciplining.

An interest in values in education can therefore manifest itself in different ways, by being oriented to the dominance of a particular type of citizenship.

Changes in educational discourse on values and social conventions

For the past fifty years, values and social conventions have been visible in various forms in education and in educational policy. The developments in the Netherlands show many similarities with the developments in the rest of the Western world. In the 1950s, the pillarization of society was still emphatically and identifiably in evidence. Established values and social conventions were transferred not only within the individual pillars but also in education. In the 1960s, the discussion on values took another turn. There was a growing

awareness that values are personal choices and that social conventions should therefore be based on 'consultation' with all concerned. In this view, values are considered to be dynamic entities in constant development, which could crystallize out into social conventions, and where these social conventions are continuously being reformed. Growing up became personal development, or personal emancipation.

However, the 1960s - actually the period from 1965 to 1975, which is generally referred to as 'the sixties' - had a broader project: both the personal and the collective emancipation had centre stage. Collective emancipation was concerned with eliminating, or at least reducing, obstacles on the road to personal emancipation for all. Society was expected to create the conditions for everyone's personal emancipation. In this view, social class, sex and ethnicity should not be a handicap to personal emancipation – neither in the Netherlands nor in the rest of the world. Personal emancipation and collective emancipation were linked together and further democratization of society was seen as an associated condition. Attention was given to values such as justice and equality.

Ideas in education relating to a collective emancipation provoked considerable resistance. The attention to the collective emancipation function of education, which in fact had just started to develop, came under increasing pressure and was marginalized. It was thought that education should not politicize and the control over secondary education and vocational education was tightened - through final standards and national curricula. This meant that education, more than before, became characterized by a process of rationalization and by a technical-instrumental way of thinking.

It was not only education that was oriented to collective emancipation that suffered from this process of rationalization. The traditional transfer of values - in so far as it still existed in education - was also obstructed by the denial of the moral nature of education.

Personal emancipation in education was permissible in the 1980s in a certain way. Personal emancipation was able to survive in education in the form of 'the new spirit of the times', the rational, or the technical-instrumental with the emphasis on established knowledge and skills, and oriented to easily verifiable output. Personal development in education increasingly became the individual exploitation of the opportunities on offer.

Values were then reduced to individual welfare and disappeared from education, especially from the subject matter. The teacher increasingly became a knowledge manager and a supervisor of learning processes. The moral element only came into view when the order, or the social convention, was disturbed. The dominance of technical rationality meant that there was little explicit attention to values in education: neither in the sense of a transfer of values, nor in the sense of value development.

Attention to social conventions was reduced to enforcement and therefore the imposition of values. This adapting value orientation in education is still present to this day, especially through all manner of rules and forms of discipline. In recent research Brint (2003) shed new light on this sustained normative line.

In the 1990s, technical-instrumental thinking was mixed with the 'marketing' of education. The thinking and organization in education had to be more market oriented, in line with industry (Apple, 1996; Giroux, 2001). Students, teachers and schools should take more responsibility for their own learning process, teaching and school organization. The central concept was self-regulation (Bandura, 1995; Dieleman et al., 1999).

In terms of citizenship, I would like to point out that in education and in education policy in the early 1990s almost no attention was given to the development of critical-democratic citizenship, oriented to both autonomy and social concern or involvement. The

part of the value development oriented to society was adapting and conforming, whereas the one-sided orientation on autonomy with the individual led to calculating citizenship.

INDIVIDUALIZATION IN MODERN SOCIETY: AUTONOMY AND SOCIAL CONCERN

According to sociologists such as Beck, Giddens and Lash (1992), Bauman (1993) and Castels (1996) and in the Netherlands especially social scientists such as Van der Loo and Van Rijen (1993), Kunneman (1998; 2002) and Dieleman (et al., 1999), the individualization of society is making strong headway. At first the development was oriented to structuring society, whereas now it is oriented to individualization. At first life was linear, in the sense of following rules. It is now ever more a question of finding rules and of reflective judgment. Now people can and even must make an increasing number of choices of their own. This tendency towards individualization coincides with a tendency towards globalization. People must increasingly organize their own lives and bring their own order into the chaos.

This begs the question of whether it is still possible to integrate highly individualized societies. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) firstly reject two possibilities:

1. Integration through shared values – the old way. The difficulty with this is that the very diversity of cultural orientations has swept away the foundations on which the traditional value societies formed and constantly renewed themselves;
2. The cultivation of a national awareness. This is not only awkward in view of the polarization between individualization and globalization, it is also too abstract in relation to actual and highly tangible differences between groups.

What does that leave? Beck and Beck-Gernsheim put forward two proposals:

1. By developing a clear understanding of the problem of how to keep a strongly individualized society together;
2. By attempting to mobilize and motivate people for the challenges that exist at the centre of their lives (for example, related to work or the destruction of nature).

These proposals mean that society has to be continuously reinvented, with new forms of politically open and creative links. This implies that space has to be given to value development and to the convergence of social conventions – conventions that have to be constantly reformulated. People would have to acquire reflective and action skills to enable them to seek out rules.

But behaviour is not only a question of skills or competencies. Behaviour depends on an intention, on a will to act. This intention is value-driven: values such as realizing the importance of keeping society together and values that are related to challenges present at the centre of life.

Social concern and democracy

However usable this analysis of social development may be, I still wish to seek out more social motives for linking sustained individualization with the coexistence of people. De Wit (1999) investigated the various meanings of the term solidarity. De Wit's reasoning is that increasingly mutual dependence appeals solidarity to people, also in a moral sense, in that people become aware of being partners. Social concern and involvement means mutual dependence and acknowledging the 'condition humaine'. In order to keep society together, De Wit also makes a moral appeal for continuing to define the relationship between the individual and society as a problem and so to be oriented to the other.

Linking the individual and society is often currently formulated in terms of integration and social cohesion. I opt for the term 'democracy', which expresses more active participation and involvement. It also fits well with the ideas outlined earlier on a critical democratic citizenship. Democracy relates not only to the political but also to the interpersonal level, the daily interaction in schools, in work organizations and in the public domain (Touraine, 1997). Democracy must be repeatedly won and maintained. Coordination and cohesion have to be realized by means of democracy also in the individualized society.

Democracy, according to Giroux (2001), must not be equated with consumer behaviour, market operation and privatization. Therefore topics such as empowerment, power relations, ethics and giving meaning to life must be reintroduced into the public debate. Through citizenship forming, education is able to equip young people with the competencies to participate in the social and political domains, but education should also attempt to make young people prepared to use these competencies, that is to say, to develop social concern, i.e. to exhibit 'civic courage'. Democracy must not remain restricted to the national level. Alongside individualization there is also an element of globalization. In line with Nussbaum (1997) and Manschot (1999), I refer to a global citizenship. On this level too, coordination is necessary between the individual and society, or, more internalized in the person, between autonomy and social concern.

Current society is characterized by individualization and globalization, demands continuous value development and the active and creative joint formulation of social conventions. A continuing democratization of society, such that people on all levels are able to participate actively, must be the fertile ground for this value development, development of social conventions and identification and engagement with social conventions.

Education is able to make a contribution to active participation, to social change and to the democratization of society. The quality of the education should be assessed not only more in terms of individual school performance, but also on the contribution made by education to social justice and motivation for social change (Giroux, 2001).

GIVING MEANING TO LIFE AND EMPOWERING HUMANITY

Every person is involved in a personal giving of meaning to life, and giving meaning to their own life. Giving meaning to life fulfils two central tasks that people are constantly involved in for their survival: orientation and evaluation. Giving meaning to life offers people the opportunity to create cohesion in experiences and thereby to give meaning and value to their lives. Baumeister (1991) distinguishes four needs within the concept of 'meaning': the need for goal orientation, the need for justification, the need for a grasp on life and the need for self-esteem. Giving meaning to life can be seen as a cognitive and affective control system that forms an individual's own identity and gives it an emotional charge. By giving meaning to life a person defines his position relative to others.

It is as if giving meaning to life provides direction and substance to a person's own life, and a personal view of life. Giving meaning to life is a means of bringing about young people's value development and young people learn to relate to social conventions around them, in groups and cultures, and in society at large. Upbringing, teaching and education are able to contribute to processes of giving meaning to life for young people.

The giving of meaning to life for an individual may be inspired by ideologies, which includes not only religions, but also views shared by many people on life and ideologies. Examples of

this are humanism, as well as more political ideologies such as liberalism or socialism (Derckx, 1993).

A humanistic perspective on giving meaning to life is based on individual responsibility, and not therefore on God-given insights, and on repeatedly striving to achieve human potentials. It is an attitude of mind in which humanity is the aim. 'Giving meaning to life' and 'empowering humanity' are two core concepts in modern humanism. Humanism is seen as an *open ideology* (Derckx, 1993). The rationality that is linked with openness is seen as historically determined, dynamic and dialogic. There is no fixed, absolute criterion for higher humanity, or for what is beautiful or true. The normative criterion is the dialogue that never ends to which everyone involved contributes and in which they reflect on the unique context in which that dialogue is conducted.

Alongside a cognitive and a moral aspect, every ideology also has a motivating, inspiring or spiritual aspect. What might be known as 'humanist spirituality' is concerned with humanism as development to higher humanity and with humanism as a art of living (Dohmen, 2002). Spirituality is both the end and the means. It is drawing inspiration from beauty, from people's life story and imagination, and from the experience of belonging to something. It is the experience of kinship, without the feeling that it means being closed in and constrained. There is much attention within humanism to the development of Greek civilization, the Renaissance, the French Revolution and the emancipation movements of the twentieth century. These are examples of empowering humanity and active processes of giving meaning to life on the part of those involved.

Empowering humanity

Current humanism is strongly oriented to personal development *in relation to others*. It is this tension between personal development and empowering humanity, in other words, creating opportunities for personal development for every world citizen, that dominates the current debate on humanism (Halsema & Van Houten, 2002). The term 'empowering humanity' partly corresponds with term 'collective emancipation' that has been used until now. Both terms express the fight against inequality. Collective emancipation puts more emphasis on power relations between groups, whereas the term empowering humanity is broader.

'Empowering humanity', functions on three levels:

- *Personal*: it is concerned with human dignity and acquiring or maintaining control over one's own life;
- *Interpersonal*: with solidarity and responsibility. The focus is on being heard, being in a position to share with others in the immediate environment. It means finding support from other people;
- *Socio-political*: equality, diversity and justice oriented to a more humane society. It is concerned with citizenship, with due regard for social structures, which it attempts to change. Empowering humanity is political in the sense of social relevance and engagement.

This involves what I call the tension between *autonomy and social concern or involvement*. It is a relational issue. Both anchors are necessary. I place developing autonomy and stimulating social involvement within the framework of critical democratic citizenship. Such a view is still eligible to be given a large diversity of theoretical and practical substance. The diversity should be assessed positively and can contribute to lively communication on values and may prevent the values of one group all too easily from being adopted as the standard for all. Among the challenges that diversity poses for everyone is a reflection on individual values.

The open character of humanism does not demand traditional institutions, but modern network organizations in which individuals and groups come together and support each other

in their personal processes of giving meaning to life, in their own value development, and in dialogue with each other. Their orientation to empowering humanity is what binds them.

Giving meaning to life and empowering humanity through both value development and development of social convention

A second tentative conclusion. An analysis of the development of modern society shows that individualization, or making individual choices, is also making inroads in the area of values. The social field must be organized on local, national and global levels. In other words, the development of social conventions must be organized. For an increasing number of people the acceptance of social conventions is no longer God-given, but is the personal choice of the autonomous individual. The development of social conventions must be initiated, and opportunities to identify social conventions must be offered.

A humanistic perspective to this is the promotion of individual autonomy, stimulating the social, questioning all variations of the social and promoting humanity for all. The development of a personal meaning to life, or of a personal life view, is more important here than the institutional development of an ideology.

It is extremely important to demonstrate that people who are not inspired by religion also think about values and social conventions and that there are other possible discourses and practices when it comes to values and social conventions. Familiarizing oneself with the diversity of social and cultural practices and studying a wide variety of critical and social theories is relevant, also on the level of secondary education. This might allow for a more effective response to the social development of individualization as outlined above - the necessity to hold society together, and the wish for empowering humanity and democracy of society.

What does this mean for education? This is something I shall now go on to look at.

EDUCATION AND GIVING MEANING TO LIFE AND EMPOWERING HUMANITY

Value development by pupils

Values cannot simply be transferred from educators to young people, from teachers to students. Students must accept the values themselves, and must make them their own values. Passively accepting values is only possible when the educator and the young person subscribe to the same unambiguous value orientation and the young person fully accepts the pedagogical authority of the older person. This formulation is based on three premises: unambiguous value orientation, a strong correspondence between the value orientations of the educator and the young person, and absolute acceptance of the pedagogical authority. However, all three premises are unrealistic, or at least undesirable. Unambiguous value orientation does not do justice to diversity within value orientations, which is actually becoming more prevalent in contemporary society and which may be assessed positively in the light of the humanization of society. The premise of accepting the pedagogical authority is undesirable in view of ideas on critical democratic citizenship with an emphasis on autonomy.

Recent educational psychology theories also contribute towards undermining the concept of value transfer (Prawat, 1998). These theories accentuate the social-constructive nature of learning processes and view the learning process as an active form of giving meaning to life, as a process of construction in which students interact with their environment, the subject matter, the teacher and other students. The student gives his own meaning to knowledge. The subjective element in this construction is not seen primarily as interfering

with the correct observation, but as a part of the normal learning process. This view on knowledge construction is certainly applicable to value development.

From the point of students, their value development is seen as an active process in which they further develop their own values based on their interests and previously acquired knowledge, insights and skills, making use of what is on offer in the environment, in the subject matter and by teachers and fellow students. The individual student transforms the meanings that are offered and fits them into its own value orientation, its own life view and own ideology, which then also continue to evolve. The outcome of this value development is therefore, by definition, not fixed in advance. Value development is a creative process of giving meaning to life. This is a process that the student himself ultimately controls. The school can deny the student this control by demanding conformity, but the school can also help the student gain a grasp of this control (Veugelers & De Kat, 2002).

Value stimulation by teachers

In view of the nature of students' value development as described above, it is not a simple matter to describe the role of the teacher. Research has shown that many teachers also have trouble defining their own role in students' value development (Veugelers & De Kat, 2003). It would seem that the teacher often disappears as an active participant in the interaction with the student, and that the teacher is seen as a neutral supervisor of learning processes. A view of this kind does not present the teacher as someone who himself also upholds values, and reduces the interaction between teacher and student to a formal and technical-instrumental encounter, while ignoring the specific educational task given to the teacher by educational policy and the school.

A teacher may attempt to influence these value forming processes by actively participating in the interaction with students, by creating specific learning environments, and making certain choices in the subject matter on offer. Such a form of teacher behaviour actually assumes that a teacher has a deep understanding of the process of the value development of each individual student, and that on the basis of this knowledge the teacher is able to reflect on his own behaviour and to weigh up opportunities, which is something that is driven by the teacher's own values. Gaining a deep understanding of the individual development of students is not simple, and certainly not with large classes and in a single hour.

In my view the teacher is not a neutral instructor. According to Hansen (2001), this is something that is actually completely impossible. Hansen shows that each teacher is preoccupied on a detailed level with promoting students' intellectual and moral development. Time and again a teacher makes, usually implicit, choices about what he thinks is the desired intellectual and moral development of a student. Hansen refers to the 'moral heart of teaching'. This 'moral heart of teaching' is manifest not only in the interaction with students, but also in the subject matter, in the choices that a teacher makes in interpreting the curriculum, in the examples that he chooses and in actual reactions to students. According to Gudmundsdotter (1991), the moral aspect forms part of the 'pedagogical subject knowledge' of the teacher. Students pick up these signals well and are able to form an outline of the teacher's moral message. Gudmundsdotter showed how in American history lessons the teacher's view on war permeated through into the lessons and the curriculum as perceived by students, which is not to say that students have to adopt these ideas and values. The students have, at least, to relate to these values in their own process of giving meaning to life.

As far as the students are concerned I refer to 'value development', and as far as the teacher is concerned to 'value stimulation' (Veugelers, 2001). This term expresses the idea that the teacher does not transfer values, but neither does he act in a value-neutral way. The

teacher upholds values in behaviour, in the subject matter, and in his supervision. The teacher attempts, consciously and subconsciously, to influence students' value development. The teacher works explicitly and implicitly from education policy, the pedagogical vision of the school and his own cultural-pedagogical project. The teacher is a participant in the process of giving meaning to education. However, he is no ordinary participant. The teacher is deemed to work on certain educational objectives, on the development of citizenship. Teachers should be more consciously involved with the question of which values they wish to stimulate, what type of citizenship they are aiming for, which values they uphold now and how they will support students in their value development. Teachers work from the values they find pedagogically relevant for these students. They offer them through subject content, which is a reflection of cultures and ideologies.

Creating space for giving meaning to life and the social aspect

Contrary to what is often stated, education must not first and foremost pay more attention to life stances, but rather to the development of a personal identity- for giving meaning to life. Education should challenge students to think about values and social conventions and their own moral development. It goes without saying that in this process of reflection students have to relate to important value systems. Relevant knowledge must also be transferred, but it is more important that attention is given to the moral development of young people: to their values and social conventions, their process of giving meaning to life, and their skills for thinking about values, to communicate about them, to act accordingly, and to reflect on this action.

It is therefore desirable in educational practice to create more space for giving meaning to life, personal meaning construction, and the development of a personal life view, and that attention is created for the social environment and for the processes of power and inequality that it entails. It is concerned with the development of social concern and not only with the development of social skills. It has to do with challenging students to relate to the world around them and to the 'global world'; to learning how to assess differences and being able to deal with those differences. To be constantly defining the tension between autonomy and social concern.

Values and subject matter

Since I would not like to give the impression that this form of education is limited to the subject religious studies, or part of social studies or philosophy, I would like to present some examples of other subjects. Paying attention to giving meaning to life and moral reasoning is possible in courses on literature. Values and social conventions are interwoven into literature and culture, and the author himself, the characters in the story and the reader are all involved in the process of giving meaning to life. The substance of social subjects such as economics and geography is concerned with making humanity possible. These subjects are concerned with power relations and issues of sharing and being involved with others, and of encouraging 'empowerment'. History is concerned with opportunities for giving meaning to life and empowering humanity in a historic perspective, and with power relations, opportunities for 'empowerment' and the influence of emancipation movements. Social studies are concerned with current political, cultural and social opportunities for giving meaning to life and empowering humanity. The sciences are concerned with giving meaning to life and humanity in the perspective of the relationship between humankind and nature, health, and currently even humankind itself. The cultural subjects may relate aesthetics to giving meaning to life. Vocational education and higher education can also explore the moral framework of professional action and the organization of labour.

Students should be given the opportunity to explore the above-mentioned domains and to further develop their own values in these domains. In doing so they will become familiar with value orientations woven into cultures. Attention to different perspectives is important (Veugelers, 2001). Students develop their own values in dialogue with the values that are woven into the subject matter. When interacting, they develop skills for critical opinion forming, moral action and reflection on that action. Students should perceive education as a moral practice in which they are challenged to further develop their own values in order to engage with values.

In applying values where students have to reach agreement with others, and therefore have to develop social conventions, students practice developing social conventions and relating themselves to social conventions. This development of social conventions as part of the educational teaching process may take place in the school and in the outside world. As far as learning outside school is concerned, the student is prepared in school for developing social conventions and to reflect on the perceived development of social conventions. During their education, students must be given many opportunities to develop social conventions with each other and with the teacher. And this is something that already starts when formulating class rules together.

Moral education, critical pedagogy and democratic education

Thinking and acting on values and social conventions in education has for too long and too often been dominated by Christian ideas. It is as if other religions or non-religious people do not have an opinion on the subject. However, from a non-religious position, people often react with some unease to attention to values and social conventions, and they argue for neutrality; the educator is written out of the game and reduced to a kind of neutral supervisor.

The old socialist values and social conventions and their educational practices have also disappeared from the discourse. Socialist educational ideals are thought to have a reproducing character too because this also insufficiently recognizes the autonomy of the subject.

A more dynamic view of development and education, of interaction between the individual and the environment, between the individual and structure, and between the individual and culture is necessary when contributing in education to young people's value development and development of social conventions. Nascent forms of this can be found in various academic traditions such as pragmatism, the cultural activity theory, moral education, critical pedagogy and democratic education. I would like to concentrate on the meaning of three trends that inspire me: moral education, critical pedagogy, and democratic education.

Moral education

I shall now examine a number of points from the moral education tradition that are relevant to current pedagogical practices oriented to critical-democratic citizenship:

- Moral judgement necessitates the use of criteria for assessing behaviour, in particular a value such as justice (Power, Higgins & Kohlberg, 1989);
- With procedures such as value communication, where students learn to think and to act with respect to values, it is necessary to take account of values as criteria (McLaren, 1994a; Veugelers, 2001);
- Students are able to develop knowledge and values, but the will to use knowledge and skills is value-driven. Values drive behaviour, the affective component of moral development therefore deserves attention. Concern or involvement ('caring') is the affective component in the social domain (Noddings, 2001);

- The development of moral sensitivity and being able to deal with emotions is relevant. Moral action is both a cognitive and an affective process (Tirri, 1999);
- Current approaches to moral education in the educational field are characterized by an integrated approach to acquiring skills for value communication, stimulating certain values – often oriented to critical- democratic citizenship – and attention to the school as a community (Oser, 1994; Solomon, Watson & Battistisch, 2001).

Critical pedagogy and democratic education

I have often found considerable inspiration from American 'Critical Pedagogy'. Building on the work of Freire, Dewey and the Frankfurter Schule, Critical Pedagogy sets out to social relevant education and to give the participants more control over their own lives. Publications by, for example, Giroux (1989), Simon (1992), Kincheloe (1993), McLaren (1994b), Shor (1996), and Kanpol (1997) are challenging and bring power relations in education up for discussion. They argue for transformative practices where both personal and collective emancipation are worked on.

The work of Giroux (1983, 168) fits best with the classical Greek definition of citizenship education, in which "a rationality can be identified that is explicitly political, moral and visionary. In this model, education is seen as intrinsically political, developed to educate citizens to be intelligent and active participants in society. Furthermore, intelligence is seen as a supplement to ethics, a manifestation and demonstration of the principles of the good and just life. In this perspective, education was not intended to train. Its goal was to form a sound character oriented to the permanent search for freedom."

Giroux (1983, 202) lists five points that are essential to educational practice: active participation, critical thinking, developing an individual autobiography, tracing values that are woven into human existence, and learning about the structural and ideological forces that obstruct opportunities for development, but also show how to jointly make political structures that challenge the status quo. This type of pedagogics must be influenced by a passion and optimism that appeals to opportunities.

'Critical pedagogy', now often also under the heading of 'critical theory' or 'social theory', is oriented to change practices in education. It currently makes even more use of the work of Dewey, is more multiculturally oriented and is more open in its solutions, but does retain an orientation to issues relating to the interrelation of power and knowledge, to empowerment and to reducing the inequality according to social class, ethnicity and gender (Hinchey, 1998; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1998; Purpel, 1999; Burbules & Torres, 2000; Steinberg, 2001). There are opportunities for an educational practice on the basis of 'critical pedagogy' especially in less traditional institutional forms of education, but insights from 'critical pedagogy' can be found in many American educational publications (Richardson, 2001).

'Democratic education' refers to an educational practice based on critical pedagogy, but translated more strongly to the organization of education and to participation in society (Goodman, 1992; Apple & Beane, 1996; O'Hair, McLaughlin & Reitzig, 2000; Soder, Goodlad, McMannon, 2001). These ideas influenced our vision on the pedagogical identity of public education. This pedagogical identity can be expressed in three domains:

- *Participation in society*. Not only the acquisition of knowledge about society and of skills for working in society, but also the development of values (attitudes, opinions and behaviour), in particular justice and social involvement;
- *Active diversity*. It is desirable for the diversity of society to be reflected in the school and that students are prepared for a plural and multicultural society: to learn to deal with differences;

- *Active participation.* Active participation in education by parents, students and teachers must ensure that the school functions as a community and that there is a firm relationship between the school and the wider community which it is part of. Students can practise giving meaning to life and humanity.

Precisely because public education bridges various different philosophies of life, is it able, more than a school based on one philosophy of life, to concentrate on humanity as a whole and on society as a whole. A public school should orient itself to the environment, to society. The school is not inward looking and oriented to its own group, but to interaction with the outside world. The school prepares students for active participation in society; in the school the student already puts that participation into practice. Public education is therefore simultaneously a reflection of society and of the preparation of students for that society. It achieves participation through the actual promotion of autonomy and an intensive interrelationship between intramural and extramural learning.

Whereas educational thinking first emphasized the knowledge paradigm, or established knowledge, it now emphasizes skills, or using skills to acquire knowledge. The more radical variants focus on knowledge construction. What drives this construction, what the personal moral is mostly outside the scope of education. The current challenge for education and educational studies is the incorporation of values into the educational learning process, the creation of pedagogical practices in which students are able to work on the development of values and social conventions.

The school as a community

The school as a community and its relationship with the environment was mentioned above. There is currently considerable renewed interest for the school as a community. I subscribe to the importance of a good community – a good school culture – for the development of students. I agree especially if the interaction between students is also encouraged on the level of learning through cooperative learning. Nonetheless, I would like to make two comments.

School culture. In the 'upbringing in secondary education' study (Veugelers & De Kat, 1998) we found indications to suggest that the more homogeneous the school population, and the stronger the school's own perceived distinguished pedagogical identity, the better students, parents and teachers assessed the school culture. They got on well together. Emphasizing the importance of the school as a community, a positive school culture might result in a more homogeneous school population or class composition and at the same time in cultivating a strong distinction relative to other groups: a good community, but a poor relationship with the diversity in society. In Dutch education parents may choose themselves to which school their child is going. Emphasizing the school as a community – without involving the factor of diversity – reinforces tendencies in education such as the creation of schools with the domination of one ethnic group ('black' or 'white' schools), opposition to the formation of combined secondary schools by separating higher kinds of schools from lower kinds of schools, and (on a class level) organizing students into homogeneous classes as opposed to heterogeneous classes.

School and community. The school should also accentuate the contact with the local community. This too is a statement that everyone is enthusiastic about. But a one-sided social and cultural composition of the local community is an inwardly directed one, as opposed to one that is oriented to the plural society. It is therefore important to make a case for widening horizons, for acquiring new and different experience (Dieleman, et al., 1999), for acquiring

work experience in trans-environmental settings or for mentoring by people from someone's own cultural community who operates in other environments (Veugelers, in press). This widening of horizons should extend to a preparation for a global citizenship.

The multicultural society and values and social conventions in education

Up until now I have said little about the multicultural society and values and social conventions in education. In my opinion, my argument would have just as much validity if there was no multicultural society. Naturally the diversity of values increases in a multicultural society, and processes of developing social conventions may be more complicated and the dominance of certain groups in developing social conventions may actually marginalize other groups more. However, the multicultural society does not lead to a *different* dynamism, but to an *intensification* of it. Therefore, attention to values and social conventions is not exclusively linked to the current multicultural nature of society.

I already indicated that a diversity of cultures is particularly important in learning to deal with differences. This diversity is also important for the more subject matter bound subjects, and certainly for ideology. When practically all students are in close contact with the dominant culture, then they do not really learn how to deal with differences. When many students keep their distance from and even reject the dominant culture, then there is no question of a meeting of cultures or of a joint reflection on values and social conventions. The white working young people in Willis' (1977) investigation and now the ethnic young people in Paulle's (2003) investigation react together against the dominant culture and its values and social conventions. In both examples the segregation almost resulted in a termination of the dialogue on values and social conventions.

CRITICAL-DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP IN EDUCATION

Humanitarian, social and democratic values and autonomy

If we wish to devote attention in education to values and social conventions, in my opinion the emphasis must be on the development of a *critical-democratic citizenship*, or in other words the stimulation of humanitarian, social and democratic values. At the same time, education must stimulate students to gain increasing control over their own process of giving meaning to life such that their autonomy continues to develop. Based on their *autonomy*, they must relate in learning processes to the values that the school stimulates.

Now that values and social conventions are again part of debate in society, and education has been given an important task in the process, I consider it to be a sign of professionalism for each school and for each teacher to determine a position. In this way it becomes clear that numerous different perspectives on values and social conventions are possible. This diversity is possible within the pillarized Dutch educational system and also fits well within the thinking on the increased autonomy for schools.

I started my account with an outline of the developments regarding values and social conventions in recent decades. I pointed in particular to the disappearance of the explicitly moral element from education, especially from the subject matter. I gave two reasons for this: the declining influence of pillarization on the content of education and rejection of a more political content, oriented to collective emancipation.

In my account, I set out to show that the moral element should be explicitly reintroduced into education. Not in the form of the transfer of values – neither from the perspective of a collective emancipation – but through *supervising processes of giving meaning to life by students*, the young people's own values development. Students should

learn to relate to important ideological, social and cultural traditions. They should learn to position themselves in modern society and to learn from moral criteria to reflect on their own opinions and actions.

Social conventions are the rules that apply in a group. These social conventions are continuously being reformulated. Students should not in the first place be obliged to acquire knowledge on which social conventions are dominant in society, but must acquire an understanding of the *development of social conventions* and be able to try out the development of social conventions in the school and in extramural learning activities organized by the school. In addition, students should acquire insight into how social conventions have changed through the *activities of groups of people* in the course of time. From the perspective of a critical-democratic citizenship, particular attention is desired for emancipation, democracy and empowering humanity.

Insight into and experience with the development of social conventions is a better preparation for social participation in school and society than acquiring knowledge of the dominant standards in society. Education of this kind demands opportunities for a *more active participation* of students in school, much *extramural learning*, and teacher supervision of this development and dealing with social conventions.

Public education is deemed to be open to a wide variety of ideologies and to pay attention to these ideologies in the education. *Public education* is, through this active diversity, the ideal place for promoting students' autonomy in giving meaning to life.

At the same time, we should realize that all education stimulates certain values and in doing so works on the development of citizenship. The adapting type of citizenship is already encouraged in that students have to comply with the social conventions of the school. Calculating citizenship is already encouraged through a meritocratic educational system oriented to individual performance, in which an individual is personally responsible for success or failure at school. Only the *critical-democratic type of citizenship* received hardly any attention in education. Stimulating humanitarian, social and democratic values and autonomy should, for this reason alone, be given more attention in education.

The issue for me is to educate young people to have a critical, enquiring attitude, to have the courage and the creativity to tread new paths, who wish to scrutinize all knowledge – including their own knowledge – for the social conventions and underlying power structures it contains, and who are alert to the relationship between *autonomy and social concern.*

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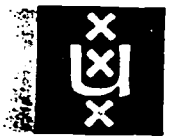

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