

MORAL EDUCATION FOR A SOCIETY IN MORAL TRANSITION

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IN 1969 the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development held a special conference on the hidden or unstudied curriculum of the school. My friend Philip Jackson organized the session with papers by Friedenberg, Dreeben, Jackson, and myself.¹ At the time I claimed Jackson's term, the "hidden curriculum," referred to the moral atmosphere of the school, and that the function of the hidden curriculum was moral education or perhaps miseducation. To make the point, I took a trivial episode. My son, then in the second grade, came home from school one day saying, "I don't want to be one of the bad boys at school." I asked, "Who are they?" and he answered, "They are the boys who don't put their books away, and they get yelled at."

Praise, Crowds, and Power

Philip Jackson holds that the guts of the hidden curriculum are the *praise*, the teacher's use of rewards or punishments; the *crowd* or the life in a crowded group; and the teacher's *power*. Our episode of the teacher blaming kids for not putting their books away is the natural exercise of teacher power, the natural use of praise or blame in

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a crowded setting where order is a necessary preoccupation. To the teacher it is not moral education, it is a natural reaction to the classroom situation. To my son, however, it was moral education or miseducation. It defined the good boys and the bad. That is what I meant by claiming that the school or teacher's methods of classroom management, the unstudied or hidden curriculum, should be approached from a theory of moral education. This implies that not only did we need to study the hidden curriculum, but to take a moral position on it.

In 1969, Philip Jackson and Robert Dreeben reported their excellent studies of the hidden curriculum, done as value-neutral scientists. I said their sociological view of the functions of the hidden curriculum was not really value-neutral, it was conservative. In the Jackson and Dreeben view, the hidden curriculum served the function of socializing

¹ Norman V. Overly, editor. *The Unstudied Curriculum: Its Impact on Children*. Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1970. 130 pp.

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the student into the norms of the American competitive bureaucratic industrial society. Our example of putting books away, from their point of view, would be said to aid the child to adapt to a bureaucratic society of crowds, praise, and power at office and factory. Edgar Friedenberg, the radical, implicitly showed that Jackson and Dreeben were not really value-neutral by taking Jackson's ideas and turning them upside down. The function of the hidden curriculum, Friedenberg stated, was to wipe out individuality and impose the conformity and the banal values of mass bureaucratic society on the young.

Having rejected the possibility of value-neutrality, in 1969 I stated my own value viewpoint on the hidden curriculum. My viewpoint was neither radical nor conservative but progressive in John Dewey's sense. The conservative thinks that the hidden curriculum of the bureaucratic academic achievement school is good, it helps the student to adapt to a bureaucratic academic oriented society. The radical thinks it bad, it stamps out individuality and sensitivity. "Close down the academic achievement bureaucratic schools," say the Friedenbergs, "and start alternative open schools." To me, neither the conservative nor the radical had understood John Dewey's progressive viewpoint, or they would have taken Dewey's third position.

According to Dewey, the progressive educator identifies true progress with development, the child's development and the development of society. If we are to evolve or progress, we must know what progress or development is. The development of the child, the child's standard of progress, is something studied by the child psychologist. We shall show that some of his or her conclusions are relevant to judging the progress of the society. In this light we will look to Watergate. The standard of progress for the child or the society is not a standard that can be purely scientific, however. Ultimately, the standard for the development of the individual or the society is to a higher level of moral awareness and action. The fundamental way in which education helps social

progress is through aiding the moral development of the individual and the society.

Here is how Dewey stated it:

The aim of education is growth or development, both intellectual and moral. Ethical and psychological principles can aid the school in the greatest of all constructions—the building of a free and powerful character. Only knowledge of the order and connection of the stages in psychological development can insure this. Education is the work of supplying the conditions which will enable the psychological functions to mature in the freest and fullest manner.²

Dewey and Tufts postulated three levels of moral development which are: (a) the premoral or preconventional level "of behavior motivated by biological and social impulses with results for morals," (b) the conventional level of behavior "in which the individual accepts with little critical reflections the standards of his group," (c) the autonomous level of behavior in which "conduct is guided by the individual thinking and judging for himself whether a purpose is good, and does not accept the standard of his group without reflection."

Movement Through Moral Levels

Education, said Dewey, is to aid development through these moral levels, not by indoctrination but by supplying the conditions for movement from stage to stage. Dewey's conception of education as movement through moral levels makes it clear that the individual is not born at the autonomous or self-directing level. Romantics like Friedenberg or A. S. Neill see children as born individual, creative, empathic, and as crushed or limited by school and society. Autonomy, however, is not born, it develops; the autonomous level comes after the conventional. Autonomy will not develop through an education of "do your thing," but through educational stimulation which leads first to the level of understanding the standard of the group and then to autonomy,

² John Dewey. "What Psychology Can Do for the Teacher." In: Reginald Archambault, editor. *John Dewey on Education: Selected Writings*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1964.

to constructing standards held through reflection and self-judgment.

Here, let me discuss what I could only theorize about in 1968, how to make a school's hidden curriculum good, that is, how to make it a vehicle for stimulating moral development. For the past six months I have been working with a new small school within the Cambridge, Massachusetts, public high school whose unstudied curriculum is democracy, and whose purpose is moral as well as intellectual advance. The school, officially called the Cluster School, we call a Just Community school. To explain its working requires a trip through moral psychology and philosophy and a review of 20 years of research I have done on moral development.

The research started with the concept of moral stage. In 1955, I started to redefine and validate (through longitudinal and cross-cultural study) the Dewey-Piaget levels and stages. I found two stages at each of Dewey's three levels. For instance, at Dewey's pre-conventional level there was a Stage 1 of punishment and obedience and a Stage 2 of instrumental exchange.

We claim to have not only found but validated the stages defined in Table 1. The notion that stages can be validated implies that stages have definite empirical or researchable characteristics (Kohlberg, 1975, in press). The concept of stages (as used by Piaget, 1948, and the writer) implies the following characteristics:

1. Stages are "structured wholes," or organized systems of thought. This means individuals are consistent in level of moral judgment.

2. Stages form an invariant sequence. Under all conditions except extreme trauma, movement is always forward, never backward. Individuals never skip stages, movement is always to the next stage up. This is true in all cultures.

3. Stages are "hierarchical integrations." Thinking at a higher stage includes or comprehends within it lower stage thinking. There is a tendency to function at or prefer the highest stage available.

Each of these characteristics has been demonstrated for moral stages. Stages are

defined by responses to a set of verbal moral dilemmas classified according to an elaborate scoring scheme. Validating studies include:

- a. A 20-year study of 50 Chicago area boys, middle- and working class. Initially interviewed at ages 10-16, they have been reinterviewed at three-year intervals thereafter.

- b. A small six-year longitudinal study of Turkish village and city boys of the same age.

- c. A variety of cross-sectional longitudinal studies in Canada, Britain, Israel, Turkey, Taiwan, Yucatan, Honduras, and India.

With regard to 1., *the structured whole or consistency criterion*, we have found more than 50 percent of an individual's thinking is always at one stage with the remainder at the next adjacent stage (which he or she is leaving or is moving into).

With regard to 2., *invariant sequence*, our longitudinal results indicate that on every retest individuals were either at the same stage as three years earlier or had moved up one stage. This was true in Turkey as well as in the United States.

With regard to 3., *the hierarchical integration criterion*, we have found that: adolescents exposed to statements at each of the six stages comprehend all statements at or below their own stage but fail to comprehend any statements more than one stage above their own. They prefer (or rank as best) the highest stage they can comprehend.

To understand moral stages it is important to clarify their relations to stage of logic or intelligence on the one hand, and to moral behavior on the other. Mature moral judgment is not highly correlated with I.Q. or verbal intelligence (correlations are only in the 30's, accounting for 10 percent of the variance). Cognitive development, in the stage sense, however, is more important for moral development than such correlations suggest. Piaget has found that after the child learns to speak there are three major stages of reasoning: the intuitive, the concrete operational, and the formal operational. A person whose logical stage is only concrete-operational is limited to the pre-conventional moral stages (Stages 1 and 2). A person whose logical stage is only partially formal

I. Preconventional level *

At this level the child is responsive to cultural rules and labels of good and bad, right or wrong, but interprets these labels either in terms of the physical or the hedonistic consequences of action (punishment, reward, exchange of favors) or in terms of the physical power of those who enunciate the rules and labels. The level is divided into the following two stages:

Stage 1: *The punishment-and-obedience orientation.* The physical consequences of action determine its goodness or badness regardless of the human meaning or value of these consequences. Avoidance of punishment and unquestioning deference to power are valued in their own right, not in terms of respect for an underlying moral order supported by punishment and authority (the latter being stage 4).

Stage 2: *The instrumental-relativist orientation.* Right action consists of that which instrumentally satisfies one's own needs and occasionally the needs of others. Human relations are viewed in terms like those of the market place. Elements of fairness, of reciprocity, and of equal sharing are present, but they are always interpreted in a physical pragmatic way. Reciprocity is a matter of "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours," not of loyalty, gratitude, or justice.

II. Conventional level

At this level, maintaining the expectations of the individual's family, group, or nation is perceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences. The attitude is not only one of conformity to personal expectations and social order, but of loyalty to it, of actively *maintaining*, supporting, and justifying the order, and of identifying with the persons or group involved in it. At this level, there are the following two stages:

Stage 3: *The interpersonal concordance or "good boy—nice girl" orientation.* Good behavior is that which pleases or helps others and is approved by them. There is much conformity to stereotypical images of

* Reprinted from: Lawrence Kohlberg. "The Claim to Moral Adequacy of a Highest Stage of Moral Judgment." *The Journal of Philosophy* 70 (18): 631-32; October 25, 1973.

what is majority or "natural" behavior. Behavior is frequently judged by intention—"he means well" becomes important for the first time. One earns approval by being "nice."

Stage 4: *The "law and order" orientation.* There is orientation toward authority, fixed rules, and the maintenance of the social order. Right behavior consists of doing one's duty, showing respect for authority, and maintaining the given social order for its own sake.

III. Postconventional, autonomous, or principled level

At this level, there is a clear effort to define moral values and principles that have validity and application apart from the authority of the groups or persons holding these principles and apart from the individual's own identification with these groups. This level again has two stages:

Stage 5: *The social contract, legalistic orientation,* generally with utilitarian overtones. Right action tends to be defined in terms of general individual rights, and standards which have been critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society. There is a clear awareness of the relativism of personal values and opinions and a corresponding emphasis upon procedural rules for reaching consensus. Aside from what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, the right is a matter of personal "values" and "opinion." The result is an emphasis upon the "legal point of view," but with an emphasis upon the possibility of changing law in terms of rational considerations of social utility (rather than freezing it in terms of stage 4 "law and order"). Outside the legal realm, free agreement and contract is the binding element of obligation. This is the "official" morality of the American government and constitution.

Stage 6: *The universal-ethical-principle orientation.* Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen *ethical principles* appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. These principles are abstract and ethical (the Golden Rule, the categorical imperative); they are not concrete moral rules like the Ten Commandments. At heart, these are universal principles of *justice*, of the *reciprocity* and *equality* of human rights, and of respect for the dignity of human beings as *individual persons* ("From Is to Ought," pp. 164-65).

Table 1. Definition of Moral Stages

operational is limited to the conventional moral stages (Stage 3). While logical development is necessary for moral development and sets limits to it, most individuals are higher in logical stage than they are in moral stage. As an example, over 50 percent of late adolescents and adults are capable of full formal reasoning but only 10 percent of these adults (all formal operational) display principled (Stages 5 and 6) moral reasoning.

In summary, moral development partly depends upon the intellectual development which is the school's first concern, but

usually lags behind it. If logical reasoning is a necessary but not sufficient condition for mature moral judgment, mature moral judgment is a necessary but not sufficient condition for mature moral action. One cannot follow moral principles if one does not understand (or believe in) moral principles. However, one can reason in terms of principles and not live up to these principles. As an example, Krebs and Kohlberg (1974) found that only 15 percent of students showing some principled thinking cheated as compared to 55 percent of conventional subjects

and 70 percent of preconventional subjects. Thus, mature moral judgment predicts moral action. Nevertheless, 15 percent of the principled subjects did cheat, suggesting that factors additional to moral judgment are necessary for principled moral reasoning to be translated into "moral action."

If maturity of moral reasoning is only one factor to moral behavior, why does the progressive approach to moral education focus so heavily upon moral reasoning? For the following reasons:

1. Moral judgment, while only one factor in moral behavior, is the single most important or influential factor yet discovered in moral behavior.

2. While other factors influence moral behavior, moral judgment is the only distinctively *moral factor* in moral behavior. To illustrate, the Krebs and Kohlberg study indicated that "strong-willed" conventional stage subjects resisted cheating more than "weak-willed" subjects, only 26 percent of strong-willed subjects cheated as compared to 76 percent of the weak-willed. For those at a preconventional level of moral reasoning, however, "will" had an opposite effect. "Strong-willed" Stages 1 and 2 subjects cheated more, not less than "weak-willed" subjects, that is, they had the "courage of their (amoral) convictions" that it was worthwhile to cheat. "Will," then, is an important factor in moral behavior but it is not distinctively moral, it becomes moral only when informed by mature moral judgment.

3. Moral judgment change is long-range or irreversible, a higher stage is never lost. In contrast, moral behavior as such is largely situational and reversible or "loseable" in new situations.

Psychology finds an invariant sequence of moral stages. Moral philosophy, however, must be invoked to answer whether a later stage is a better stage. The "stage" of senescence and death follows the "stage of adulthood," but that does not mean that the later "stage" is the better. The tradition of moral philosophy to which we appeal is the liberal or rational tradition running from Kant through Mill and Dewey to John Rawls (1971). Central to this tradition is the claim that an adequate morality is *principled*, that is, that it makes judgments in terms of *uni-*

versal principles applicable to all people. *Principles* are to be distinguished from *rules*. Conventional morality is grounded on rules, primarily "thou shalt nots" such as are represented by the Ten Commandments. Rules are prescriptions of kinds of actions; principles are, rather, universal guides to making a moral decision. An example is Kant's "categorical imperative," formulated in two ways. The first formulation is the maxim of respect for human personality, "Act always toward the other as an end, not a means." The second is the maxim of universalization, "Choose only as you would be willing to have everyone choose in your situation."

Furthermore, moral principles are ultimately principles of justice. In essence, moral conflicts are conflicts between the claims of persons and principles for resolving these claims are principles of justice, "for giving each his due." Central to justice are the demands of *liberty*, *equality*, and *reciprocity*. At every moral stage there is a concern for justice. The most damning statement a school child can make about a teacher is that the teacher is not "fair." At each higher stage, however, the conception of justice is reorganized. At Stage 1, justice is punishing the bad in terms of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." At Stage 2, it is exchanging favors and goods in an equal manner. At Stages 3 and 4, it is treating people as they "deserve" in terms of the conventional rules. At Stage 5, it is recognized that all rules and laws flow from justice, from a social contract between the governors and the governed designed to protect the equal rights of all. At Stage 6, personally chosen moral principles are also principles of justice, the principles any member of a society would choose for that society if the person did not know what his or her position was to be in the society and in which he or she might be the least advantaged (Rawls, 1971).

Why are decisions based on universal principles of justice better decisions? Because they are decisions on which all moral people could agree. When decisions are based on conventional moral rules people will disagree, since they adhere to conflicting

systems of rules dependent on culture and social position. Throughout history people have killed one another in the name of conflicting moral rules and values, most recently in Vietnam and the Middle East. Truly moral or just resolutions of conflicts require principles which are, or can be, universally applicable.

A Concern for Moral Education

If moral development centers on a sense of individual justice, it becomes apparent that moral and civic education are much the same thing. This equation, taken for granted by the classic philosophers of education from Plato and Aristotle to Dewey, is basic to our claim that a concern for moral education is central to the educational objectives of social studies.

The term "civic education" is used to refer to social studies as more than the study of the facts and concepts of social science, history, and civics. It is education for the analytic understanding, value principles, and motivation necessary for a citizen in a democracy if democracy is to be an effective process. To understand and be democratic is to understand and practice justice. It is political education. Civic or political education means the stimulation of development of more advanced patterns of reasoning about political and social decisions and their implementation. These are largely patterns of moral reasoning. Our studies show that reasoning and decision making about political decisions are directly derivative of broader patterns of moral reasoning and decision making. We have interviewed high school and college students about concrete political situations involving laws about open housing, civil disobedience for peace in Vietnam, free press rights to publish what might disturb national order, distribution of income through taxation. We find that reasoning on these political decisions can be classified according to moral stage and that an individual's stage on political dilemmas is at the same level as on nonpolitical dilemmas.

From a psychological side, then, political development is part of moral develop-

ment. The same is true from the philosophic side. In historical perspective, America was the first nation whose government was publicly founded on post-conventional principles of justice and the rights of human beings, rather than upon the authority central to conventional moral reasoning. At the time of our founding, post-conventional or principled moral and political reasoning was the possession of the minority, as it still is. Today, as in the time of our founding, the majority of our adults are at the conventional level, particularly the law-and-order fourth moral stage. (Every few years the Gallup Poll circulates the Bill of Rights unidentified and each time it is turned down.) The founders of our nation intuitively understood this without benefit of our elaborate social research and constructed a document designing a government which would maintain principles of justice and the rights of all even though principled people were not those in power. The machinery included checks and balances, the independent judiciary, freedom of the press. Most recently, this machinery found its use at Watergate. The tragedy of Richard Nixon, as Harry Truman said long ago, was that he never understood the Constitution, a Stage 5 document, but the Constitution understood Richard Nixon.³

From Conventional to Principled Morality

Watergate, then, is not some sign of moral decay of the nation, but rather, of the fact that understanding and action in support of justice principles is still the possession of a minority of our society. Insofar as there is moral decay today, it represents the weakening of conventional morality in the face of social and value conflict. This can lead the less fortunate adolescent to fixation at the preconventional level, the more fortunate to movement to principles. Watergate, then, I

³ No public or private word or deed of Nixon ever rose above Stage 4, the law-and-order stage. His last comments in the White House were of wonderment that the Republican Congress could turn on him after so many Stage 2 exchanges of favors in getting them elected.

see as part of the slow movement of society from the conventional to the morally principled level. I will argue that our society has been in this transition zone for the 200 years since its founding. In the lives of youths I have studied, the transition from conventional to principled morality usually takes 10 years. In the life of a nation, a bicentennial would not be long. I shall claim our schools for 200 years have been essentially Stage 4 law, order, and authority stage institutions though our Constitutional government aspires to the Stage 5 social contract democracy and the human rights.

In the high school today, one often hears both pre-conventional adolescents and those moving beyond convention sounding the same note of disaffection for the traditional school. This is partly because our schools have traditionally been Stage 4 institutions of convention and authority. Today more than ever democratic schools systematically engaged in civic and moral education are required. Our approach to moral education starts with the cognitive-developmental theory as to how moral progress is made. The theory suggests that the conditions for moral development in homes and schools are similar, and very different from the psychoanalytic and Skinnerian or learning theory views of the conditions for moral development. According to the cognitive-developmental theory, morality is a natural product of a universal human tendency toward empathy or role-taking, toward putting oneself in the shoes of other conscious beings. It is also a product of a universal human concern for justice, for reciprocity or equality in the relation of one person to another.

As an example, when my son was four he became a morally principled vegetarian and refused to eat meat, resisting all parental efforts of persuasion to increase his protein intake. His reason was, "It's bad to kill animals." His moral commitment to vegetarianism was not taught or acquired from parental authority, it was the result of the universal tendency of the child to project his consciousness and values into other living things, other selves. My son's vegetarianism also

involved a sense of justice, revealed when I read him a book about Eskimos in which a seal hunting expedition was described. His response was to say, "Daddy, there is one kind of meat I would eat, Eskimo meat. It's all right to eat Eskimos because they eat animals." This natural sense of justice or reciprocity was Stage 1, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. His sense of the value of life was also Stage 1 and involved no differentiation between human personality and physical life. His morality, though Stage 1, was, however, natural and internal.

Moral development past Stage 1, then, is not an internalization, but the reconstruction of tendencies to role-take and conceptions of justice toward greater adequacy. These reconstructions occur in order to achieve a better match between the child's own moral structures and the structures of the social and moral situations he or she confronts. We divide these conditions into two kinds, those dealing with moral discussion and communication and those dealing with the total moral environment or atmosphere in which the child lives.

In terms of moral discussion, the important conditions appear to be:

1. Exposure to the next stage of reasoning up
2. Exposure to situations posing problems and contradictions for the child's current moral structure, leading to dissatisfaction with his or her current level
3. An atmosphere of interchange and dialogue in which the first two conditions obtain, in which conflicting moral views are compared in an open manner.

Drawing on this notion of the conditions stimulating advance, Blatt (Blatt and Kohlberg, 1974) conducted classroom discussions and conflict-laden hypothetical moral dilemmas with four classes of junior high and high school students for a semester. In each of these classes, students were to be found at three stages. Since the children were not all responding at the same stage, the arguments they used with each other were at different levels. In the course of these discussions among the students, the teacher first supported and clarified those

arguments that were one stage above the lowest stage among the children (for example, the teacher supported Stage 3 rather than Stage 2). When it seemed that these arguments were understood by the students, the teacher then challenged that stage, using new situations, and clarified the arguments one stage above the previous one (Stage 4 rather than Stage 3). At the end of the semester, all the students were retested; they showed significant upward change as compared to the controls, and maintained the change one year later. In the various experimental classrooms from one-fourth to one-half of the students moved up a stage, while there was essentially no change during the course of the experiment in the control group.

Given the Blatt studies showing that moral discussion could raise moral stage, we undertook the next step, to see if teachers could conduct moral discussions in the course of teaching high school social studies with the same results. This step we took in cooperation with Edwin Fenton, who introduced moral dilemmas in his ninth and eleventh grade social studies texts. Twenty-four teachers in the Boston and Pittsburgh areas were given some instruction in conducting moral discussions around the dilemmas and the text. About half of the teachers stimulated significant developmental change in their classrooms, their discussions leading to upward stage movement on one-quarter to one-half a stage. In control classes using the text but no moral dilemma discussions, the same teachers failed to stimulate any moral change in the students. Moral discussion, then, can be a useable and effective part of the curriculum at any grade level. Working with filmstrip dilemmas produced in cooperation with Guidance Associates, second grade teachers conducted moral discussions yielding a similar amount of moral stage movement. We also have achieved similar results at the Harvard undergraduate level.

Moral discussion and curriculum, however, is only one portion of the conditions stimulating moral growth. When we turn to analyzing the broader life environment, we turn to a consideration of the *moral atmosphere* of the home, the school, and the

broader society, what we earlier called the hidden curriculum. Central to this atmosphere is, first, the role-taking opportunities it provides, the extent to which it encourages the child to take the point of view of others. The second related condition is the level of justice of the environment or institution. The justice structure of an institution refers to the perceived rules or principles for distributing rewards, punishments, responsibilities, and privileges among the members of an institution. As an example, a study of a traditional prison revealed that inmates perceived it as Stage 1 regardless of their own level (Kohlberg, Scharf, and Hickey, 1972). Obedience to arbitrary command by power figures and punishment for disobedience were seen as the governing justice norms of the prison. A behavior-modification prison using point rewards for conformity was perceived as a Stage 2 system of instrumental exchange. Inmates at Stage 3 or 4 perceived this institution as more fair than the traditional prison, but not as really fair in their Stage 3 terms. These and other studies suggest that a higher level of justice in an environment stimulates development to a higher stage of a sense of justice.

A "Just Community" High School

One year ago Ted Fenton, Ralph Mosher, and myself received a three-year grant from the Danforth Foundation to make moral education a living matter in two high schools in the Boston area (Cambridge and Brookline) and two in Pittsburgh. The plan had two components. The first was the intellectual or official curriculum. It involved training social studies, English, and counseling staff in conducting classroom moral discussions and making moral discussion an integrated part of the curriculum. The second was addressed to the unstudied curriculum. Its focus was establishing a just community school within a public high school.

The theory of the just community high school postulated a participatory democracy stressing solving school issues in a community meeting through moral discussion process. It assumes that treating real-life

moral situations and actions as issues of fairness and as matters for democratic decision would stimulate advance in both moral reasoning and moral action. A participatory democracy provides more extensive opportunities for role-taking and a higher level of perceived institutional justice than does any other social arrangement. Most alternative schools strive to establish a democratic governance, but none we have observed has achieved a vital or viable participatory democracy.

Our theory suggested reasons why we might succeed where others failed. First, we felt participatory democracy had failed because it was not a central commitment of a school, rather, it was a humanitarian frill. Democracy as moral education provides that commitment. Second, democracy in alternative schools often failed because it bored the students. Students preferred to let teachers make decisions about staff, courses, schedules, than to attend lengthy complicated meetings. Our theory said that the issues a democracy should focus on were issues of morality and fairness. Real issues concerning drugs, stealing, causing disturbances, grading, are never boring if handled as issues of fairness. Such moral issues are often evaded in alternative schools because of the pervasive "do your thing" ideology. Third, our theory suggested that if democratic decision-making meetings were preceded by small-group moral discussion, higher stage thinking by students would win out in town meeting decisions, avoiding the disasters of mob rule.

Our Cambridge just community school started with a small summer planning ses-

sion of volunteer teachers, students, and parents. At the time the school opened in the fall, a commitment to democracy and a skeleton program of English and social studies for the half day given over to the new school had been decided on. The school started with six teachers from the regular school and 60 students. One-third were from academic/professional homes, one-third from working-class homes, one-third were drop-outs and troublemakers in terms of previous record. The usual mistakes and usual chaos of a beginning alternative school ensued. Within a few weeks, however, a successful democratic community process had been established. Rules were made around pressing issues, disturbances, drugs, hooking. A rotating student discipline committee or jury was set up. Our democratic system of rules and enforcement has been relatively effective and reasonable but we do not see fairness or reasonableness as an end in itself. Rather, the democratic process is a vehicle for moral discussion and the cause of an emerging sense of community.

Our successes in these ends can be documented as yet only by anecdotes. An example is Greg, who started in the fall as the greatest paragon of humor, aggression, light-fingeredness, and inability to sit still known to this writer. From being the principal disturber of all community meetings, Greg has become an excellent community meeting participant and chairman. While ahead in his willingness to enforce rules on others rather than to observe them himself, Greg's commitment to the school has led to a steady decrease in his exotic behavior.

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