Tradition and Innovation in the Humanities and Their Relation to the Current Curriculum

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CHAPTER ONE

Problems in the Contemporary Curriculum

Contemporary elementary education is often fragmented into skills and content area facts which are not offered as a meaningful gestalt. This lack of a big picture makes it difficult for students to see the relevance of what they are learning, and leads to a feeling of alienation from the educational experience. In this study I will argue that the teaching of skills need not fragment the curriculum and that in fact they can best be taught by using subject matter within the context of an integrated humanities approach. Skills developed in this way, through a network of meaningful relationships, would in addition quite naturally develop a spirit of true dialectical inquiry. Enrichment, the lack of which is also being recognized in our schools, would also be enhanced.

These seemingly separate problems all add a tremendous burden to the contemporary curriculum. In response many educators and textbook companies have isolated the acquisition of skills and facts in order to cover them all and this has resulted in the further breakdown of a unified picture./1/ This added pressure has enabled standardized testing to take on an importance which flies in the face of recent educational research on how learning takes place./2/ The one-sidedness of such

"objective" views will be addressed in the following chapter, while the historical development of these problems and their relationship to humanities will be discussed in chapter three.

Much educational content has been diluted in order to be as inoffensive as possible to special interest groups. The development of true critical thinking and the quality of personal enrichment have been excluded by this type of "watering down" and should be reintroduced (perhaps in new and different contexts) through special programs. Just as white flour has been stripped of its nutrients and flavor in the milling process and later enriched with synthetic vitamins and minerals before being made into bread, so too the educational process which has been "dumbed down" now needs to be "smartened up."

One expedient solution employed by many school districts is to buy "packages" which "guarantee" mastery of skills, great gains in critical thinking, and enrichment for the small percent of gifted and talented students who surely must exist in every district. Many of these packages also claim to be contentless and value free; this is actually touted as a virtue!/3/ These packages differ from an integrated humanities program in so far as they are extra activities meant to supplement the standard curriculum rather than serving as an integral part of it. As such they take essential time away from the basics and

are opposed for this reason by many teachers. This brings us back full circle.

Although much has been written about basic skills, critical thinking, and enrichment programs, little has been done to integrate the elementary curriculum. I propose that the content of a liberal arts curriculum could be presented within a humanities context. This praxis would ensure that the wisdom of tradition can be introduced to meet the interests and needs of contemporary students in the elementary school. Such a program would provide true thinking skills and enrichment of content for all students, while teaching the three "R,s" in a meaningful way. Chapter two will discuss these modern educational dilemmas in greater detail and will show how our current methods of testing keep us locked into a one-sided model of learning. Some implications of the research on split-brain studies which shed light on learning styles will also be discussed. Chapter three will serve to remind us that a humanities based approach is by no means a novel idea. From classical antiquity through the Renaissance and Enlightenment and until modern times it has held varying degrees of importance in educational theory.

Chapter four presents an integrated humanities curriculum with examples from a fifth grade public school classroom. Fifth grade is an especially appropriate place to initiate such an approach because in most public schools it is the last year of self-contained classes. At this

grade level the educational experience has not been structurally fragmented into disparate subjects, each taught by a different "expert." Beginning in the sixth grade, however, and continuing for the rest of a student's educational life classes are departmentalized. Fifth graders (ten and eleven years old) are also developmentally ready for a humanities program because they are on the cusp of formal reasoning: they are beginning to let go of their egocentric childhood and are increasingly capable of experiencing different points of view. What an opportunity for a teacher to help knit together a meaningful picture based on the learnings of earlier elementary years! It is important to note that if this does not happen by fifth grade many of our students may never get it.

This is not to suggest that we do away with the standard curriculum but rather that we approach it from a broad based humanities perspective which would breathe more life into it. Students would be encouraged to experience different "climates of opinion" and be exposed to representative thinkers in their unique "time, place, and circumstances" with an eye towards perceiving how a problem posed in a previous period of history is still relevant for us today. Chapter four will show how fifth graders could attain such a humanities perspective by following what E.D. Hirsch has called an "intensive and extensive" curriculum /4/. The proposed units of study and methodology are an

attempt to model one teacher's efforts to enliven the standard curriculum.

In this approach skills are developed directly out of the subject matter, and the growth of critical thinking and enrichment spring from the lesson itself, rather than being grafted onto the student using a pre-packaged "pull-out" program. A reading of the Odyssey, for example, would engage the student in developing the necessary skills for a successful hearing/reading of epic poetry; critical thinking and values would be fostered through a consideration of the choices and decisions made by the characters; personal enrichment would be enhanced through familiarity with the richness of allusion which comes from such a story, as well as from understanding the depths of personal and creative solutions to the myriad problems which each character faces. Odysseus is willing to leave the enchantress, Calypso, who offers him immortality and endless pleasure to return to his own wife, Penelope. He chooses his own humanity and an honest relationship over the great enticements of immortality and sensuality. This is neither a value free story nor is it one without content, yet there is much here for the youngster asking these same questions about his/her own life. By presenting students with the very finest literature from our collective past we offer them the extensive background which will enable them to claim their own birthright. What greater gift could an education give? Students nourished

with a liberal arts based humanities program would eventually embrace their studies and their lives in ways which demonstrate understanding and commitment, ways which utilize actual thought processes and cumulative enrichment.

Chapter four will also discuss the very important issue of evaluation of a humanities program. Fill-in-the-blanks and multiple-choice quizzes leave much to be desired in any educational context. The very methods used to personalize instruction, such as debates, discussions, essays, and reports, could themselves be used as evaluative instruments. The value of writing as a way of learning will be touched upon as well as the ability to listen well which is another very important ingredient if students are to fully assimilate their oral cultural tradition.

Chapter five will bring the ongoing debate over the value of the humanities up to present times and will discuss the traditional and innovative aspects of such an approach. The success of this kind of program ultimately rests with the teacher; suggestions for training teachers to present an enriched and holistic curriculum will thus be included.

CHAPTER TWO

Critical Thinking Without Values and Enrichment Minus Content

In this chapter we will consider three contemporary dilemmas facing elementary education as outlined in Chapter one. All three dilemmas represent false dichotomies; it will be shown how the apparent "either-or" in each instance may be overcome by an integrative approach.

Skills Devoid of Meaning

Most people would agree that one of the major components of a good education is the acquisition of skills. Yet, after this simple and self-evident truth has been uttered, important questions remain to be explored: Which skills? How do we measure them? Each year administrators endeavor to review aspects of the current curriculum and to ascertain whether the skill objectives in any given academic area are being achieved. The job of reviewing objectives usually comes from checklists which determine the skills to be introduced, reinforced, or mastered at each grade level. We will discuss how these criteria are measured later in the chapter.

At this point in the process everyone is still aware that these skills do not exist independently of the subject area from whence they come. Yet, because they have been

placed out of context, they soon become abstractions on a checklist and are expected to be covered in the classroom in such a way that the results may be "objectively" measured (i.e., tested). The tendency to regard each of them one at a time and in isolation from any real content alters the validity of the measurement. Teachers are not necessarily to be blamed for this occurrence; yet, there is much that they could do to better it.

Results of the measurement of skills acquisition are in fact considered by many parents, administrators, and board members to be one of the most, if not the most important aspect of the educational process. Most public school systems use so-called standardized, objective tests such as the California Achievement test, the Iowa Test of Basic skills, or the Stanford Test. These tests purport to measure skills through an assortment of multiple choice questions which, in fact, measure only a fraction of a student's knowledge. This emphasis on cognitive, measurable skills is one-sided and reductive, and the philosophy which supports such testing has fallen behind the latest scientific research in understanding how we learn. R.W. Sperry, a leader in the field of multiple ways of knowing, has written as follows:

> There appear to be two modes of thinking, verbal and non-verbal represented rather separately in left and right hemispheres, respectively, and that our educational system, as well as science in general, in general, tends to neglect the non-verbal forms of intellect. What it comes down to is that modern society

> discriminates against the right hemisphere"/5/

J. E. Bogen, a neurosurgeon, has suggested, further, that:

> An answer might be that we give equal time to each hemisphere. This is not simply a matter of enrichment, but of saving from neglect a potential as important for high-level problem solving as language skills." /6/

It should be noted that far from being an avoidance of the concerns expressed by recent reports, the acknowledgement and testing of <u>both</u> left and right hemispheres as a key to developing the whole person would renew our insight and creativity not only in the areas of arts and humanities, but also in such fields as science and technology.

Prior to Werner Heisenberg and the uncertainty principle it was believed that reductionism could force nature to reveal all her secrets. (If your method of perception is powerful enough there is nothing you cannot know.) Our current educational philosophy still believes that if a subject can be subdivided far enough and our diagnostic tests refined enough, there is nothing we cannot teach. Standardized tests claim to measure how we are doing, yet the more subtle and less easily measured right brain abilities are ignored. J.E. Bogen, mentioned above, has put the matter succinctly:

> To the extent that our society has overemphasized analytic left-hemisphere skills at the expense of the intuitive right-hemisphere, much more is involved than the adjustment of difficulties of isolated individuals. It appears that whole generations of students are being educated lopsidedly."/7/

As the state and local school boards lengthen the list of skills for which teachers are ultimately responsible, teaching to the test becomes necessary to demonstrate teacher and student competence. The irony here is that in the very schools which score highest a great percentage of valuable educational time may have been devoted to preparation for that one test, while teachers who have given their students time for discussion, extra reading, artistic activities (which reinforce learning), lectures on general background, and writing across the curriculum run the very real risk of not having their students score as well as those who have been "primed" for the exam. Let us now turn to critical thinking skills and their role in the further fragmentation of the educational process.

Critical Thinking Without Values

Not so long ago there were no critical thinking packages being sold; one wonders how people ever learned to think without them! Just as learning skills became reduced to a list which was eventually separated from content, so too has thinking become removed from any content or values. Thinking skills are packaged for school systems independently from the content areas; yet, many proponents of such skills argue that the ideas found in these packages are meant to find their way (bridge) into the content areas. This study, however, is about the way things actually work in today's classrooms. Critical thinking has in fact become a subject in its own right and is even

referred to as the fourth "R." In hundreds of articles written during the past five years about critical thinking and its implementation in school districts, one can discern a trend toward isolating thinking from content and making the exercises value neutral. Still, there is little agreement among the experts as to what it is, how to teach it, or what would measure its outcome. As we will see in Chapter three this institutionalization of thinking which separates it from values can be traced as far back as the sophists in ancient Greece.

As recently as 1933 John Dewey, a well known philosopher and educator, defined reflective thinking as "the careful and persistent examination of an action, proposal or belief, and the analysis or use of knowledge in light of grounds which justify it and its possible consequences."/8/ This pragmatic definition not only takes values into consideration but actually includes making a value judgement as part of the definition. Contrary to what Dewey proposed, thinking skills are fast becoming devoid of content or meaning. The Chicago Mastery Learning Reading Program which teaches thinking and reading together offers us a fourth grade comprehension lesson called "whiskey and sweets" which depicts"...a drunken father tricking his son into buying him whiskey and sweets by feigning a heart attack." A third grade story about Cinderella has the heroine "...fitting the slipper on the foot of an ugly forty year old lady who weighed three

hundred pounds and lived unhappily ever after."/8/ Members of the Chicago Mastery Learning staff felt that they were being unfairly criticized when these points were mentioned.

Many critical thinking lists include similar ingredients: summarizing, classifying, inferring, and evaluating. This looks surprisingly like a reading skills list. Just as a child can master each sub-skill supposedly required for reading and not know (or care to Know) how to read, so too can children complete endless thinking skills sheets and never consider applying these "skills" to other situations. Proponents of thinking packages answer that particularized skills must be made conscious (raised to metacognitive levels). It is no longer enough to be able to figure something out; now you must also be able to <u>explain</u> your strategies as well. As a scientist Leonardo invented a prototype for an airplane, and as an artist he painted the "Last Supper." Would he have been able to satisfactorily explain his strategies and bridge these areas metacognitively? One begins to wonder what the point is. Thinking skills which are taught outside the content area must then be applied in the content area! This sounds like a tall order for students who have no idea in what century the American Civil War occurred or on what continent for that matter, but, as we shall see in Chapter three the challenge to integrate thinking and ethics has been with us for a very long time.

Two other much used thinking skill packages are Feuerstien's Instrumental Enrichment and Lipman's Philosophy for Children. The Instrumental Enrichment Program was specifically created for children showing retarded performance in Israel. Only later did Feuerstien discover that his package was appropriate for all American children in grades 5-8. It is as content free as possible and in this way differs from a humanities program which would teach thinking through a structured, coherent knowledge base, and which would also include the moral and ethical questions that are most relevant to each situation as an integral part of the thought process. One of the claims of the Instrumental Enrichment Program is that it raises children's scores on ability tests (Does this justification sound familiar)? Talking about the Instrumental Enrichment Program Robert Sternberg, an educational researcher, has said:

> Indeed most of the training exercises contain items similar or identical to those found on intelligence and muliple aptitude tests, so that it should not be totally surprising that intensive practice and training on such items should raise test scores. /10/

The Instrumental Enrichment Program also requires a commitment of time for extensive teacher training on an ongoing basis...time which could be better spent in an enriching humanities program that would inspire and renew teachers' creative energies.

Another popular program, Philosophy for Children, also intended for grades 5-8, zeros in on thirty thinking

skills. Here is an example from the section devoted to teaching the skill of generalization, "I get sick when I eat raspberries; I get sick when I eat strawberries; I get sick when I eat blackberries." /11/ Such an exercise fails to teach either a generalization skill or give an enhanced appreciation of life. Although Instrumental Enrichment and Philosophy for Children both purport to teach thinking skills, Instrumental Enrichment offers to do it without using traditional content matter (what has been taught in schools for the past two thousand years); Philosophy for Children offers to do it by replacing the Judeo-Christian tradition with texts written for the occasion by Mr. Lipman himself (Book I, Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery, Book II, Mark, Book III Pixie, and so on.) One wonders what Harry could possibly discover in Book I that would justify spending two class periods a week in such a way! Chapter four elaborates on this argument by showing how skills can be better taught by using the content of history, science, literature, language arts, and mathematics. At this time let us turn to a final example of reductionism in the curriculum, that of so-called Enrichment.

Enrichment Minus the Content

In most public schools, if there is a separate enrichment program, potential participants for such a program must be screened in advance. A general rule of thumb is that applicants should score two or three years above grade level on the standardized tests and may also need to take a special creativity test of some sort to qualify (like the Wexler Intelligence Scale for children). There is usually a maximum number of children per grade level who can qualify (approximately 3%), and this fortunate group is pulled out of their regular lessons once a week in order to work on a project which is largely unrelated to their other school work. There have been cases when a child who was labeled gifted in one school district did not qualify in another.

In a humanities based program all students would have the opportunity to relate to the subject matter in creative and personal ways. There would be no need for a special "pull-out" program for the few, because the "giftedness" of each individual could be nourished. This enrichment would be directly related to the subject matter and students could pursue whatever aspects of the liberal arts program that interested them. Assignments would be self-generated, with the teacher acting as a resource person. To better understand the value of such a dialectical approach for solving the above mentioned

dilemmas, let us survey the humanities from Homer through the development of Historismus in the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER THREE

The Humanities: An Educational Continuity in Historical Perspective

The idea that a broad based liberal arts background is the best possible preparation for becoming a full human being goes back to the very beginnings of Western culture. Though the spark of a humanities education can be seen to burn more brightly during certain periods of history, there have been many outstanding proponents for the humanities who have attempted to fan that spark into a brighter intellectual enlightenment. It becomes apparent in looking at the history of educational theory from the point of view of humanities that periods of stability and cultural renewal encourage a broad based approach. Times of economic, political, and religious turmoil, on the other hand, tend to severely limit and often institutionalize the dialectical method. This chapter will survey the major periods in the expansion and contraction of the dialectical approach as well as point to the shifting emphases on what has been considered to make a well-rounded person in different times, places, and circumstances. We will discuss how the spirit of free inquiry became the basis for the liberal arts within a curriculum that continues to include thinkers such as Plato, Cicero, Aquinas, Jefferson, Arnold, and Dewey. Whatever the historical period, the

liberally educated person strives to achieve personal excellence; however, as we shall see, social, political, and economic realities do shape the focus of that excellence and how it will appear to contemporaries. In this process, certain aspects continuously reappear and eventually emerge as a tradition.

From the very beginnings of Western civilization we find examples of great men who constantly strove to perform at their peak of perfection. In the Iliad, still very much a part of the canon of a liberal arts curriculum, we meet examples of heroes having moments of great personal valor (Aristeia). The central characters of the Iliad are heroes who are willing to sacrifice their lives for the sake of communal loyalty and, in the case of Achilles, in the hope of gaining immortality. Yet, very early in the story, we can see the results of not having achieved personal wholeness. The theme of the Iliad is the wrath of Achilles, and his anger in the opening scene, for example, sets the stage for much of the ongoing tension in the story. In the background to the Trojan War we find mortals (Paris) and even gods (Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite) behaving in a less than enlightened way.

Paris lusts after Menelaus's wife, Helen, and the three goddesses put him up to it by bribing him for the golden apple. Agamemnon seems to have a weakness for power and takes Achilles prize away to establish his own authority.

Homer, however, proceeds to counterbalance the tragedy of being one sided and narrow with some very touching scenes of a fuller humanity. Hector is the loving family man who protects his home from invaders. When he takes leave of Andromache and his young son, Astanyx, he is not recognized because of his armor. Hector laughs and removes his helmet to hug the boy. His father, old King Priam, is also described in a most touching way as he appeals to Achilles for Hector's body in order to give it a proper burial. As early as the eighth century B.C., Homer was asking his listeners to ponder these questions: What is the good of war? What is virtue? What role does man have in shaping his own destiny? Although the ideal person in the Iliad seems to be the hero who sacrifices his life for his community, Homer may be asking us if we really believe this. We may also ask what kind of community deserves the supreme sacrifice of one's own life?

In the Odyssey we find a more fully developed human personality. Odysseus survives by using his reason and he successfully overcomes great trials to win back his homeland and family. Julian Jaynes, a contemporary psychologist, has argues that the Odyssey reflects a further development of consciousness than we find in the Iliad. Here for the first time, according to Jaynes, is man thinking for himself. Odysseus is polythropos, the man of many ways, and it is his very lack of specialization which gets him through.

Later in Greek history the Spartans would retain the ideal of the specialized warrior in the service of the hierarchical and corporate, military state. Sparta rejected the humanistic philosophy of her neighbor, Athens, as an indulgence which would lead to Athens' eventual downfall. We can listen to what the Athenians thought in Thucydides' History of thePeloponnesian Wars when Pericles delivered his famous funeral oration at the beginning of the conflict in 430 B.C. Pericles reminded his fellow Athenians that the seemingly shortest route is not necessarily the best and that time spent in becoming well-rounded would in the long run give the Athenians a leading edge:

> Our military training is superior in many respects to that of our adversaries (the Spartans). Our city is thrown open to the world, and we never expel a foreigner or prevent him from seeing or learning anything of which the secret if revealed to an enemy might profit him. We rely not upon management or trickery, but upon our own hearts and hands. And in the matter of education, whereas they from early youth are always undergoing laborious exercises which are to make them brave, we live at ease, and yet are equally ready to face the perils which they face. /12/

Even though the Athenians did in fact lose the Peloponnesian War to the Spartans they continue to be immortal through their art, philosophy, drama, architecture, and literature. The Athenian belief in the value of a well-rounded training as the best preparation for a fully lived humanity would be reiterated down the centuries by such seemingly disparate shapers of

educational theory as Plato, Cicero, Erasmus, and Jefferson, each of whom could form an additional part of the curriculum which would add to the cumulative enrichment.

One of the major problems that the humanities have always faced is the seeming efficaciousness of specialization. As long ago as 400 B.C. it was apparent to the Spartans that the polis which narrows itself to a single area of expertise (in their case military training) would always have a decided advantage over any group which chose to remain diversified. Both in the short run and during times of necessity this argument has had great appeal, but over time the larger questions continue to arise: "What is the purpose of life?" "What humanistic civilizations would commit themselves, their children, and their children's children to perpetual military preparedness--and, if they did, would the difference in the quality of life justify the sacrifice?" For the Spartans there appeared to be little alternative; militarism was all they knew.

But specialization was not unknown to the Athenians. The Sophists specialized in rhetoric, which meant for them the winning of arguments. This discrepancy between a broad-based education and one catering to special interests can be found again in the conflict between the sophists and the Greek speculative philosophers: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The Sophists were concerned with the vocational benefits of a rhetorical training. Their chief clients

were the sons of Greek traders and entrepreneurs who grew powerful after the Persian War, and wanted to consolidate and perpetuate their new found power and wealth. In the newly formed democracy of Athens this was best accomplished by being persuasive. Many sophists offered just that, a technique for winning arguments or "making the unjust appear the just cause." There were few ethical considerations to get in the way and what would be good for the state became second to what would profit a special interest group. Here we find the beginnings of professionalism separated from values and ethical considerations. Protagorus (485-411), a sophist, allegedly said that, "Man is the measure of all things," and in this maxim we find the relativity of truth for the Sophist: the winner of the argument is always successful. This narrowing of the intellect to a kind of vocational training and the Sophist's inability to offer any stable values in place of the traditional wisdom was strongly opposed by Socrates.

Socrates (469-399 B.C.), an Athenian Philosopher, upheld the position that there were universal laws which applied to all people and that virtue and knowledge were synonymous. Being fully human, he thought, was more important than mastering the technical abilities of persuasive rhetoric. He tried to draw from each person what was already latent in their mind. For Socrates a close teacher-pupil relationship was essential for the

dialectical process to work, and the end result would be the subordination of the appetites to reason and the development of higher faculties which could apprehend universal truths.

The ideal man for both Socrates and his student, Plato (428-348 B.C.) was the philsopher who was capable of "participating" in higher realities. Plato thought that a person could be guided to remember universal truths which were already within the mind but must be recalled. In the first effort to conceive a humanities curriculum, The Republic, Plato placed this ability to "reminisce" in the minds of those who had achieved the broad perspective that accompanied a critical training through the dialectical method. Yet Plato turned Socratic inquiry into a philosophy which served as a base for studies in his Academy. This institutionalization of the living Socratic spirit in both his writings, Republic, and his school, the Academy, preserved a less vital version of it. True happiness was to be found in enkuklios paideia (encyclopedic knowledge) for those who were rationally suited for it. Others would be trained according to their talents and inclinations. Reason and emotion became distinctly separate.

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), another Athenian, also believed, like his mentors, in the approach of the critical method of inquiry as the best way to widen horizons and develop intellectual excellence. Aristotle was more

empirical than Plato, yet his critical method also became institutionalized in his own school, the Lyceum, where students came to memorize his teachings. As we shall see again and again in our survey of the humanities as a theoretical approach, whenever a great thinker's ideas became codified in a school there was always a hardening and narrowing of the spirit behind the thoughts--this would happen a second time to Aristotle with Medieval scholasticism.

It is also helpful to remember that educational theory often depends upon the prevailing view of human nature, and Aristotle differed from Plato in the means of producing the best possible behavior in a majority of citizens. He thought that the security of owning property and of having a modest income would be more important for "enlightened behavior" than the training of a small and wise elite. /13/ Two thousand years later, in America, Thomas Jefferson would draw on the ideas of both Plato and Aristotle to help establish the American Public School system, a synthesis of past experience which included speech, public speaking, and debate, as well as reading, writing and arithmetic. Obviously, not all oratorical training was as limited and specialized as that of the Sophists. Isocrates (436-338 B.C.), an Athenian orator, for example, thought that the ability to persuade must be grounded in a rational background so that the orator could discern worthwhile arguments to champion; by this he meant

arguments worthwhile for the public good. Isocrates also taught that rhetoric and social responsibility could not be separated--the liberally educated man would have a well-rounded, far reaching vision which could serve to guide the state.

The orator continued to be the model for the educated citizen in Rome, and Cicero (106-43 B.C.) translated the enkuklios paideia of the Greeks as Humanitas. Cicero's book on the training of an orator, De Oratore, combines the practical goal of winning an argument with the Greek ideal of a rational education. The orator who would speak on behalf of the state must have a strong ethical character...there can be no separation between what one says and how one behaves. Cicero had a great influence on that well known trainer of orators, Quintilian (35-90 A.D.), who also agreed that the ideal orator had to achieve a high level of personal integrity through a training that we can now begin to identify with the liberal arts. The final aim of education was to become a good man, a vir bonus. This approach was rediscovered during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, now known as the Renaissance, and today many still hold this to be the most important aim of education. Quintilian's seminal work on education, Institutio Oratori a, furthered educational theory in several ways. Quintilian understood the far reaching benefits of training in the dialecticical method of inquiry as well as the place of motivation in the

teaching process. He also respected differences in individual learners.

It is important to keep in mind that this expanded view of the humanities as found in such dialectical thinkers as Cicero and Quintilian would soon be drastically reduced by the utilitarian needs of the Romans. Knowledge for its own sake and the development of the whole person were not as important to the Romans as what was practical and expedient. Cicero might still be memorized, but good roads and sewers were more immediate and necessary: broad based liberal studies could be left to the more effeminate Greeks! With the growth of the Roman Empire the need for critical and ethical oratory declined and the model of the educated person changed again. Jurisprudence became more legalistic than ethical and practicality replaced inquiry.

While the value of the liberal arts was waning for the Romans it was still being kept alive by the early church fathers as a base for developing Christian virtues. Clement of Alexandria (153-220 A.D.), for example, believed that Greek thought was in fact "a slender spark capable of being fanned into flame, a trace of wisdom and an impulse from God." /14/ Origen (A.D. 185-253), another patristic thinker, also found no contradiction in the reconciliation of Classical and Christian traditions. He agreed that Greek philosophy would make a solid foundation for Christian ethics and we will meet this idea again in the Renaissance as Christian humanism.

At the end of the Partistic period monasteries began to develop, and it was in these isolated centers that the humanities were kept alive and were preserved for the future as Europe entered the Middle Ages. At this juncture Boethius (A.D. 480-524), a Roman philosopher and a Christian foreshadowed the coming scholastic synthesis of Christian doctrine with Aristotelianism. His work On The Consolation of Philosophy would further testify to the importance of the classical tradition as a foundation for intellectual and spiritual achievement. The Christian Boethius would call upon philosophy (and not theology) for consolation in his moment of need. Cassiodorus (A.D.490-585), a contemporary scholar of Boethius, also influenced subsequent thinking on the value of classical learning with his Divine and Human Readings which became a text in many monasteries. Cassiodorus was one of the last of the classically trained Christians before the appearance of Petrarch almost a thousand years later.

It was yet another Church father, Augustine (354-430), who was to give education a new direction. Augustine saw the benefits of a liberal arts curriculum, yet he thought that it should be taught authoritatively as mere information. Augustine believed that man had lost his ability to reason due to the "fall" and that the only requirement for his salvation was belief. It was not necessary for man to learn to think critically--if anything it would be a hindrance to salvation. Augustine's other

worldly focus did much to diminish the spirit of inquiry during the middle ages.

Over the next several hundred years education came increasingly under church control, but the essence of the liberal arts was preserved not only in monastaries but also in the Palace school of Charlemagne (768-814). Charles the Great understood the importance of education for his country's vitality, and he urged all of his subjects, "...so far as they may be able, to cultivate the liberal arts,...and we set them the example."/15/

As so often happens with great thinkers in the dialectical tradition, ideas lose some of their vitality when others begin to administer their perpetuation. Charles' son, Pepin, reports on the training that he received at the hands of Alcuin, "...it consisted of the memorizing of a series of highly artificial questions and answers, prepared by Alcuin himself."/16/ The Palace school did serve the necessary function, however, of preparing scribes and clerks to run the bureaucracy of government. Two generation later, Charles' grandson, Charles the Bald, would revive the critical spirit of the Palace school by giving great intellectual freedom to John Scotus Erigena, that brilliant scholar whose ideas would eventually become institutionalized in the more rigid confines of scholasticism. Nevertheless, the Palace school from Charles the great to Charles the Bald served as a

transition toward the Medieval University and preserved the rudiments of the trivium and quadrivium.

By the eleventh century, the medieval Bachelor's degree consisted of the trivium (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) and the Master's degree was comprised of the quadrivium (music, geometry, astronomy, and arithmetic), a combination of both "scientific" and humanistic studies. Yet, several factors conspired to weaken the hold of the liberal arts.

Augustine's theological position that man's reason alone was insufficient without Christian revelation lessened the role of critical inquiry. Also by the end of the twelfth century secular towns had grown strong, there was increasing interest in practical science, and the efficacy of vocationalism was being recognized. These factors helped to create new job opportunities in fields such as law, medicine, and administration. Both church and state found it advantageous to support the Universities because these institutions needed clerks and scribes for their daily maintenance. Here we see the early beginnings of professionalism as we find it today.

Universities evolved out of the cathedral schools to fulfill these educational needs with faculties which sometimes specialized in just one area: in some locations the entire university was given to a particular training as

in Bologna (law), in Salerno (Medicine), and in Naples (administration). Although the basic curriculum of the liberal arts was still taught in these schools it became a background for the more practical vocational trainings.

Greek texts, particularly those of Aristotle, entered European consciousness in the early twelfth century as a result of the crusades and renewed contact with the Arab world. The Arabs had preserved Greek philosophy and this new material had to be reconciled with faith. The most elaborate attempt, to show that faith (Christian theology) was not at odds with reason (Aristotelianism) was reached by Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), a monk and teacher, in his development of Scholastic Philosophy--a Christian institutionalization of Aristotelianism.

As the craze for disputation increased, interest in classical literature decreased. Here we can see a beginning of a shift in emphasis from grammar (literature) to logic (disputation). The importance of keeping a balance in these subjects, now contained in the trivium, had been recognized earlier by such original thinkers as Quintilian and Cicero who believed that what a person had to say was as important as the way in which it was expressed. The very term "dialectic" soon began to take on a pejorative connotation among critical thinkers as it increasingly came to mean a reconciliation of reason with faith through the use of the syllogism. Within the

confines of a fixed theological canon, the syllogism soon became arid as students merely memorized them.

The Renaissance was in part a reaction against the narrowness of scholasticism, as well as the fixed view of human nature which was held in the Middle Ages. During the Renaissance, universities continued to teach the formal content of liberal arts (trivium and quadrivium), but the real spirit of inquiry and excitement which had existed in ancient Athens, and Republican Rome was gone. The medieval universities had become rigid in their understanding and promotion of the liberal arts, and the humanities began to flourish in small ways outside church and university circles. Especially in Northern Italy, the theocentric world view of the Middle Ages began to give way to the more humanistic understanding of man's potential in the here and now.

As Medieval outlooks were challenged there was also an increase of bankers and entrepreneurs who needed a new kind of training. The Renaissance humanists had added a new perspective but could not entirely restructure the basic curriculum. Some universities added on where they saw fit, but primarily the new intellectual institutions which developed around this need were supported by lay patrons who established the idea that one could be taught to be a vir bonus. Castiglione (1478-1529), an Italian humanist, would, for example, have his courtier develop all of his faculties so as to be of the utmost service to his prince.

As the Renaissance had begun in Italy with Dante's Divine Comedy encouraging man to find his selfhood through absorption in the mind of God, it would end in France with Montaigne and in England with Shakespeare, both looking into their own experience to find the "truth."

Since educational theory is often deeply influenced by the prevailing views of human nature let us look at some of these views during the Italian Renaissance and advance this as far as Shakespeare in Elizabethan England. While all humanists agree that what relates to man is central for his development and that education is important to perfect human nature, the emphasis on which aspects of development are the most important was much debated. The ideally educated person was viewed in many different lights during the Renaissance: as classical humanists (Dante, Petrarch, da Feltre), the courtier (Castiglione), Christian humanists (Vives, Erasmus), the civic humanist (Bruni), the Neoplatonic humanists (Pico, Ficino), the historical humanist (Valla), and the skeptical humanists (Montaigne, Shakespeare). Each of these views was based on a different understanding of human values.

The tension between the God centered and the man centered approaches to life can be seen reflected in the life and writings of Petrarch (1304-1374), who has been called `the father of classical humanism.' Petrarch was the first humanist to look at antiquity as a distinct and separate civilization. This historical perspective would

grow until in the nineteenth century history would become a "science" in its own right. In My Secret Petrarch has an imaginary dialogue with his spiritual mentor, St. Augustine, in which he tries to justify his own life and especially his guilty feelings about wanting to achieve fame. He is questioning the optimistic and humanistic values of his times in comparison to the more pessimistic and limited Augustinian view of human nature. Petrarch found that "traditional learning" couldn't answer his spiritual/worldly dilemma, but that Cicero and other "ancients" had much to offer him because they focused on man's earthly existence.

The civic humanists were interested in using education to further enhance active participation in community life and Bruni (d. 1444), the second chancellor of Florence, would compare Florence to Republican Rome and Periclean Athens. There was a burst of civic pride in Florence which declined with the rise of the Medici family when a more inward contemplative humanism emerged. Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494) began to teach at the Platonic Academy in Florence where he tried to show that Christianity was in harmony with the classical past. He also included Hebraism and Islam in his reconciliation. Pico set no limits for what man can accomplish: "you may have and possess according to your desire and judgement whatever place, form, or functions you shall desire..., you are confined by no limits, and shall determine for yourself

your own nature in accordance with your own free will." /18/ While Pico agreed with Alberti (1404-1472) that " Man can do all things if he will," Alberti tempered his thought: "Man is born in order to be useful to other men." Alberti believed in VIRTU--in what human nature is capable of: "I realize that many persons often blame fortune without just cause...men are themselves the sources of their own fortune and misfortune."/17/ Ability was what mattered for Alberti and for many of the humanists. But the humanist who was to give man the highest place of all was Pico's teacher, Ficino (1433-1499), "Man is a kind of God." /19/

There was also a critical and historical side to humanism as found in the work of Lorenzo Valla (1406-1457). While others had suspected that the donation of Constantine was a forgery, Valla was the first to be able to prove it on a factual or empirical basis. Valla is even more important for turning his philological methods to biblical studies, and this opened a whole new approach to scriptural studies, an approach that was carried forward later by such a renowned humanist as Erasmus.

The thinking of many of the Renaissance humanists was deeply influenced by the time, place, and circumstance in which they found themselves. Juan Vives (1492-1540), a Spanish humanist, for example, was effected by his early training. Vives attended the Academy of Valencia shortly after Ferdinand and Isabella had obtained the right to

appoint bishops in Spain. This in effect gave them power over the church and the educational institutions. The tone of the Academy was conservative and the traditional liberal arts were taught with an emphasis on logic which Vives called empty wrangling. When he went to the University of Paris (1509-1514) the situation was much the same. It was only later in Bruges when he met his teacher, Erasmus, that he realized what a price he had paid for spending time with the logicians who had taken the very life out of critical thought. In the low countries there were many teachers of literature (grammar) who grounded what they taught in the content of the Greek and Latin classics. Here at last were teachers who understood that an emphasis on classics would produce virtuous, practical Christians in the same sense that effective orators produced good citizens for Quintillian.

Vives realized that true intellectual thinking would produce successful people who could contribute to the social harmony, and more importantly, that the study of "natural things" would eventually lead to an understanding of God. For Vives, the ideal curriculum consisted of languages (Latin and Greek), classics (Plato, Aristotle, Quintilian, Cicero), natural history, medicine, moral philosophy, grammar, rhetoric, logic, economics, law, and the quadrivium./20/ These subjects would best prepare a sixteenth century person to be both good citizens and in union with God.

Vives' teacher, Erasmus (1466-1536), a Dutch scholar, encouraged him to balance the content and expression of a humanities training. Like Vives, Erasmus had also received an early training which was steeped in wrangling. For Erasmus it was not enough to analyze a text; one must also understand the circumstances and intentions of the writer as well as how to apply what one learns. This is what he attempted to do in his translation of the New Testament: to present Christ in such a way that middle class readers could have a direct experience of Christ's spirit.

The humanities in Northern Europe existed in a less secular climate. Erasmus soon found himself in the middle of a serious controversy between Henry VIII, and the Pope on one side, and Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformers on the other. He was `adrift among warring factions' and offered his translation of the bible, which was published in 1515, as a reconciliatory contribution.

Erasmus was able to maintain his seemingly incongruous position of being both a Christian and a classical scholar because for him religion was to a large degree a matter of scholarship. He wanted to stay focused on what was really important and relevant in education and in his Praise of Folly he poked fun at those who had become entangled in their own narrow disciplines: the overspecialized scholar, the philosopher whose thinking is no longer a contribution to the community, and the theologian hopelessly caught in abstractions. His

Education of a Christian Prince, presents an aristocrat who genuinely cares about the community he leads; a good shepherd who cares about his flock. For Erasmus, there was no doubt that the best educational preparation was a broad-based liberal arts training which was kept vital through the spirit of intellectual questioning.

In ccntrast, Machiavelli (1469-1527), a contemporary Italian political philosopher, thought that the function of an effective Prince was the acquisition and maintenance of power. For Machiavelli the education of a leader would be similar to the institutionalized training given to those sophists who identified what they were after and then attained the vocational skills to acquire it. Again, like the Sophists, Machiavelli recognized the separation of morality from the political decision making in his day.

Montaigne (1533-1592), a French humanist, lived in France during a time of great religious fanaticism. Decades of civil war had set the stage for doubting whether either group (Catholic or Protestant) had the complete truth, and many people were questioning both sides of the controversy without arriving at any certainty. It was in this skeptical environment that Montaigne lived. Unlike Vives and Erasmus who rallied against logical disputation, Montaigne thought that pedantry was the enemy. He knew many so-called educated people who could recite what the texts said, but were unable to think for themselves. Nor did all of their studies affect the quality of their

actions which was for Montaigne the true test of an education. He was not interested in educating the masses, but in training gentlemen who could live and die well. Montaigne's method was a radical departure from that of the earlier Renaissance humanists who looked back to the lives of ancient Greeks and Romans. He detached himself from each situation and studied every side of an issue. This form of skepticism was aided by writing his thoughts in essay form and he seems to have developed this literary genre precisely to get at what he knew (essayer means to attempt). His thinking was based on his own experience and he believed in man's ability to reason if he was uncorrupted by society (here he foreshadows Rousseau). His skeptical approach, "Que sais je?" allowed him to break with the past long enough to see each issue afresh. The political and social climate in France makes it easy to understand why he would shut himself up in a tower in the countryside to do his thinking and writing.

The situation in Elizabethan England was much more conducive to experimentation with ideas and it was here that the Renaissance continued to flower (Vives had been invited to set up the educational program of Henry VIII's daughter, Mary). The Reformation appeared to have run its course and England was beginning to experience a golden age of literature with a great freedom of expression. In this supportive political, social, and religious climate, Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was able to initiate the

scientific spirit of inquiry which was to have a most profound effect on the humanities down to the present day.

Like Montaigne, Bacon distrusted learning that was based on authority. He favored experimentation: "Put nature on the rack and compel her to bear witness." Bacon saw the necessity for abandoning medieval speculation and he formalized his experiential method (empiricism) which turned science into a systematic study. He attempted to apply scientific thinking to daily life because he believed that the object of knowledge was to give man power over nature. Bacon did, however, realize the importance of the humanities and he himself had a good liberal arts education. He understood that the humanities could prepare people to lead good and virtuous lives yet, because his ultimate criterion was usefulness, he turned the humanities into a prerequisite for the study of science much as the church had used the liberal arts as a base for theological studies.

Concerning elementary education, Bacon recommended studying what the Jesuits had done (Ratio Studiorum, 1599). That Bacon thought highly of the Jesuit approach can be seen in his apocryphal remark, "They are so good I wish they were on our side." (The Jesuits attempted to present the Christian tradition along with selected classics and their schools kept classical learning alive in the seventeenth century.) Bacon applied the new learning to the way he looked at nature; he thought that the <u>modus</u>

operandi of nature should be Vex Natura -- nature should be manipulated to get her secrets and that technology should be used to do it. (Utilitarian technology was already beginning to replace contemplative philosophy). The invention of the telescope and the microscope gave science the tools it needed to study in greater depth both the heavenly orbits (Galileo) and the circulation of the blood (Harvey). Bacon's prediction that the marriage of science and technology would create undreamed of wealth and power had come to pass for good or ill. The empirical scientific rationale was more optimistic than the Augustinian tradition promoted during the Reformation, yet both the reformers and the empiricists had one thing in common: the understanding that human nature could not improve.

The greatest commentator on human nature and, for many, the pinnacle of humanist writers was William Shakespeare. Shakespeare (1546-1616), an English dramatist and poet, lived through the Elizabethan and into the Jacobean era. The cultural climate in England continued to foster intellectual openness and Shakespeare took advantage of this to fully express himself. He was influenced by the essays of Montaigne, and accomplished in his plays what Montaigne did in his essays: he looked long and deeply into human nature and based on his own insights united the loftiest forms of language with the deepest content of thought. Here is the perfect harmony

sought after by the earlier humanists--the use of substantial ideas as a base for exquisite expression.

The idea that human nature was not fixed and that a standard curriculum was not necessary to educate the "whole person" was perhaps the most innovative idea of the Renaissance. Society would benefit in many ways from the "new learning" and people were once again encouraged to participate in an active civic life. Family life was praised, as was community service, and the rising middle class came to believe in VIRTU: the purpose of education was clearly to produce the good man. But, it is important to remember that the humanities were not the only impulse shaping the Renaissance, there were also the two religious reformations, the religious wars, and the continuing influence of scholasticism. The humanities would be limited by these religious and scientific revolutions, and institutionalism would once again restrict the emerging idea of human freedom and the ability to shape one's self with dignity.

Unlike Bacon who thought that education should encompass all knowledge, John Locke (1632-1704), an English philosopher, realized the futility of such an undertaking and insisted instead that a good education: should try "...not to make the young perfect in any one of the sciences, but to open and dispose their minds for learning any one of them, should occasion demand it."/21/

Locke formulated an empirical methodology which rejected innate ideas. He also rejected Augustine's position that man's reasoning ability was flawed. Instead of being able to remember universal truths the mind was a tabula rasa which could only receive sense impressions; moral values would ultimately derive from these sense impressions. This emphasis on material sensation as the basis for all knowledge moved educational methodology in the direction of empirical verification and increased the importance of the stimuli which surrounded a student. In his Essay on Human Understanding Locke developed an epistemology which reinforced a break with the past and its innate ideas. Locke's followers, however, would use his environmentalist insights in more rigid ways. For Condillac, the mind became more passive, while in the thought of Helvetius circumstances made the man "whole cloth." We can see here the beginnings of twentieth century behaviorism and of the craze for measurement.

The eighteenth century enlightenment evolved out of the humanism of the Renaissance and the empiricism of the scientific revolution. By the eighteenth century, at least in France, both church and state were viewed by les philosophes as obstacles to the spirit of critical inquiry. They represented self serving authority structures which could not permit real intellectual challenge. The ideally educated person for this age was the philosophe...a secular, cosmopolitan, critical,

humanist, who saw God as a watchmaker who set the universe in motion and then retired. Newton expressed the idea that Man could only know God by learning about the laws of nature which could be understood mathematically; Newton's scientific rationalism and Locke's psychological empiricism became the basis for the new methodology. The philosphes were optimistic about man's ability to progress through reason, intelligence, and empiricism. Voltaire helped to popularize these ideas in his philosophical letters and made them available to a larger audience especially in France. Once understood, the laws governing nature would make the world an open book.

Rousseau (1712-1778), a French philosopher, while agreeing with Helvitius that man was perfectable would strongly oppose the idea that he was born with a blank slate. If the society shapes the man, the man also shapes the society. Rousseau legitimized emotion and feeling as valid ways of knowing and thus rounded out the limitations of rationality. He did not want to destroy the institutions which sullied man's pure nature but simply to call attention to their corrupting influences. His most important educational work, Emile, describes the education of a child and honors the various stages of child development giving free reign to the natural instincts. The child should learn through observation and direct participation and should be allowed to experience the consequences of his/her choices. It was not until the

nineteenth century that Pestalozzi (1746-1827) and Froebel (1782-1852) would be able to bring Rousseau's ideas about child development into a pedagogical form.

Rousseau was not alone in recognizing feeling as a valuable method for acquiring knowledge. Herder (1744-1803), for example, posited a way of studying history with an "imaginative sympathy" whereby the uniqueness of each time, place, and circumstance could be recognized. History understood in this light would take, as we shall see, an important place in an evaluation of the humanities. But, before concluding this chapter on the value of the humanities from the ancient Greeks until the entrance of history into the curriculum in the nineteenth century, I would like to discuss the contributions of Thomas Jefferson to educational theory and practice, for it was Jefferson who gave education the most serious thought during what may be called the American Enlightenment.

In America the philosophes would apply Enlightenment ideas to government and education: they would actually put into practice what had remained theory in the old world. Drawing on Locke's insights that man has natural rights and that government is a social contract which can be revoked by the governed, Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), pushed for an educated citizenry which would make American democracy viable. In his "Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge," (1799) Jefferson promoted the ideas that literacy is essential for a Republican form of government;

that church and state should be separated; that the state must educate its citizens; and that public education should include everyone. While Jefferson would agree with Aristotle that the well being of the majority must be considered, he also concurred with Plato's recommendation to further educate those who were suited for higher learning and that this expense should be carried by the state.

Jefferson is a pivotal figure connecting the ancient and modern humanists because he knew both groups intimately. His connections to Renaissance ideas can be seen, for example, in his devotion to the architect Palladio upon whose ideas Monticello was based. From 1769 through 1809 Jefferson continued to enlarge his mountaintop home using his practical expertise and although Jefferson was well schooled in the classical tradition, he did not simply copy it. Instead, he integrated different styles in his own unique synthesis, for example, his parlor was Corinthian, his dining room, Doric, his chamber, Ionian, and for the roof of his home he created a dome based on the Roman temple of Vesta. Jefferson also drew on his knowledge of Renaissance humanism in his love of innovation (doors that open themselves, a bed between two rooms). Sir Kenneth Clarke calls him, "Almost a reincarnation of Alberti, even down to a love of music, and the management of horses...." /22/ Monticello was an attempt to use the

best of world culture to create his American dream--a self sufficient farm.

For Jefferson tradition and innovation interacted in a dynamic way and, while ensuring that the best of the past would not be lost, he honored the needs of eighteenth century Americans. His educational ideas are a bridge across time and lead us to new educational developments with the humanities in a central position. The University of Virginia was Jefferson's practical contribution to education. He was opposed to teaching abstract theory in his curriculum because he felt that it led to oversimplification and tended to influence the way phenomena were observed: we see what fits our theory. In science it was easy to keep one's attention on experimentation and observation, but in the humanities only a thorough diversification and cross fertilization of ideas would keep learning fresh. Although Jefferson himself was well versed in classical studies, he did not think that the classics or ancient languages were practical for the average American. Instead, he advocated modern languages. Education in the eighteenth century had its center in France and Jefferson, as ambassador to France, was well acquainted with the European tradition and the spirit of the Enlightenment. Much of the new scientific understanding was being expressed in the French language and he admired the ability to create and understand new words with which to express new ideas. It should come as

no surprise then that French was his first choice for a modern language!

Jefferson favored giving everyone a basic elementary school education, so that citizens would all be equipped with the fundamental skills necessary for maintaining a democracy. After completing elementary education, those who favored working as laborers could receive a vocational training, while others who showed ability could advance to higher education, such as at the University of Virginia where he had proposed competitive scholarships to help those without the means of attending. As we have seen throughout our survey the finest critical thinkers of each period such as Plato, Cicero, Charlemagne, Da Feltre and now Jefferson were able to utilize both the liberal arts and the vocational training which is most suitable to their own unique time, place, and circumstance.

When Jefferson first visited William and Mary College, the curriculum included: "Greek and Latin; mathematics; moral philosophy; and divinity."/23/ Twenty years later, when he devised his own curriculum for the University of Virginia, he shaped it with eighteenth century Americans in mind. It consisted of: "Botany, chemistry, zoology, anatomy, surgery, medicine, natural philosophy, agriculture, mathematics, astronomy, geography, politics, commerce, history, ethics, law, arts, fine arts."/24/ While it is not surprising that agriculture was in Jefferson's opinion the crowning subject in his practical

curriculum, the inclusion of history does seem a bit out of place, unless one sees the need for establishing a new tradition of learning. Without some sense of history little of the past would be preserved for future use.

The Enlightenment with its emphasis on nature had altered the approach to God, man and nature, and for the philosophe it was by reading nature, not history that the answers to the really big questions could be found. Voltaire saw the past as lacking continuity or development, "L`histoire est un tour qu'on joue aux morte." (History is a pack of tricks we play on the dead.) Man was not thought to have any significant past (and even if he did it could not be verified using the new scientific methodology). While Jefferson basically would agree with this position, he recommended history in the curriculum for prophylactic reasons. History would help citizens to protect themselves from the unhealthy ambitions of others, and would teach about the forms of tyranny in past ages. Jefferson especially wanted history taught in the elementary curriculum because here it would reach <u>everyone</u> and was, in his opinion, a most practical subject for citizens who wished to maintain a healthy democracy. Thus history was equated with patriotism, while paradoxically in France under Napoleon we see these same thoughts being used for authoritarian purposes.

Let us now trace the development of history from the distrust of the philosophe to its final acceptance as a

legitimate science in the course of the nineteenth century. The nineteenth century was the real beginning of the breakdown of knowledge into compartments which made it impossible for any one person to try to keep abreast of all the new developments in every field. Ernest Renan commented that the nineteenth century had transformed the traditional outlook, one that presupposed "a faith and simplicity we no longer have...."/25/ In this light, history became a field which attempted to encompass and make sense of the rapid changes occurring in every area. The world seen in historical terms was a world in process: God developed along with man (Hegel). For Hegel, history was moving towards perfectibility and God's will was unfolding through history (Zeitgeist) much as in the eighteenth century God's thoughts could be discerned in the workings of nature.

Society was also different in each time, place, and circumstance (Herder, Ranke, Dilthey). It was Herder who first recognized the Volksgeist--voice of the universal spirit--made manifest in a special way within a group of people. This became for Herder an historical relativism which opposed the generalizing tendency of the philosophes. The elevation of history to an acceptable science had significant beginnings at small German Universities such as Gottingen. It was here that primary source materials were first analyzed in a thorough and critical way. (The eighteenth century penchant for

collecting and organizing historical materials had already set up the museums and archives for such a study.) Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886), a German scholar, helped to further develop this "scientific historical method." But it was Wilhelm Dilthey, the successor of Hegel at the University of Berlin, who developed the understanding that the history of man's ideas would be the best way to truly understand human nature. Dilthey believed that the proper study of man was to be found in his ideas which were living as vital forces expressing both continuity and change. H. Stuart Hughes, an American intellectual historian, has remarked that, "After Dilthey historians no longer needed to apologize for the unscientific character of their discipline: they understood why its methods could never be quite the same as those of natural science."/26/

One of the chief impacts of historicism in the nineteenth century can be found in the work of Charles Darwin. Darwin (1809-1882) was familiar with the historicism which had preceded him. He had read Lyell's Principles of Geology (1830) which discussed geological evolution and this gave him encouragement for his own insights into biological evolution (The Origin of Species, 1861). Darwin's ideas were popularized by Thomas Huxley in much the same way that Voltaire had brought the ideas of Locke and Newton to the literate public. Soon Darwin's biological ideas were being applied to other disciplines, particularly the social sciences.

His scientific methodology was used on man himself and it was at this point that a serious rift occurred between science and the humanities: the reductionist methods of empiricism were applied to human beliefs and conduct.

With the ensuing breakdown of values in the nineteenth century, people continued to turn to history to try and answer life's bigger questions. It was believed that a study of the past could help point to where the future lay by revealing the laws underlying human development. In America, Santayana preached that "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." There was an assumption that we were heading somewhere....the millenium! Thus history became a respectable part of the curriculum and once again man had hopes of being able to grasp the present as well as to predict the direction that the future would take. But as we have seen throughout the history of critical inquiry the flame of free enlightened thinking could be limited by the very institutions created to guard it. History would become one more subject in a liberal arts curriculum, but not before showing us how to keep the past relevant.

In the following chapter we will outline a practical way of uniting traditional liberal arts subjects with a humanities perspective. By historicizing each subject we can keep the focus on both where it came from and how it is related to other subjects. When this method is used in the

widest possible way it is referred to as intellectual history. In the concluding chapter we will bring the great debate on the humanities which grew out of the nineteenth century into a modern focus.

CHAPTER FOUR

An Integrated Fifth Grade Humanities Curriculum

Every public school teacher is responsible for a given curriculum which is dictated in part by the state and more specifically by each local school district. The amount of flexibility and interpretation that any teacher has within that curriculum depends upon the prevailing administration and the political climate of the local community which includes input from the general public, parents, board members, administrators, teachers, and even students. In this chapter I will attempt to show how an integrated humanities approach has helped one teacher to stem the tide of increasing fragmentation at the fifth grade level and to satisfy needs and expectations across a wide spectrum of community concerns. Because accountability is such an important part of any integrated curriculum I will also discuss how each of the following lessons could be evaluated.

When I first began teaching fifth grade several years ago I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of content material. The curriculum <u>was</u> for all practical purposes the text book, and to give some idea of what that means here are a few numbers for which I found myself responsible:

Social Studies --450 pages
Science----------350 pages
Mathematics------300 pages
Reading----------300 pages
Grammar----------100 pages
Punctuation------100 pages

Spelling---------200 pages

These 1800 pages divided by 180 days of instructional time (really more like 150 actual days) yield a tidy minimum of over 10 pages per day (imagine the effect on a student who is absent for a few days). Needless to say very little of this material relates to anything else. The Social Studies lesson may be on Marco Polo and the explorers, while the Reading section is about Harriet Tubman and the underground railroad. Science might well cover the life of deciduous trees while the Spelling, Math, and Writing lessons would also be separate entities in most classrooms. At the upper grade levels where the students switch classes and various upper grade specialists teach only their area of expertise a certain degree of fragmentation is understandable, but what about the self contained classroom. In most public schools--grades K-5--the main subject areas are taught by one person. I wondered why so many of the commissions and reports were focused on integrating the humanities at the secondary level with virtually no mention made of the elementary school. In a telephone interview with Mr. Robert Marquand, education staff writer for The Christian Science Monitor I got my answer, "People just assume it's being done." Well it isn't! And the fragmentation that we see occurring at the high school level is in my opinion a direct result of the lack of a well thought out, integrated humanities program in the self-contained classroom.

Is it really any wonder that high school students cannot identify the American Civil War within half a century or locate the continent on which the American Revolutionary War happened! How could they really? Events are not tied together in their minds in meaningful patterns. What good is a teacher's own education if not to take hold of a year's worth of curriculum and begin to shape it into a meaningful whole. Was this not, after all, why we became teachers in the first place? Yet to do this means shaping the curriculum not as set up by the textbook companies but according to one's own training. The texts would become reference materials which is what the textbook companies claim they are!

Yet, if a teacher tampers with the way the "experts" suggest treating the material he/she becomes suspect! I summarized the major headings and listed them as follows:

Early Indian Inhabitants
Explorers
Colonists
Revolutionary War
Westward Expansion
Civil War and beginnings of Industrialization /27/

These would later become essay topics in the writing program, and as we shall see would become one of the chief methods of evaluating the program.

Next I looked through all the readers (Basal, literature-based, and "real") which were available at the fifth grade level and listed the stories which applied to each of these historical periods. The difficult vocabulary and spelling words from all of these sources became part of

my weekly spelling/vocabulary work. Science was then approached with the same end in mind. It should be mentioned here that Science and Math are the most difficult topics to integrate into a humanities program for one main reason --the textbook companies when creating a table of contents for any grade level are only interested in their own "scope and sequence K-8." This means that the topics which teachers inherit with any given series are usually unrelated to anything else in their program. If the teachers themselves could plan the units in science and math which would be appropriate to teaching responsibilities at other grade levels this would not happen. But very few school districts are that innovative, and teachers must use every ounce of imagination to interconnect the various given topics. Here is a sample table of contents from a fifth grade science book used in my school district, Holt Science:/28/

Introduction to the Scientific Method
Oceans
Astronomy
Human Body Systems
Magnetism and Electricity
Plant Studies

Once again applicable reading selections, vocabulary, and spelling words were noted. Next I listed my areas of responsibility in reading which included the following genres:

Historical Fiction
Imaginative Fiction
Epics
Poetry
Content area reading

Plays

In addition these are related to a group of reading skills:

Main Idea
Comprehension
Inferencing
Sequencing
Literal recall
Vocabulary development
Contextual meaning

I laid out all these components (Social Studies, Science, Reading) and arranged them into the most workable, meaningful gestalt which would integrate them as fully as possible. But before I give an overview of how I organized the material I would like to mention the very important topic of evaluation.

In The Aims of Education Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), a British-American philosopher, says that education is only possible where "every question directly asked of a pupil at any examination is either framed or modified by the actual teacher of that pupil in that subject..." and that "...the uniform external examination is deadly." /29/ I like to base my evaluation directly on the curriculum content and allow the subject matter itself to determine the way in which it can best be evaluated.

Of course a teacher who decides to be responsible for the course content instead of just following the textbook has already made a very important evaluation: what's important and to whom.

The Curriculum integrated according to historical sequence

Early Indian inhabitants of North America

Indians came to North America over a land bridge from Asia. This subject lends itself to an exploration of the effects of geography and climate as well as the migration habits of animals on the development of a culture. For example, each child builds one of the major types of dwelling which a tribe used such as Adobe houses in the Southwest, Tepees in the Plains, or Wigwams in the Northeast Woodlands. The Indian's reasons for choosing different types of housing become apparent as the classroom fills up with the various models and they are grouped according to climate and resourses for gathering food and other materials. American Indian stories add much flavor as well as create an expectancy which would be realized later when studying Indians again during the Westward movement.

Explorers

The age of exploration is ushered in by a description of the Viking raiders. Where they sailed and how the boats they used enabled them to be very skilled at raiding villages can be best illustrated by building model Viking ships (Bellophoron Books offers cut out models) /30/ Hearing stories which the Vikings themselves might well have shared such as Norse myths, and Beowulf also provide a real feeling for their rough and tumble way of

thinking. Children's interest and understanding can be measured by asking them to recount (either orally or in pictures) their favorite parts of the stories which they have heard. The boys are especially intrigued with Grendel's mother and she becomes a favorite classroom topic of conversation. After telling the story of Beowulf I give each child a copy of Rosemary Sutcliffe's wonderful retelling, Dragon Slayer./31/ For those children who seem highly motivated to learn more I distribute copies of selected passages from the Penguin prose translation./32/ It is heart warming to see ten year olds absolutely enjoying such sophisticated language, yet with the proper introduction such literature is well within their reach.

Another explorer who ushered in the age of exploration was Marco Polo. His actual writings, The Travels of Marco Polo, can be used to describe his journey to the East, and again many original passages can be read from the Penguin translation./33/ Many of the adventures that Marco claimed to have experienced sound fantastic to us even today. Here the children can live imaginatively into the past. They might picture themselves as citizens of Venice ca.1300 listening to tales of Marco about the great Khan. Do they begin to feel the wave of excitement that would eventually usher in the era of exploration? If so, then they are having the experience of empathy, so essential for the development of historismus and for their own understanding of history.

This "feeling one's way into the past" is such an essential skill and is so valuable to the young student who already has a natural propensity for it that it can not be emphasized strongly enough.

Next, we do a study of Columbus who incidentally carried the writings of Marco Polo with him and used them for inspiration to find the new world. Passages from his journals hold great fascination for contemporary boys and girls. Morison's Life of Christopher Columbus clearly illustrates the struggle between Columbus' imaginative vision and the skeptical doubt of his crew. The days leading up the the discovery of the new world are especially poignant./34/

I would like to address the issue of capturing the spirit of a person in such a way that the children feel that they have met him/her and yet are not burdened by so many facts that they would rather not have made the acquaintance. A teacher who is sensitive to giving children an experience of an historical figure can extract from his/her readings and musings one or two images of that person which would serve as a kind of introduction to their deeds and accomplishments. The importance of these images cannot be overemphasized. Let us listen to what the great American educator, John Dewey thought of the importance of this method:

> The image is the great instrument of instruction. What a child gets out of any subject presented to him is simply the images which he himself forms with regard to it.

> If nine-tenths of the energy at present directed towards making the child learn certain things were spent in seeing to it that the child was forming proper images, the work of instruction would be definitely facilitated./35/

The often told apocryphal story about Columbus provides us with just such a picture. It proceeds along the following lines: When Christopher Columbus became exasperated with the ministers on the Spanish court who were chiding him for his foolish ideas he produced an egg which he challenged any of the assembled gentlemen to stand on its end. One by one they accepted the challenge but could not succeed (it especially delights fifth grade students if this is acted out a bit). When it was his turn Columbus took the egg and set it down so that one end broke and it remained standing. This bold solution supposedly helped convince Ferdinand and Isabella that Columbus could accomplish his journey to the Indies and he was granted his supplies. Whether or not this story is true is not the only point; for it captures the bold adventurousness of Columbus in a dramatic way.

Once one or two explorers are personalized in this way the more general topic "explorers" takes on a meaning which remains an abstraction in too many classrooms. All too often a study of the explorers is reduced to memorizing names, dates, points of departure and arrival of about twenty people. Everyone crams for the night before the test and such a procedure leaves a bad taste in the mouth of students not only for the subject of exploration but

also for the entire field of history. We are well advised to follow another of Quintillian's admonitions--to make the subject matter interesting. The truth or falsity of the narrative may then be introduced to students whose attention already has been aroused.

During this study of exploration the Science work which pertains to astronomy (finding one's way by the stars), the oceans (what early explorers knew about ocean currents), and magnetism (how the development of the compass effected exploration) could be included. To evaluate such understandings students are asked to identify several major constellations which both Marco Polo and Columbus might have known and tell the myths that go with their choices. The signs of the Zodiac are of great interest to children of this age, and this is an opportune moment to explain the difference between astronomy and astrology. Some references from Chaucer would also reveal reveal a time when many important decisions were based on the stars.

The best way to test compass competency is to have a treasure hunt around the school following a number of specific directions. This is a good moment to introduce orienteering, and perhaps a speaker could visit the classroom and share some enthusiasm for this fast growing "sport." The winners of the treasure hunt can set up the next treasure hunt and put their skills to work at a higher level.

There are also many reading selections on exploration which may fascinate as well as instruct. A good example of such reading would be the Journals of Lewis and Clark which would not only further the student's feeling for exploration, but would describe U.S. geography and American Indian life as well. Mention could also be made of how the members of the expedition shared their various skills for the overall success of the group. These readings would also serve to introduce Thomas Jefferson and his political and economic ideas--a veritable feast! To teach in this way is a joy to both the student and the teacher and ensures the meaningful retention of information. A map of the Lewis and Clark expedition could be drawn and comparisons might be made with the same area today. A debate over which expedition--Lewis and Clark or Marco Polo--was of greater benefit to civilization usually brings interesting thoughts to the fore as well as acting as a springboard for the comparative essay.

Colonists

After an area is explored it seems natural to move into it. Here it would be useful to give a description of what life was like in Europe during the age of colonization: just why were so many people willing to leave their own homeland to come to America. Mention could be made of the excesses of King Henry VIII, religious intolerance including the abuses of the witchcraft trials which are always of such interest to students. This is an

ideal place to introduce the scientific method by way of contrast with the pseudo scientific methods of the witch hunters.

Galileo's contribution to the scientific method (ca.1600) only makes sense in relation to the prevailing medieval world view which was based on the teachings of Aristotle and the catechism of the Roman Catholic Church. The whole question of the split between science and religion could be grounded historically in tales of the scientific experiments of Galileo. Young children are Aristotelians at heart: they prefer to go with what their senses tell them even when shown that things work out differently in experiments. For example, most fifth graders ill guess that a heavy ball will reach the ground before a lighter one simply because it makes more sense. When told that the great Aristotle would have agreed but that Galileo disagreed they begin to think "experiment." How delighted they are to climb on top of their desks to get to the bottom of this matter. Also they are very pleased with themselves to discover that this is what the scientific method is all about.

While speaking of Galileo there is a perfect opportunity to show mathematics as the language of science. Here is another teaching tale which helps to bring Galileo to life: imagine that you are Galileo sitting in the Cathedral of Pisa in the year 1581. It is a hot day and Mass is about to begin. Your mind drifts

around the church and alights on the chandelier. The lamplighter is about to light the twenty or so candles. You have watched this procedure many times and do not pay special attention. Then, suddenly, something catches your interest! After the chandelier, which was pulled to one side for the lighting, is released, it swings back and forth across the church in a fiery arc (by this point in story, I have climbed on top of my desk with a weighted string). I give them time to experience the moment before suggesting that each full swing is in harmony with their own pulse. As the arcs grow smaller, youn naturally expect what to happen? The time to shorten; but does it? No! they shout. Some are annoyed; most are excited. They sense that something quite unusual is happening; as the arc diminishes the time remains the same. Poor Galileo became so excited by this discovery that it sped up his heartbeat and invalidated his measurements. How can you test further? After Mass he rushed home to recreate this experiment under more controlled conditions.

This story does several things at once; it gives an experiential look at how the mind of a genius works and suggests the level of intellectual development which existed in Europe while the American colonies were being founded in the new world. Further, it demonstrates how necessary math is for scientific expression and teaches students how to use a graph to record data. It also introduces the laws of motion, and it is enjoyable to

boot. The children can demonstrate their grasp of these ideas by doing their own experiments and graphing the results. Later when asked to write an essay on this topic their personal "voice" comes across very clearly--they could write it up in the first person.

Revolutionary War

I like to teach the Revolutionary War period by drawing on primary source materials. We look at what was going on in the colonies by reading copies of the newspapers and broadsides from those times./34/ Children get a real sense of what was happening in the colonies from the different gazettes which were published then. After it has been established what the problems were which led to the war, we look back in history to see what had been written which documents the development of the idea of freedom.

Periclean Athens 390B.C. An excerpt from Pericles funeral oration as mentioned in chapter three shows the role of the well rounded citizen in the preservation of a healthy state.

The Magna Carta--King John, 1215. How the Barons came to force King John to sign the great charter agreeing to trial by peers and limited taxation.

The Mayflower Compact, 1623. What led the pilgrims to declare a compact of self government?

The Declaration of Independence, 1776. How the above precedents helped in drawing up this document and what reasons led to its adoption.

Federalist Papers, 1787-1788. What were some of the arguments for and against accepting the new form of Government?

The Constitution, 1789. Why we needed a new form of government and what the different branches ensure.

The Bill of Rights, 1789. What it is and why it is included in the Constitution.

When we have discussed and understood these documents we then break up into groups and write a series of skits about how each one came to be. Then as a group we shape our separate skits into a play. This year we performed our play for the entire school and it really was a magnificent story which will not be easily forgotten

The Westward Movement

The period in American history known as Westward Expansion (1800-1860) is taught as a Language Arts/Social Studies block. It usually comes at the end of the third marking period and is the first major report for which my fifth graders are responsible. (As common background we have all read and discussed Little House on the Prairie.) Because the topic includes so many interesting aspects I approach it as a storyteller. Each day I tell stories about different aspects of the movement. The children are instructed to listen for those stories which

truly interest them and which they would like to know more about at a later date. Whatever they choose will become their research topic, but I don't tell them this too soon--it gets in the way of making a selection based on pure interest. The topics which are covered include:

The West as a promised land--religious influences.

Shifting frontiers--Appalachians, Mississippi, Rockies, and Pacific ocean.

What were the hardships and dangers faced along the way?

What motivated people to make the journey?

What was the attitude toward "real estate" (by both settlers and Indians?

What were some famous roads, and how were they made?

What folk heroes come out of this period?

What happened between the settlers and the Indians?

Describe the effect of the Westward Movement on the Indians?

How did technology effect the expansion?

How was territory acquired?

What were the contributions of the Lewis and Clark expedition?

How did the discovery of gold effect the expansion?

What effect did religion have as a motivating factor? (Mormons)?

What was a cowboy?

What were the means of transportation?

What were some methods of communication (Pony Express, Morse Code)?

After these topics are discussed the children are given an extensive bibliography of books which our school library owns and several research periods to do background reading on a few topics of their choice. At this point they are encouraged to read widely and not to narrow their topics too quickly.

A study of the Westward Movement lends itself to the humanities approach by incorporating art, music, games, storytelling, and cooking. In my classroom each child works with the various specialist teachers to enrich and deepen their understanding and interest. The art teacher helps each child to draw a picture which captures the spirit of that child's interest. This drawing is later pinned to a large blank mural and when all the pictures are up the children decide which arrangement would be best for an integrated view of the Westward Movement. Then each child draws his/her own picture in the appropriate place on the mural. The overall effect is stunning and how proud they are of their visual success.

In Music, songs are selected and over a period of six weeks the children work closely with the music teacher in learning not only the songs but the background as well. Music is an excellent place for introducing a continuing oral tradition as well as the writing of music in the more literary intellectual tradition of the western world. The physical Education teacher was most willing to work with my class in teaching pioneer games and dances. My school

librarian was enthusiastic about encouraging the children to listen to and make up pioneer stories which would be told around the culminating camp fire activity. Last, but not least, the practical arts teacher worked with us designing costumes and baking food from pioneer days. At the end of all this reenforcement can you guess what we did? That's right we had the most wonderful party and what fun the children had.

Civil War

Science played an important part in the development of events leading to the Civil War, and technology and industry helped to create regional sectionalism. Discussions about inventions such as the cotton gin, interchangeable parts, the arrival of Samuel Slater with all of his knowledge, and the anomalous "Lowell Girls" helps children to understand the different economic realities which shaped the North and the South. The Science unit on Electricity and Magnetism also ties in well with inventions which eventually transformed America into a world power. Just how electromagnetism became the source of so much of our energy as well as its simple application in the realm of communication (Morse Code) and more recently in the scrap metal industry is fascinating for the children. It is helpful for the children to realize the impact which the Civil War had on the growth of the Industrial Revolution in America.

Literature can also be brought to bear on establishing a deeper level of understanding about Civil War times. In the 1860's Charles Dickens wrote A Christmas Carol to expose the ills which an industrialized England was creating for the masses. A study of this classic gives students a feeling for the coming industrialization of America. Another classic which sheds light on the Civil War period is Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Uncle Tom's Cabin. In this 1860's best seller slavery is depicted as it was viewed from a Northern perspective. This novel aroused the conscience and humanitarian instincts not only of Americans but of Europeans as well. Stowe was the first American author to depict the black man as a hero.

By way of contrast a good example of the Southern view of blacks can be found in Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn. Here is an excerpt from the scene where Huck's father meets a black man coming down the street:

> There was a free nigger there from Ohio; a mullatter most as white as a white man...and there ain't a man in town got as fine clothes as what he had...And what do you think? They said he was a p'fessor in a college...and knowed everything...They said he could vote when he was at home. Well that let me out. Thinks I, what is the country a-coming to? It was election day and I was just about to go and vote myself, if I warn't too drunk to get there; but when they told me there was a state in this country where they'd let that nigger vote, I drawed out. I says I'll never vote again...I says to the people why ain't this nigger put up at auction and sold? /37/

The worth of the Black man is also reflected in this brief dialogue between Huck and Aunt Sally, when Huck described a steamboat explosion: " `Good gracious! anybody hurt?' `No'm. Killed a nigger.' `Well it's lucky; because sometimes people do get hurt.'/38/

Yet another approach to the Civil War would include the visual arts. This is the first war to have been photographed, and Matthew Brady has left us stunning photographs which record the horror and tragedy of brother killing brother. A teacher who proceeds in this way wins the interest and respect his/her students.

With Social Studies, Reading, Science, Spelling, Vocabulary, and Writing matched up for their mutual interdisciplinary qualities I keep my attention on how to bring out the humanities aspect of each major topic. Humanities for my students consists of studying what great men and women have contributed to the world as we know it. It includes not only the physical contibutions (electricity, airplanes) but also the development of ideas (democracy, freedom). A Humanities approach enables children to see that the world as we know it was created and shaped in large measure by people much like themselves and that past decisions continue to shape the future. This approach does not negate the role of God as some fundamentalists have claimed in their attack on "secular humanism." Rather, it concentrates on man's part in the unfoldment in terms of various ideas that people have held

about God. Religion remains an essential ingredient in people's motivation to act and is thus a vital part of the story. There was, for example, a strong "religious" belief that God had ordained Americans to expand over the whole of North America and to continue to expand their political, social, and economic influence as well. This idea was termed "Manifest Destiny", but it is usually presented in terms which neglect to mention the real energy behind that conviction, that Americans perceived themselves to be the chosen people.

In a humanities approach the great works of literature are used to supplement the subject matter throughout the program. For example, a study of A Christmas Carol could be used during the Christmas season as well as to give background for the Civil War and the Industrial Revolution. In an enlightened school a case could be made for offering the myths and stories of a culture as pure literature the year before the students met that topic as academic content. For illustration, I tell the Iliad and Odyssey to my fifth graders the year before they study the Greeks in sixth grade world history. The sixth grade Social Studies teacher has told me repeatedly that she always knows which students were in my class because of their broad knowledge and excitement. This seems to be a good indication of learning taking place, yet evaluation of a humanities based program must be

carefully thought out if the program is to succeed in this age of accountability.

It is essential to come to terms with ways of measuring learning in humanities classes. Most school systems provide a variety of ways to assess progress. Here is a typical list:

Report cards
Cumulative records
Skills continuums
Standardized tests
State Assessment tests
Mastery tests (text)
Reports
Criterion Reference tests
Written assignments
Homework assignments
Teacher observation
Teacher made tests

A quick review of this list reveals the practical basis for most evaluation and that is objective measurement.

Andrew Strenio, a lawyer who specializes in testing, reiterates what was touched upon in chapters one and two of this paper: how so-called objective tests shape classroom teaching and determine curriculum. Strenio defines an "objective" test as a "...subjective test that has been dressed up in statistical clothing designed to hide some of the sources of its subjectivity."/39/ He explains that the choice of questions, test format (multiple choice), and length of time given are all subjective elements which have been decided upon before the computer "objectively" scores the answers. The subjectivity is still there, but it is hidden up front. This understanding could be applied to that final bastion of objectivity, scientific methodology.

Science rests upon hypotheses which, as long as they "save the appearances," serve as working models. Thomas Kuhn, a contemporary intellectual historian, has shown how these paradigms can only remain in place until anomalies force the creation of a more inclusive paradigm./40/ Science is a series of working hypotheses: an approximation of truth.

Wilhelm Dilthey addressed the issue of measurement in relation to the study of the humanities. He argued that to understand the past one must be in touch with one's present social circumstances. Dilthey believed that the reference points for all historical works must be "subjectively lived experiences," as Herder had believed in "feeling" his way into a situation to get on the inside and experience it fully. Dilthey tried to grasp the spiritual structures that lay beneath events. Does the subjective path lead us into hopeless metaphysical meditations? Does Herder's historical relativism obliterate our chances for ever arriving at truth? Dilthey thought that by studying different gestalts he would come to an <u>approximation</u> of truth: that it was a person's own life and values which helps to make sense of the world. Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955), a Spanish philosopher who was greatly influenced by Dilthey, believed that human nature was not fixed, but "plastic," and that this quality could only be glimpsed over time--"Man has no nature; what he has is history."/41/ History in this broad sense became an organizing principle for humanistic studies and historicism

became an approach which honored both continuity and change in every field. The contemporary tradition of intellectual history has developed out of these ideas.

Yet the very idea of subjectivity throws up a red flag in most professional circles. Doctors now have a medical data base (Caduceus) which actually prescribes treatment based on data fed into the computer. In sports, umpires making close calls wait for the instant replay technician to give the "true" verdict on what really happened. Can educators be less professional?

Subjectivity as a key for evaluation is, as we have seen, not new. One legacy of Dilthey has been to make subjectivity respectable, but he also showed that to be properly subjective was to reach out to all other subjects. Indeed, this notion has become a permanent theme among Dilthey's posterity (Buber, Heideger, Ortega y Gasset, Jaspers, Merleay-Ponty, Collingwood, and Habermas to mention a few). We have also seen in Montaigne, for example, an earlier attempt to establish objective understanding through personal writing.

Montaigne was aware that he had within himself an "exemplar of the human condition," and that by going deeper and deeper with increasing honesty he could reach that paradoxical place of being both personal (subjective) and at the same time universal (objective). This is the place to which so many of the great representatives of mankind aspire--a place where truth is one, while its

manifestations are many. Although the students in elementary school cannot be expected to reach Montaigne's level of universality, they can be encouraged to search for what they think and know. Indeed, unless we as teachers respect what students have to say and nourish their efforts at self expression they may never find that uniqueness so treasured in the humanities from ancient Greek times.

I advocate a large expenditure of time and energy at the elementary level for teaching children to write. Not informational writing (reports, papers, note taking) which already exist as a tool for evaluation, but rather expressive writing which is more of a learning instrument than a testing apparatus. Like Montaigne children can write to learn the answers to their own questions, "What do I know"? Writing as self discovery without the fear of being graded for "the correct answer," punctuation, grammar or even spelling must be encouraged./42/ A recent study in secondary schools showed that less than 4% of all subject area teachers asked for writing of more than a paragraph in length./43/ Yet, writing may very well be the single most effective way of merging the content of the liberal arts with the needs and interests of the learner.

In the beginning of the school year I give my fifth grade students pencil and paper and ask them to write about the two most interesting subjects they have studied in their past four years in school and, if possible, to draw some comparisons between them. Needless to say there is

much shuffling of feet and coughing, but not much writing that comes back. At the end of each unit throughout the year, however, I ask them to write about what they have learned and I teach them how to organize their thoughts and structure their responses. At the end of the year they get the same question which they were asked in the beginning. After they have written for about two hours, I simply return their papers from that early assignment without making any comments. Can you think of a better evaluation for a year's growth in the humanities? Here is a chance for them to evaluate their own progress, to see the tremendous amount of knowledge which they have gained, and to experience their ability to organize and express it. The lesson is not wasted on them.

Chapter Five

Summary and Conclusions

Contemporary elementary education is fragmented. We have seen in chapters one and two that skills come from workbooks rather than the content area; that critical thinking consists of "value free" exercises of dubious value; and that enrichment has become a "pull out" program for about 3% of all students. We have also discussed the role that the multi-billion dollar textbook publishers play in shaping the curriculum as well as how so-called objective tests keep the entire system locked in place.

Chapter three surveyed the role of a humanities approach which has provided a holistic view of man throughout the ages. We explored the beginnings of the liberal arts as they evolved out of the spirit of critical inquiry among the ancient Greeks and we saw that by the time of the rise of universities the liberal arts had lost their vitality. It was only during the Renaissance that a humanities approach brought them to life again. The liberal arts have lost and regained that vitality many times throughout history. We left the story of the humanities with the development of historical studies in the nineteenth century; now let us bring this debate up to present times.

Chapter three alluded to the fact that Darwin's ideas were applied to the social sciences. One of the chief

popularizers of these ideas was Thomas Huxley mentioned earlier, who, in his address "Science and Culture" (1881), made a case for emphasizing scientific literacy as the primary means of getting a true education. Huxley attacked Matthew Arnold, the chief representative of letters in England, for having too narrow a literary conception of culture.

Arnold (1822-1888), who had been a school inspector, was well aware of the effects of "scientific" education on the minds of the middle class in England. In Culture and Anarchy(1869) he had argued that the middle class were in a state of anarchy because they had no high ideals for what they could become and that because they so distrusted the political process, they had no means of bettering their condition. Arnold spoke in favor of the "organic wholeness" which the humanities offered. He believed that things could not be separated into compartments because that is not really the way life is: the social and artistic aspects of life are not different from knowledge. Arnold understood that even the greatest scientific breakthroughs had no meaning without a relationship to the whole of life.

In 1882 Arnold responded to Huxley's attack with Literature and Science. Like Dilthey and von Ranke, Arnold used primary sources for his literary studies and thereby qualified them for the status "scientific." Arnold expanded his concept of humanities to include

mathematicians and scientists as well as poets and felt that strictly scientific studies promoted a narrow specialization while the humanities preserved the "symmetry of knowledge." The Huxley-Arnold debate is significant because here for the first time two articulate spokesmen do battle over which metaphor would shape man's very soul. Would science absorb the humanities or, as Arnold hoped, would the humanities become the organic metaphor which would give the sciences their rightful place. Most people have since lined up on either side of what C.P. Snow would call "the two cultures."

The English philosopher Herbert Spencer provided a philosophic base for Huxley's position by arguing that only those who did what was "useful" would be fit to survive. Proponents of this utilitarian view favored vocational training for the masses and strongly urged that the universities make changes in their curriculum. In opposition to this attitude, John Henry Newman (1801-1890), an English Cardinal, championed the broad base that a liberal arts university provided and fought against the growing clamor to introduce vocational courses. Newman thought that the true purpose of the mind was "...for viewing many things at once as one whole, of referring them severally to their true place in the universal system, for understanding their respective values and for determining their mutual dependence."/44/

Newman insisted in cultivating the intellect for its own sake and not for any kind of practical outcome. He believed that it was the duty of the University to teach students to think with a `philosophic cast of mind' which would see things whole. Newman's arguments were primarily directed against the utilitarians who advocated a more practical training. He agreed with Arnold that the sciences are unintelligible except in relation to each other and to a bigger perspective, whereas a`philosophic cast of mind' would provide a gestalt which would be both good in itself and good for society.

The direction of this debate took new turns as the twentieth century provided a different time, place, and set of circumstance. During the twentieth century there was a dramatic increase in the numbers of students being admitted to every level of education; while, at the same time in philosophic circles, there was a growing interest in Pragmatism. William James (1842-1910), an American philosopher, had also recognized the value of the subjective and had great respect for the perceptions of the individual. James believed that man had free will and helped to shape his own reality. Truth for James was judged by its practical consequences and was meaningful only through experience. James championed universal democractic education and one of the leading members of his circle was John Dewey.

Dewey (1859-1952), an American philosopher and educator, synthesized the ideas of Rousseau, Jefferson, Darwin, and James. Dewey believed that the child's own instincts and powers furnished the material and gave the starting point for all education. The teacher needed a knowledge of social conditions because the psychological and social were organically related. Education begins with psychological insights which honor the stages in a child's development. Later the child's capacities and interests can be translated into social service. School, like home, is a vital place. It does not prepare for some future life but for the immediate present. Therefore, according to Dewey, a key basis for education should come from the child's own social activities. Progress is measured in terms of awakening new attitudes and interests in experience. For Dewey the image which the child forms in relation to any subject is all he will get from it. Teachers, consequently, should encourage this ability to picture what is essential.

Dewey was against imposing a traditional scheme of adult standards from above and outside. Subjects taught without active participation and as finished products with no regard to history have little meaning. Instead, he recommended cultivation of individuality, free activity, and learning through experience. As with James his philosophy of education was based on experience. Some of his followers (in the progressive movement) would carry

Dewey's conclusions to absurd lengths, such as throwing out the entire liberal arts tradition.

Alfred North Whitehead, mentioned earlier, preserved a continuity between the more contemplative aspects of scholarship and the active teaching which is necessary to meet the students where they were. While there is little doubt that much of what Dewey had proposed served to counter a strong tendency in education to ignore the child, he also may have gone too far in becoming so "child centered." Whitehead seemed to strike a more even balance by delivering a body of tradition in such a way that the students could make sense of it, and were able to apply what they learned in their own lives. In his Aims of Education(1929) he said, "The result of teaching small parts of a large number of subjects is the passive reception of disconnected ideas, not illumined with any spark of vitality...let the main ideas which are introduced into a child's education be few and important and let them be thrown into every combination possible."/45/ For a genius like Whitehead "every possible combination" would include all of intellectual history, yet how can a contemporary teacher even begin to acquire such a background?

Good teacher preparation is crucial to the success of a humanities based program which takes as its scope the entire liberal arts tradition. Yet, at the same time that higher standards are being called for many teacher training

programs simultaneously are playing down the importance of content matter. As was recently stated in a Federal report on the Humanities, "...teacher training programs are elevating the role of process to the status of dogma."/46/ This watering down of the liberal arts can also be seen on many contemporary university campuses. At Stanford University, for example, students and faculty both protested the humanities canon and the administration agreed to change the required "Western Culture" reading list for freshmen from fifteen classics to six. Dropped from the list were Homer, Virgil, Dante, Luther, Galileo, Freud, and Darwin. These were replaced by works of minorities. Let us look at the kinds of programs which are currently being offered to teachers in the 1980s which would provide a dialectical approach to the liberal arts?

At the University of Virginia the newly created center for the liberal arts (1984) is attempting to remain true to Jefferson's vision. The center sees itself as having two great resourses for assisting public education: knowledge and leadership. Courses include the classics as well as classes which cover more contemporary concerns such as the proper place in the curriculum for folktales like Brer Rabbit. The center provides leadership by bringing together "...a coalition of teachers, administrators, school board members, and citizens--as well as professors--to debate and decide the essentially political question of what should be taught in the schools."/47/

Jefferson would be pleased that his University was still offering courses which were relevant for twentieth century teachers as well as preserving the liberal arts tradition.

The number of Universities in this country which offer similar trainings known as Liberal Studies or Master of Letters degrees has grown dramatically in the last few years. The 1988 Peterson's Graduate Programs in the Humanities lists over seventy four programs in Liberal Studies alone. At Drew University one such program reaches out to thousands of public and private school teachers from New York and New Jersey with a rigorous program that gives teachers the experience of thinking dialectically while studying the liberal arts. This thirty credit program attempts to stimulate teachers intellectually while deepening their understanding of Western civilization. As a graduate of this program I can speak from experience when I say that this course of studies has revitalized my approach to teaching in terms of both broadening my own knowledge base as well as increasing my ability to transmit what I know.

In this paper I have argued that we must keep the humanities central if we do not want to lose the key unifying ingredient amidst specialization, vocationalism, and fragmentation. As life becomes increasingly dehumanized, computerized, and technologized with objective `calculative thinking' which reaches into our very homes, surely the liberal arts may provide some semblance of a

counterweight to balance this growing tendency. We have seen how state supported education has naturally evolved out of church and nationalistic interests of the past, and today everyone agrees that education is of the utmost importance. There is, however, that lingering question "what kind is the best."

The humanities approach to the liberal arts curriculum helps to unfold the story of our common human nature. It is the fabric which connects us to our own past, person to person in an unbroken lineage. The challenge is to study what has gone before as a foundation without losing sight of where we want to go. While there is an obvious need to study contemporary contributions in science as well as in literature, this in no way negates the ability of the humanities to serve as the central educational vehicle.

As I have shown, Dilthey was the first to make clear that the real center of the humanities is the cultivation of that subjectivity which links us with all mankind past, present, and future. To have a firm understanding of the evolution of ideas and their interrelatedness is to enter the field which has come to be known as intellectual history. One effort of that field is to establish a way of holding the `best that has ever been said or thought' in an `organic unity.' In my opinion, this avenue provides the key for future directions in education. In my own curriculum I have attempted to show that the results of

this approach are not so intangible that they cannot survive the test of accountability.

As long as the debate over the place of the humanities is set up as a dichotomy, a battle of metaphors, our single vision as human beings is in jeopardy. The timeless image of our bodies having separate organs, yet functioning as one unified whole could help us to understand the central role of the humanities. Contemporary education has trouble submitting to this paradigm and insists on looking for a master organ or system. But the humanities are not just another system: they are the organizing principle which attempts to show us the body of mankind whole and complete, even when limited to the Western intellectual tradition.

Notes

1 Major textbook companies for schools include MacMillan, Harcourt Brace Javonivitch, and Houton Mifflin. An exception to these big companies is Boynton/Cook--Heinemann which publishes elementary and secondary texts with an orientation towards the process and the whole language approach to learning.

2 Madeline Hunter, "Right Brained Kids in Left-Brained Schools." Today's Education. Nov/Dec 1976.

3 Reuven Feuerstein, Instrumental Enrichment. (Baltimore: University Park Press, 1982) xi.

4 E.D. Hirsch, Jr, Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know.(Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company 1987) 127-129.

5 Roger Sperry, "Some Educational Aspects of Hemispheric Specialization," Dromenon--A Journal of New Ways of Being, Vol 1, no. 5-6, (February 1979) 19.

6 J.E. Bogen M.D., Ibid., 20.

7 Ibid.

8 John Dewey on Education: Selected Writings. Ed. Reginald Archambault,(Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1964) 226.

9 George N. Schmidt, "Chicago Mastery Reading: A Case Against a Skills-Based Reading Curriculum," Learning November 1982 40.

10 Robert Sternberg, "The Nature of Mental Abilities," American Psychologist 34. 1979, 218.

11 Robert Sternberg, "How Can We Teach Intelligence," Educational Leadership. September 1984, 43.

12 Complete Writings of Thucycdides: the Peloponnesian War, trans. T. Crawley. (New York: Modern Library, 1951) 104

13 Paul Gagnon, Democracy's Untold Story, (New York: American Federation of Teachers, 1987.) 48.

14 James Bowen, A History of Western Education Vol 1. (New York: St. Martins Press, 1972) 26.

15 William Boyd, History of Western Education. (New York: Barnes and Noble Inc. 1966) 119.

16 Ibid., 120.

17 The Portable Renaissance Reader Ed. James Bruce Ross and Mary M. McLaughlin (New York: Penguin Books, 1981) "The Dignity of Man," by Pico. 478.

18 Ibid., "On Virtu and Fortune," Alberti 329.

19 Ibid., "The Soul of Man," Ficino 388.

20 Ronald Crane, The Idea of the Humanities. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967) 29-32.

21 Encyclopedia of Education Vol. IV. (New York Macmillan Company, 1971) 212.

22 Kenneth Clark, Civilization. (New York: Harper and Row, 1969) 264-265.

23 Daniel Boorstin, The Lost World of Thomas Jefferson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) 217-218.

24 Idem.

25 Franklin L. Baumer Modern European Thought: Continuity and Change in Ideas 1600-1950 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1977) 265.

26 William Dilthey: Patterns and Meaning in History. Ed. H.P. Richman. (New York: Allen and Unwin, 1961) Back Cover quote by H.Stuart Hughes.

27 America: Past and Present. Dr. Joan Schreiber, (Illinois: Scott Foresman and Company, 1983)

28 Holt Science Joseph Asbrucato,(New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1986)

29 Alfred North Whitehead, Aims of Education and Other Essays. (New York: Macmillan, 1957) 7.

30 Viking Ships.(Bellerophon Books. California: 1980)

31 Rosemary Sutcliff, Dragon Slayer (New York: Penguin Books, 1981)

32 Beowulf. trans. David Wright. (Maryland: Penguin Books, 1972) 42 and 62.

33 Marco Polo: The Travels. trans. Ronald Latham. (New York: Penguin Books, 1982)

34 Samuel Eliot Morison, Admiral of the Ocean: A Life of Christopher Columbus. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co. 1942) 202-236.

35 Issues in Education. Ed. by Bernard Johnston, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1964) 219.

36 This Common Channel to Independence: Revolutions and Newspapers 1759- 1789. Ed. Frederic B. Farrar. (New York: Farrar Books 1975)

37 Mark Twain, Huckleberry Finn. (New York: W>W> Norton, 1977) 26-27.

38 Ibid., 175.

39 Andrew Strenio, The Testing Trap (New York: Rawson, Wade Publishers, 1981) 106-110.

40 Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970)

41 Baumer., 437.

42 Donald Graves, Writing: Teachers and Children at Work (New Hampshire: Heinemann Books, 1983)

43 Arthur N. Applebee, Writing in the Secondary School: English and the Content Areas (Illinois: NCTE Publishers, 1982) 30..

44 George Anderson, Ed. The Literature of England. "John Henry Newman's Idea of a University,", (New York: Scott, Foresman, and Co., 1957) 910.

45 Whitehead, 7.

46 National Endowment for the Humanities, American Memory: A Report on the Humanities in the Nation's Public Schools. (Washington D.C. 1988) 22.

47 Center for the Liberal Arts, (Virginia: University of Virginia 1984) 3.

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