ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF PAUL GOODMAN'S CONCEPTION OF THE NATURE OF MAN AS A PERSPECTIVE ON HIS EDUCATIONAL PROPOSALS: A STUDY IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF RADICAL EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT

By

Jack Hruska

Goodman is a naturalist. His prime referent is always that of the organic person. He urges us to construct a society which will maximize the growth, and concomitantly the happiness of man. As human nature is not infinitely malleable the environment ought to be structured to man's nature so as to be responsive with his growth needs. It is Goodman's criticism that society in general, and the educational establishment in particular, has taken the position that human nature is secondary and is derived from culture. People are expected to adjust to institutions, to systems, to culture. Goodman argues, however, that man as man, has basic needs that must be satisfied if the organism is to grow and remain healthy, and, further, that many of these needs are incompatible with the demands of mid-twentieth century institutions and social norms.

Jack Hruska

The purpose of this study is to examine Paul Goodman's concept of human nature and to demonstrate how his educational recommendations and proposals stem from that concept.

Goodman's fundamental postulate is that man is a pleasure seeking self-regulating animal. Nor is it enough that man can be self-regulating, but if he is to grow and achieve happiness he must be self-regulating. This position emanates from Goodman's social psychology coupled with his humanistic posture on the desirability of individual growth. Goodman views man as social by nature. Subsequently self-regulating individuals, if educated and uncoerced by external control, will form a cooperative society maximizing the growth and pleasure of all. Goodman's insistance on freedom from authority and his belief that happiness is found in worthwhile activities mark him as a community-anarchist.

Goodman defends his self-regulating theory by illustrating that man has a hierarchy of values in that growth needs arise spontaneously. When a lower need--e.g. food, sleep--is satisfied, a higher need--e.g. creativity, curiosity--will spontaneously arise and clamor for attention. Growth occurs when the organism asserts its natural aggression in order to assimilate what it finds interesting in the environment. Crucial to Goodman's educational proposals is that the organism

can give full attention only to what it finds spontaneously or naturally interesting. In order to assimilate, the organism must destructure the novel into assimilable elements and take them on so they become at one with the organism. This process is applicable to both physiological processes and mental processes.

Growth, then, is the process of spontaneous interest, aggression, and assimilation. Maximum growth requires all three. Goodman's primary criticism as a social critic is that society is structured so as to maximize the growth and security of institutions and not people. That is, man has natural limits to what he can comprehend, destructure, and assimilate. If the institutions in his environment become too large or too complicated man withdraws, becomes hostile, and initiates stupid reaction-formations--e.g. war, guilt, mis-directed aggression. Therefore, institutions ought to be structured so they are in human scale--i.e. small, flexible, decentralized, so as to admit of individual interests and individual aggression.

Goodman's educational proposals are a natural outgrowth of this social psychology. His emphasis is on spontaneous interest and the freedom to act on that interest. Therefore, he urges us toward decentralized, flexible, autonomous units whether they be elementary schools or universities. Being highly critical of the

established educational authorities he champions the use of what are now considered non-educational activities as alternatives for the academic schooling now expected of all. He believes that a majority of the youth can be better educated by social work, travel, operating small theaters and newspapers, working on farms, beautifying small towns, or any number of socially meaningful activities that are spontaneously interesting and admit of learning experiences.

AN ANALYSIS OF PAUL GOODMAN'S CONCEPTION OF THE NATURE OF MAN AS A PERSPECTIVE ON HIS EDUCATIONAL PROPOSALS: A STUDY IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF RADICAL EDUCATIONAL THOUGHT

By

Jack Hruska

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Secondary Education
and Curriculum

1969

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Appreciation is extended to the members of the writer's Doctoral Guidance Committee: Dr. Marvin Grandstaff, Chairman; Dr. J. Allan Beegle; Dr. Frank Blackington, and Dr. Harold Wallace.

Particularly I wish to thank Dr. Marvin Grandstaff for his part in the development of this dissertation. It was in his classes that I first became excited about educational philosophy and in the challenges put forth by the radical critics. And it is his insistence that academic education be relevant to the growth needs of people that drew me to him and ultimately to the works of Paul Goodman.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Statement of the Problem

Paul Goodman's reputation as a severe and provocative critic of American education emanated from the publication of Growing Up Absurd in 1956. That blistering survey of the life-style offered to the young by this society has been followed by dozens of further criticisms and proposals, contained in two more books dealing exclusively with education (Compulsory Mis-education and Community of Scholars), numerous articles and commentary on education in other books. His writings, his speeches and his involvement with student activists have earned him the most prominent place among a circle of critics of education--besides Goodman, Jules Henry, Edgar Friedenberg, John Holt and others--most often characterized as "romantic" or "radical." In 1956 the position Goodman has articulated was representative of a tiny and fairly insignificant minority. Today, due to the efforts of Goodman, more than to those of any other person, the "radical" critique of American schools and a concommitant vision of "liberated" education poses a potent challenge

to the beliefs and practices of the established educational power structure.

Even though Goodman enjoys wide-spread acclaim and attention in educational circles--especially among students and disaffected educators--there is little evidence that his recommendations have been seriously considered by the educational policy-makers. Indeed, it seems that educational practice is moving increasingly in the very directions that Goodman most deplores. While Goodman extols smallness, simplicity and an interpersonal context, the schools are, in many instances, moving toward bigness, complexity and are more and more technological. While Goodman suggests a leisurely and self-directed approach to learning, the schools become more pressureful and more inclined to take direction for curricula from agencies outside the school.

If the neglect of Goodman and other "radicals" were grounded in a comprehensive disagreement with the educational power structure--a disagreement that encompassed not just methodology and administrative structure, but one that included aims and values as well--no particular problem of understanding would exist. But that is not the case. The disagreement is only partial and does not extend to the crucial question of what constitutes worthwhile human life and endeavor. In the literature there are few major attacks on Goodman's humanist perspective.

The "radicals" and their liberal critics usually hold similar sets of values where the life of man is concerned. The failure to take seriously radical proposals, then, must rest on some conceptual confusion, some misunderstanding. This study seeks to eliminate some of that confusion by dealing in some detail with the philosophical foundations from which Goodman's numerous recommendations for educational practice flow.

Perhaps the main basis for Goodman's not being taken seriously resides in a difference of perspective. The prime referent for Goodman is always that of the organic person. He is emphatically a naturalist. He starts with man and asks: "What kind of world does man need to grow in?" The typical pattern in educational policy-making, on the other hand, is to begin with "society" or "culture" and to ask how man can best be shaped to be happy, productive and adapted within a given cultural context. For Goodman, social criticism and analysis and even Utopian vision are dependent upon and must be consistent with a conception of human nature. The question: "What is the nature of man?" has systemic priority over all others. In the tradition that has nurtured most of the people who now occupy positions of power in education the question of the nature of man has largely disappeared, or where it is raised, human nature is treated as secondary and derivative from culture. The appropriate way to

understand man is not through the examination of man as man, but through the study and analysis of his institutions. Thus, a conceptual disposition, induced through education and a veneration for the behavioral sciences, stands as an obstacle to understanding Goodman and the other radicals and, perhaps, to the acceptance of important and workable proposals. The fault, however, lies in part with Goodman. His failure to put forth a systematic statement of his conception of man has the advantage of protecting him from direct attack on that specific front. But it also allows his critics to avoid a confrontation with his fundamental posture and makes him subject to the even more devastating attack of being ignored. It may be that an explication of Goodman's conception of the nature of man can partially remove that obstacle.

Thesis

Arthur Lovejoy, in his book Reflections on Human Nature, writes:

> And there are few more important things to know about a writer than what his express view or his tacit but controlling assumptions concerning human nature and its dominant motives were, or to know about a period than what ideas on these subjects were prevalent in it.[1]

---

[1]Arthur Lovejoy, Reflections on Human Nature (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1961), p. 13.

This thesis is based on the acceptance of Lovejoy's assertion.

In his introduction to Growing Up Absurd Goodman assails present-day sociologists and anthropologists for their lack of attention to human nature. Yet he writes:

> That is, on this view we do not need to be able to say what human nature is in order to be able to say that some training is "against human nature" and you persist at your peril. Teachers and psychologists who deal practically with growing up and the blocks to growing up may never mention the word "human nature" (indeed, they are better off without too many a priori ideas), but they cling stubbornly to the presumption that at every stage there is a developing potentiality not yet cultured, and yet not blank, and that makes possible the taking on of culture. We must draw "it" out, offer "it" opportunities, not violate "it" except for unavoidable reasons. What "it" is is not definite. It is what, when appealed to in the right circumstances, gives behavior that has force, grace, discrimination, intellect, feeling. This vagueness is of course quite sufficient for education, for education is an art. A good teacher feels his way, looking for response.[2]

In spite of Goodman's belief that a vague concept of human nature is sufficient for educators, I believe an analysis of Goodman's concept of the nature of man is indispensible to understanding his educational recommendations. First, it allows one to evaluate that concept. If one fails to agree with his referent, then his recommendations are suspect to the extent that they are

---

[2]Paul Goodman, Growing Up Absurd, Vintage Books (New York: Random House, 1956), p. 6.

based on that conception. However, if one accepts his concept of human nature one is obliged to evaluate his proposals from that standpoint or deny the naturalist position.

The methodological tools of the study are exclusively conceptual. They include the general techniques of exploration, analysis and comparison. The central special technique is that of taxonomic definition--that is, the placing of Goodman's scattered statements on the nature of man into an intelligible and reasonably precise structure.

Need for the Study

Many modern critics of American education claim our society is not suitable for the growth and development of man. One thinks of Fromm, Maslow, Harrington, Friedenberg, Goodman, Henry, Keniston. Each of these critics argues that man is not as malleable as our life-style assumes. Or, rather, as Keniston says, we mistake man's ability to survive for his ability to flourish.[3] Unless one evaluates the concept of man each postulates, it is difficult to fully understand the recommendations.

Goodman has written of Franz Kafka, "This is a very earnest artist; we must pay him the respect--that

---

[3]Kenneth Keniston, The Uncommitted, Delta Books (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1960), p. 356.

critics, alas, rarely pay--of asking whether what he says is true and freely said or false and miserable."[4] Goodman, too, is a "very earnest artist." I believe that given the condition of our society today we owe it to mankind to seriously ask whether what he says is true. The first step in this endeavor is to analyze what it is he says.

Biographical Sketch

Paul Goodman was born in New York City in 1911 and is now a resident of the Upper West Side.[5] Shortly after his birth his father had a business failure and deserted the family. His mother worked as a saleslady and his older brother, Percival, ran away from home. Goodman says that "I was a 'latch-key' boy--someone who let himself into his own house."[6]

Goodman had a thorough religious training in a Hebrew school. Later he went to Townsend Harris, an academic high school near the City College. He graduated

---

[4] Paul Goodman, Kafka's Prayer (New York: Vanguard Press, Inc., 1947), p. 8.

[5] For much of the biographical information I am indebted to Richard Kostelanetz. Kostelanetz is a Pulitzer Fellow in Critical Writing at Columbia and the editor of two recent books of criticism--On Contemporary Literature, and The New American Arts. Richard Kostelanetz, "Prevalence of Paul Goodman," New York Times Magazine, April 3, 1966, pp. 70-100.

[6] Ibid., p. 70.

at the top of his class in 1927. In 1931 he graduated from the City College where he had maintained a straight A average, with the lone exception of a D in public speaking.

He later began to bicycle to Columbia University and sat in on Richard McKeon's philosophy class. Although not enrolled, he turned in a paper on "Neo-Classicism, Platonism, and Romanticism." In 1934 it was published in the Journal of Philosophy. In 1935 after Richard McKeon became a dean at the University of Chicago, he asked Goodman to lecture on English Literature. Goodman accepted, and by 1940 he had finished a Ph.D. thesis. However, he refused to publish his thesis in proper form and was not granted the degree until 1954 when the University of Chicago Press published the thesis: The Structure of Literature. He was fired from the University of Chicago for sexual irregularities.

He later taught Greek, physics, history and mathematics at Manumit, a progressive school in Pawling, New York, and at Black Mountain in North Carolina. His non-conforming sexual behavior led to his dismissal from both schools.

Goodman had an informal habit of helping people understand themselves. During the 1950's he became a lay psychotherapist. Although unlicensed, he worked at therapy for two years with his college classmate,

Alexander Lowan, M.D., author of Love and Orgasm. In 1951 he co-authored, with Frederick Perls and Ralph F. Hefferline, Gestalt Therapy, a book on the growth and development of the human personality.

During the 1930's he wrote about 100 short stories. Few were published and until 1953 he and his family lived on $1,500 to $2,000 per year. Perhaps it was this experience which has led Goodman to say that "Decent poverty is really an ideal environment for serious people."[7] He claims that things get closer to human scale during a depression--people function as a community.

In Five Years he wrote, "Evidently I can be happy in a place, in the world, only if I stake out a claim of my own and do for myself from scratch."[8] Contained in that statement are two clues which are helpful in analyzing Paul Goodman. First is his idea of community wherein people "stake out a claim" and make-do "from scratch." Second is his willingness to use himself--his feelings, thoughts, and ideals--as a prime resource as to the nature of man.

Goodman's emergence from the lower income bracket came in the late 1950's with the success of Growing Up Absurd. He now receives up to $1,000 a lecture, and he

---

[7] Ibid., p. 91.

[8] Paul Goodman, Five Years (New York: Brussel and Brussel, 1966), p. 111.

is in demand. However, he contends that his life-style has hardly changed. He still plays on a battered piano, tapes his upholstery, uses mis-matched china, dresses casually, and in 1966 was driving a 1953 Chevrolet.

Goodman, once divorced, now lives with his wife, Sally, and his three children, Mathew Ready, Susan, and Daisy June.

Goodman has been recognized as a lecturer, teacher, poet, novelist, dramatist, city-planner, psychologist, essayist, social critic and as a father figure to many of the disenchanted youth. But, he says, "First, I'm a humanist. Everything I do has exactly the same subject--the organism and the environment. Anything I write on society is pragmatic--it aims to accomplish something."[9] His thinking is grounded in a naturalistic posture, "I am also a Taoist in that I believe that if man lives in accordance with nature, then the state will be ruled well."[10]

It has been this philosophical commitment to live by nature, as he sees it, that has brought him both fame and misery. He says, "Ever since I was 12, I have been bisexual. My desperate efforts at homosexual satisfaction have given me some beautiful experiences and

---

[9]Kostelanetz, p. 70.

[10]Ibid., p. 98.

friendships, but much more frustration and unhappiness."[11]

Yet, this intense determination to openly live his life according to his own constitution has appealed to many, especially the young. Kostelanetz writes:

> What particularly impresses the young (and perhaps disturbs the old) is Goodman's personal integrity. He has always lived by his ideals, defying whatever bureaucratic systems he touched, practicing conspicuously the sexual libertarianism he preached, forbidding editors to bowdlerize what he had written, attaining such a mastery over poverty that he could never succumb to money, and having a sense of purpose that made him resistant to flattery or vanity.[12]

Goodman's rallying cry is not new. He argues, like many before him, that man is being sacrificed--dehumanized--in the interest of progress and efficiency. Thus, it is not the uniqueness of his warning that has brought him to the forefront of social criticism, but, rather, it is the radicalism--literally, to get to the roots--of his solutions that marks him as a guiding spirit to his supporters and as a "romantic" to his critics. He insists on making the challenge that our standard of happiness is too low, and that we can increase pleasures and satisfactions by positing man as a self-regulating animal and shaping the environment to suit man's growth needs. Thus, he calls himself a true conservative in that he

---

[11] Ibid., p. 100

[12] Ibid.

wants to conserve both the basic nature of the human organism and the natural habitat for that pleasure seeking animal.

It is Goodman's argument that the battle for human happiness, and survival, is not between We and They (e.g., Russia and the United States) but between the people of the world and the power structures. Whereas he sees human happiness as compatible only with decentralization, community, spontaneity, aggression, involvement, peace, love, and freedom, he maintains that power structures thrive on centralization, bureaucracy, role playing, suppression of animal instincts, war, and rigidity. His ideas for radical reform identify him as a community-anarchist.

CHAPTER II

AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

This chapter has three purposes: first, to present an overview of the tradition of anarchist thought out of which Goodman has formulated his beliefs; second, to identify three men whose central theses are interwoven into Goodman's thinking, and, at the same time, to demonstrate the relationships of these central tenets to Goodman's anarchism--the communist-anarchism of Peter Kropotkin, the libertarianism of John Dewey, and the notion of conflict between individual instincts and the demands of civilization as analyzed by Sigmund Freud; and third, to review Goodman's own idea of anarchism and his commitment to pacifism.

The Anarchist Tradition

To classify Goodman as an anarchist without making further distinctions is to paint him with a broad brush which distorts more than it reveals. Although all anarchists reaffirm the humanitarian principles of freedom, equality, and justice, and share certain philosophical assumptions about the nature of man and the role of authority in society, they differ significantly in their

views on economics, the use of violence, and the role of government during the transition period from an authoritarian to an anarchistic society. Thus, to properly place Goodman as an anarchist it is necessary to offer a brief treatment of anarchist theory, stressing both the philosophical views which bind anarchists together, and the differences which have fractionalized their adherents.[1]

Although anarchist thought can be traced back to dissenters in the age of Classical Greece in the fifth Century B.C., it was not developed into a systematic theory until the publication in 1793 of William Godwin's An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and Its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness. Godwin is generally credited as the first man to offer a comprehensive analysis of the economic, political, and social factors consistent with an anti-government, anti-authoritarian society. Godwin never identified himself as an anarchist, but later anarchists borrowed heavily from him, and modern writers date the philosophical formulation of anarchist thought with his publication in 1793.

---

[1]The following sketch of anarchist thought was developed from four books. See George Woodcock, Anarchism, Meridian Books (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1967); Leonard I. Krimerman and Lewis Perry eds., Patterns of Anarchy, Anchor Books (Garden City: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1966); Irving L. Horowitz, ed., The Anarchists (New York: Dell Publishing Company., 1964); Corinne Jacker, The Black Flag of Anarchy (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1968).

Anarchism, properly considered, is more than a negation of government and authority. Neither is it merely a social movement. Rather, fully elaborated, it is a positive, constructive theory--Kropotkin considers it a moral philosophy--of how men ought to live together in pursuit of the good life. Woodcock defines anarchism:

> As a system of social thought, aiming at fundamental changes in the structure of society and particularly--for this is the common element uniting all its forms--at the replacement of the authoritarian state by some form of nongovernmental co-operation between free individuals.[2]

However, anarchists disagree on both how this "replacement of the authoritarian state" should come about, and on the specific structural details of the "nongovernmental co-operation between free individuals." Consequently there has evolved a classification of hyphenated terms to distinguish between the central tenets of anarchistic philosophy. Irving Horowitz offers eight classifications, although he is quick to caution that these distinctions do not imply eight separate and mutually exclusive systems. Horowitz writes:

> In examining the basic forms of anarchism we do not mean to imply the existence of eight distinct doctrines. What is at stake is not so much alternative models of the good society as distinctive strategies for getting there. Therefore the differences in forms of anarchism involve

---

[2]Woodcock, Anarchism, p. 13.

> details of priority rather than programmatic rhetoric. Should the first step include or exclude violence? Should the State be liquidated as a consequence of workers' organization from below, or must the first stage in organizing a system of mutual aid be in terms of first liquidating the State? Should anarchism strive for victory through numbers or through conspiratorial techniques?[3]

Horowitz's schema includes utilitarian-anarchism, peasant-anarchism, anarcho-syndicalism, collectivist-anarchism, conspiratorial-anarchism, communist-anarchism, individualist-anarchism and pacifist-anarchism. A moment's reflection will show that Horowitz's classification necessitates the placement of any one anarchist under two or more categories. For instance, if we classify Goodman as a pacifist, we have not yet identified his economic position. In short, Horowitz wishes to identify both the anarchist's economic theory and his stance on violence. For present purposes, however, it is unnecessary to elaborate on the eight categories. The discussion is limited to the fundamental distinctions which distinguish the primary economic postures.

Before addressing the economic structural differences in anarchistic thought, however, let us consider the basic assumptions and values with which all anarchists are in general agreement. The essence of all anarchist philosophy is individual freedom. Basic to

---

[3]Horowitz, The Anarchists, p. 29.

the position is that natural man has evolved into a social being, who when properly educated, will internalize the morals and values of his culture to such a high degree that there is no need for outside constraint. The good man then, is the natural man, whose instincts and powers of reason, if unhampered by external coercion, will lead to a harmonized social life. Underlying these thoughts, of course, whether explicitly or implicitly, are assumptions of human nature. It is the absolute criticalness of these assumptions which has prompted Goodman to write: "I have a democratic faith, its a religion with me--that everybody is really able to take care of himself, to get on with people, and to make a good society. If its not so, I don't want to hear of it."[4]

Also intrinsic to anarchism is an asceticism that urges the elimination of superfluous material objects and services. Woodcock says, "The sufficiency that will allow men to be free--that is the limit of the anarchist demand on the material world."[5] This ascetic mood does not stem from a Protestant Ethic, nor from any religion whatever. Rather, it is grounded in the bias toward naturalism, which views the good life in simple human endeavors such as food, recreation, art, love, meaningful

---

[4]Kostelanetz, "Prevalence of Paul Goodman," p. 99.

[5]Woodcock, Anarchism, p. 28.

work, and intellectual development. This tendency toward simplicity does not, however, brand all anarchists as proponents of the idyllic peasant life, nor make technology incompatible with anarchistic principles. Thus, while Tolstoy, Thoreau, and Bakunin propounded a basically agricultural society, other anarchists were eager to adapt anarchism to technological advances. Godwin saw the machine as a potential liberator, and Goodman, who also favors simplicity wherever applicable, argues for the speedy installation of machines where they can do the work as well as human labor. He finds it degrading to the dignity of man to be working at a job which could be done equally well by machinery. Nevertheless, as will be demonstrated in Chapter VI, Goodman urges us toward a way of life comprehensible to individuals, and he persistently cautions us that the good life is found along the road of simplicity. He writes:

> For most people, I think, a candid self-examination will show that their most absorbing, long, and satisfactory hours are spent in activities like friendly competitive sports, gambling, looking for love and love-making, earnest or argumentative conversation, political action with signs and sit-ins, solitary study and reading, contemplation of nature and cosmos, arts and crafts, music, and religion. Now none of these requires much money. Indeed, elaborate equipment takes the heart out of them. Friends use one another as resources. God, nature, and creativity are free. The media of the fine arts are cheap stuff. Health, luck, and affection are the only requirements for good sex. Good

> food requires taking pains more than spending money.[6]

Also fundamental to all anarchists is an antistatism. Historically, anarchism is concerned mainly with man in his relation to society. Its ultimate aim is social change. But, anarchists view mutual aid and freedom as evolutionary advances, and therefore any permanent establishment of authority, particularly the State, can only work to the hinderance of this evolutionary trend. For if man is naturally good "then the purpose of life, in contrast to the purpose of politics, ought to be the restoration of the natural condition of human relations."[7] Anarchism assumes the brotherhood of man and the naturalness of this equality; therefore statism or nationalism, founded on artificial distinctions and boundaries, is unnatural and is directly the cause of conflict and human misery. Hence, central to anarchistic movements is the dissolution of authority and government and the decentralization of responsibility. All reforms, programs, rules, and moralizing which are initiated by the authority of the State are worthless at best, and potentially damaging as they tend to disrupt the natural functioning and interaction of individuals. Only behavior that begins

---

[6]Paul Goodman, Compulsory Mis-education and The Community of Scholars, Vintage Books (New York: Random House, 1962), pp. 29-30. These two books have been published in one volume. References will be made to the specific book, not to the entire volume.

[7]Horowitz, The Anarchists, p. 17.

locally and gradually expands to a federal or international level, by voluntary cooperation, can be successful. Therefore, "social and moral evils such as poverty, robbery, prostitution, and discrimination cannot be cured by the State, which is actually the servant of oppression and exploitation that causes these evils."[8]

Anarchists are skeptical of all man-made laws which infringe upon the naturally evolving society. They see progress "in terms of the moralizing of society by the abolition of authority, inequality, and economic exploitation."[9] What unites and characterizes all anarchists is a faith in the essential decency of man, a desire for individual freedom, and an intolerance of domination. In the closing paragraph of Anarchism, Woodcock says:

> The great anarchists call on us to stand on our own moral feet like a generation of princes, to become aware of justice as an inner fire, and to learn that the still, small voices of our own hearts speak more truly than the choruses of propaganda that daily assault our outer ears. . . . In this insistence that freedom and moral self-realization are interdependent and one cannot live without the other, lies the ultimate lesson of anarchism.[10]

Yet, when individual advocates of anarchism formulate plans for the ideal society, it is evident that

---

[8]Jacker, The Black Flag of Anarchy, pp. 3-4.

[9]Woodcock, Anarchism, p. 29.

[10]Ibid., p. 476.

there are significant disagreements. It is these various social and economic structural arrangements coupled with radically different positions on violence which make for the distinguishing features among conflicting anarchistic theories. It is to these that we now turn.

Individualist-Anarchism

Individualist-anarchism is well represented by the writings of William Godwin (1756-1836), Max Stirner (1806-1856), and Benjamin Tucker (1854-1939).

The individualist-anarchist considers self-interest as the supreme law for men. Any action that he initiates or refrains from doing, any contract which he enters, any agreement which he makes ought to be done on the basis of personal gain. Thus, the individual "person" or "ego" is the repository of all that is human and self-determining, and the State is a repository of all that is inhuman and oppressive.

The individualist-anarchist favors private property and individual proprietorships, insofar as this embraces no more than the total produce of individual labor, because he believes any form of collectivism will ultimately lead to an authoritarian system. The principle of mutualism is to be arrived at on a strictly voluntary basis, without any connections whatever with agencies of the state. While envisaging a limited amount of cooperative ventures, the "individualists distrust all

co-operation beyond the barest minimum for an ascetic life."[11]

Democracy, where the minority is bound by decisions of the majority, is an evil. "The purpose of society is to preserve the sovereignty of every individual without exception."[12] In short, there is no rightful authority outside individual consent, and any attempt at such authority legitimizes any means, violent or otherwise, to curb that coercion. Krimerman and Perry, in commenting on Max Stirner, stress this centrality of internal authority.

> Stirner is not only against the State, law and private property, but also against many concepts, such as God, country, family, and love, because they claim the individual's allegiance and thus limit his freedom.[13]

Lest the reader conclude that individualist-anarchists view society as a bloody battleground dominated by the powerful and the crafty, I urge you to recall the assumptions regarding the nature of man shared by all anarchists. These assumptions enable the individualists to anticipate a peaceful culture. Woodcock says of Godwin:

---

[11] Ibid., p. 22.

[12] Horowitz, The Anarchists, p. 48.

[13] Krimerman and Perry, Patterns of Anarchy, p. 10.

> It is only this power of "positive institutions," Godwin claims, that keeps error so long alive in the world, for, like all anarchists, he believes that, left to itself, the human mind will naturally tend to detect error and to approach steadily nearer the truth.[14]

Of Max Stirner Woodcock concludes:

> In Stirner's world there will be neither masters nor servants, but only egoists, and the very fact of the withdrawal of each man into his uniqueness will prevent rather than foster conflict.[15]

And Benjamin Tucker, while denying moral responsibility or any existence of inherent rights and duties, developed a law of equal liberty, which he believed would foster a peaceful and harmonious society. "Equal liberty means the largest amount of liberty compatible with equality and mutuality of respect, on the part of individuals living in society, for their respective spheres of action."[16]

In short, while advocating the absolute freedom of the individual, the individualist-anarchist believes it is in the pure self-interest of every individual to grant equal liberty to others. This rational characteristic of man, coupled with his decency and social nature, is sufficient material for the voluntary and spontaneous development of the good society.

---

[14] Woodcock, Anarchism, p. 74.

[15] Ibid., p. 102.

[16] Jacker, The Black Flag of Anarchy, p. 123.

Collectivist-Anarchism

Clearly not all anarchists distrusted collective arrangements and networks as did the individualists. The first man to call himself an anarchist, Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865), rejected the fear of association characteristic of the individualists and led the way for the formulation of several collectivistic economic systems which aimed at "freeing anarchism from a class base and placing it on a mass base."[17] While lauding the sanctity of the individual, Proudhon believed that there was no such thing in society as an isolated being, and that the basis for all human societies was the contract, a reasonable voluntary agreement between men. He proposed the abolition of the State in favor of small communes and workers' cooperatives which in time would form larger federations for voluntary cooperation. There were to be contracts of exchange and mutual free credit among the individuals and among the communities.

Although Proudhon's most noted work, What Is Property? is an attack on the abuses of property, he disavowed communism because it tried to destroy private property. Proudhon held that individual possession was essential for liberty, and that the distribution of economic values should be based on the worker's time.

---

[17]Horowitz, The Anarchists, p. 36.

Michael Bakunin (1814-1876) retained much of Proudhon's federalism and the emphasis on workers' associations, but Bakunin sought to adapt anarchist principles to an increasingly industrial society. Thus, he replaced Proudhon's insistence on individual possession with possession by voluntary institutions, while assuring the worker reimbursement according to his individual contribution.

Later, Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921), who argues that communism is the evolutionary choice of free men, took the development one step further. The central tenet of communist-anarchism is that it is no longer possible to precisely apportion economic values in accordance with individual contributions, nor is it desirable, as the worth of the human individual transcends his value as a producer. The position encourages the adoption of the maxim, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." The distinguishing features of communist-anarchism are, then, the elimination of a wage system and the free distribution of goods.

The anarcho-syndicalists, who had no notable theoretician, differed from the communists primarily in that they "emphasized the revolutionary trade union both as an organ of struggle (the general strike its most potent tactic) and also as a foundation on which the

future free society might be constructed."[18] Horowitz conceives anarcho-syndicalism as a "marriage of unionism and anarchism," out of the fear European (mainly French) factory workers had for the state. The syndicate is based on the organization of the workers by industry at the place of work. It lacks centralization and bureaucracy, but operates as a loose federation for the functions of production and distribution. However, the federal organization has no authority over the workers in any branch, whether it be farm, business, or factory.

Ideally, syndicalism is organized so as to satisfy the natural needs of men rather than to promote the interests of a ruling class. The pivotal weapon in this endeavor is the general strike. The general strike is typical of the anarchist's propensity to confront established authority with humanitarian issues. The following quote from Horowitz illuminates the fact that syndicalism, and the general strike particularly, are anarchistic techniques aimed at far more than an improvement in wages, hours, and working conditions.

> The growth of anarcho-syndicalism was greatly assisted by a new turn toward the problems of tactics in social revolution--something notable for its absence in older anarchist postures. The fusion of socialism and unionism was seen as functionally complete in the general strike. This was not viewed either as a strike for summer wages, or as a widespread attempt to garner

---

[18] Woodcock, Anarchism, p. 21.

> political concessions from the State. While the possibilities of immediate gains were not denied, the essence of the general strike was to evoke the deepest class allegiances and obligations of the workers. As economic strife between classes would become more intense, the meaning of the general strike would become manifest. The anarcho-syndicalist strike would entail direct worker participation in a broad social and economic upheaval. It would become an instrument for compelling the State to abandon its place on the historical stage to the direct association of the wage-earning class. For the most part, revolutionary unionism, such as that practiced by the International Workers of the World in the United States and the General Confederation of Labor in France, did not view the general strike as a replacement of the traditional economic strike. Rather, it was to supercede all pragmatic "short-run inspired" strikes. Key-noting this approach was an intense disdain and a flat rejecting of anything that the government or opposing politicians were willing to concede the workers. The general strike was antipolitical, conceived of as part of the permanent social revolution.[19]

Anarcho-syndicalism has found itself on the horns of a dilemma--a position shared to a lesser degree by all anarchists. Syndicates have engaged in mass politics at the same time that they have professed an abhorrence of politicians and state authority. Horowitz concludes that the paradox was insurmountable and that the syndicates were "increasingly compelled to flee the state, rather than defeat the State in a general contest of class wills."[20]

---

[19]Horowitz, The Anarchists, pp. 35-36.

[20]Ibid., p. 37.

I can find no better concluding statement of these various anarchistic positions than this summation by Woodcock.

> The differences between the various anarchist schools, though at first they appear considerable, actually lie in two fairly limited regions: revolutionary methods (especially the use of violence) and economic organization. All recognize that if anarchist hopes are fulfilled and political domination is brought to an end, economic relations will become the main field in which organization is necessary; the differences we have encountered between the various schools of thought reflect differing views of how far co-operative "administration of things" (to use a Saint-Simonian phrase which anarchist writers have borrowed extensively) can then be applied without danger to individual independence. At one extreme, the individualists distrust all co-operation beyond the barest minimum for an ascetic life; at the other, the anarchist communists envisage an extensive network of interconnecting mutual-aid institutions as a necessary safeguard for individual interests.[21]

Pacifism

Having briefly considered the differences in organizational structures advocated by anarchistic thought, a mention needs to be made of the other crucial area of disagreement--the use of violence. Anarchists are popularly portrayed as mad bombers and pistol-wielding assassins, and surely anarchy has had its violent revolutionaries. Michael Bakunin, for instance, had a burning faith in violence and destruction; and Max Stirner lauded crime as a weapon against the State.

---

[21]Woodcock, Anarchism, p. 22.

Yet, anarchism, given its assumptions of the nature of man, is irrevocably allied with pacifism. The pacifists-anarchists have accepted the principle of resistance and even revolutionary action, but they stop short of violence, as violence is coercive power and non-anarchistic in principle. Fundamentally, the anarchists fear decisions based on invested interest and entrenched authority--Goodman speaks of the dangers in the "mind-lessness of empty institutions." Resistance makes for open confrontations and, hopefully, the peaceful conflict will result in the utilization of the inherent common sense and empathy of man.

Historically, Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), who rejected the anarchist label, was the first notably pacifist anti-statist. His ideas were dramatically put into practice by Ghandi in India and later by Civil Rights workers in the United States. An attitude of non-violence also permeates the writings of most of the influencial anarch-ists, including Proudhon, Godwin, Tucker, Thoreau, Kropotkin, and, as we shall see in detail, Goodman.

Anarchism and Education

Historically, anarchists have persistently addressed themselves to the role of education in society. Char-acteristically, in fact, they have considered education as the key to enlightenment. Krimerman and Perry go so far as to say, "Indeed, no other movement whatever has

assigned to educational principles, concepts, experiments, and practices a more significant place in its writings and activities."[22] The reason is twofold. First, an anarchistic society places its faith in the individual, rather than in rules, laws, or institutions. When anarchists advocate that a good society will evolve from a free and non-authoritarian community, they ground their beliefs in man's power of reason, but they assume the development of these intellectual faculties. Yet, almost all proponents of an ideal society are committed to an educational system which will foster that particular culture; so that alone will not account for the heavy emphasis anarchists apply to education. Krimerman and Perry, while acknowledging the need for any social reconstructionist to treat the educational system in a manner which will perpetuate that culture, offer this more penetrating analysis of the centrality of education to anarchistic philosophy.

> An explanation of the anarchists' stress on education might better be sought in their view that education should ideally function as the focus of intrinsic value, that is, as the living center and clearest model of what is ultimately desirable in human relations. In other words, education is not a mere training ground for some future community nor is its foremost aim that of producing a supply of well-trained and dedicated anarchist revolutionaries. On the contrary, education must itself manifest, indeed consist of, libertarian relations and activities. Education does not simply lay the

---

[22]Krimerman and Perry, Patterns of Anarchy, p. 404.

> groundwork for subsequent achievements; at its best it constitutes the most complete and most feasible paradigm of those achievements.
>
> . . . The teacher's major aim should be to develop the powers, the autonomy, and the personality (in Berdyaev's sense) of his pupil. Authority and coercion, if he permits himself any at all, should be employed temporarily and solely to eliminate immediate deficiencies (for example, the child's natural ignorance in matters of physical health). Above all, a teacher should strive to encourage his pupils to become men who transcend his own wisdom and accomplishments and are thus fully capable of initiating and executing further steps in their own development of themselves. In short, then, the only forms of coercion, authority, control, interference, and leadership which, for a libertarian, can count as legitimate in the larger community are those that a teacher may rightfully utilize in his endeavor to wean the young away from any further dependence on external regulation. To paraphrase the Republic, could it not be said that for an anarchist the good society is merely the educational community writ large?[23]

Thus, Goodman's exhaustive attentiveness to methods, principles, and practices of rearing our young is consistent with the outstanding anarchist thinkers.

Significant Influences on Paul Goodman

As a Community-Anarchist

Although Goodman is well versed in anarchist history and his works contain traces of the thoughts of Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin, Tolstoy, and Thoreau, there is no question but that he aligns himself most closely with Peter Kropotkin. Woodcock writes of Kropotkin:

---

[23] Ibid., pp. 404-405.

> . . . and in so far as anarchism came to be considered a serious and idealistic theory of social change rather than a creed of class violence and indiscriminate destruction, Kropotkin was principally responsible for the change.[24]

This view of anarchism as a moral philosophy is unquestioningly the tradition which Goodman has endorsed. Goodman is not unlike Kropotkin. Kropotkin was gentle in nature, a pacifist who preferred the open forum to conspiracy, a prolific writer drawn to the ascetic life, prone to ground his thinking in empirical evidence. Using the small village of the Middle Ages as his anarchistic model, he had a "crystal vision of an earthy paradise regained."[25]

Kropotkin was a communist-anarchist, however, where Goodman rejects that category and prefers to call himself a community-anarchist. The distinction stems from the change which took place in the first half of the twentieth century regarding communism. Kropotkin used the term to denote an anti-authoritarian, decentralized collection of voluntary communes, where wages were abolished, distribution was free, and each citizen could take an active part in the everyday affairs of the community. In Goodman's time, of course, communism has come to mean centralization, authoritarianism, nationalism, with an

---

[24] Woodcock, Anarchism, p. 185.

[25] Ibid.

economic policy closer to capitalism than to Kropotkin's communism. Subsequently, Goodman, in order to promote the organizational structures and life-style as did Kropotkin, has preferred the name community-anarchist.

Petr Alexeyevich Kropotkin, born in Moscow in 1842, did outstanding work in geography, geology, and zoology. Under the influence of Darwin's Origin of Species he studied zoology as a field naturalist in Siberia from 1862 to 1866. During these four years his personal observations of the animal kingdom led him to doubt the popular interpretations of the "struggle for existence." During his four years in Siberia Kropotkin had two experiences which did much to influence his political philosophy. First, he became disillusioned with the notion that the mass of the people could be usefully served by administrative machinery. He wrote, ". . . I lost in Siberia whatever faith in state discipline I had cherished before. I was prepared to become an anarchist."[26]

Secondly, his life among the natives of Siberia gave him a profound respect for the accomplishments of the unknown masses in historical events. He concluded that men of initiative are needed everywhere, but that once the impulse has been given, the enterprise must be conducted in some communal way featuring common understanding.

---

[26]Peter Kropotkin, Mutual Aid (Boston: Extending Horizons Books, 1955), p. 4.

He stated that if framers of plans for state discipline could learn from real life experience, "We should then hear far less than at present of schemes of military and pyramidal organization of society."[27]

As a philosophical anarchist Kropotkin saw anarchism as the only means of establishing justice in human relations. He detested violence, and disassociated himself from militant anarchists. To him anarchism was the replacement of state manipulation and incompetence with the spontaneous cooperation of individuals, groups, and nations.

Kropotkin's main work, Mutual Aid, is an historical scientific work aimed at emphasizing the less known concept of the struggle for existence; especially the importance of mutual aid in the development and evolution of mankind. Kropotkin identifies the two different aspects of the struggle. First, there is the "exterior" struggle between the species and its natural environmental conditions and rival species. Secondly, there is the "inner" struggle for the means of existence within the species. It is Kropotkin's belief that the inner struggle has been exaggerated far in excess of either reality or what Darwin himself intended. Therefore, Mutual Aid is an attempt to demonstrate the importance of sociability and the social instinct for the survival and well-being of

---

[27] Ibid., p. 15.

animals, including man. It is not love or even sympathy, says Kropotkin, which causes a man to seize a pail of water and rush toward his neighbors flaming house.

> It is a feeling infinitely wider than love or personal sympathy--an instinct that has been slowly developed among animals and men in the course of an extremely long evolution, and which has taught animals and men alike the force they can borrow from the practice of mutual aid and support, and the joys they can find in social life.
>
> The importance of this distinction will be easily appreciated by the student of animal psychology, and the more so by the student of human ethics. Love, sympathy, and self-sacrifice certainly play an immense part in the progressive development of our moral feelings. But it is not love and not even sympathy upon which Society is based in mankind. It is the conscience--be it only at the stage of an instinct--of human solidarity. It is the unconscious recognition of the force that is borrowed by each man from the practice of mutual aid; of the close dependency of every one's happiness upon the happiness of all; and of the sense of justice, or equity, which brings the individual to consider the rights of every other individual as equal to his own. Upon this broad and necessary foundation the still higher moral feelings are developed.[28]

Sociability, then, is as much a part of the laws of nature as is the struggle for existence.

Kropotkin argues that the anarchist thinker, in order to realize the greatest happiness for humanity, follows the "course traced by the modern philosophy of evolution."[29] That is, considering society as an

---

[28] Ibid., p. xiii.

[29] Peter Kropotkin, "A Scientific Approach to Communist Anarchism," in Patterns of Anarchy, ed. by Leonard I. Krimerman and Lewis Perry (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), p. 225.

aggregation of organisms, he tries to determine the best way to combine individual wants with those of cooperation for the well-being of the species. He studies tendencies of society, and its needs, "and in his ideal he merely points out in which direction evolution goes."[30] Kropotkin cites what he believes to be the two most prominent tendencies throughout the history of mankind. The first is the integration of labor for the benefit of all in such a manner as to not be able to discriminate the contribution of each individual. The second is a tendency toward freedom for each individual in the pursuit of his goals, consistent with the benefit both for himself and the larger society. Thus, Kropotkin asserts that his anarchist views are scientifically grounded in social evolution.

Kropotkin's approval of the evolutionary tendencies constitutes for him an ethical principle. "Anarchists recognize the justice of both tendencies towards economic and political freedom."[31] He goes on to state that to each economic phase of life there corresponds a political phase: absolute monarchy to serfdom; representative government to capital-rule. "But in a society where the distinction between capitalist and laborer has disappeared,

---

[30] Ibid., p. 225.

[31] Ibid.

there is no need of such a government; it would be an anachronism, a nuisance."[32] If there is no ruling elite the workers are free and, according to Kropotkin, this would require a free organization whose only basis could be free voluntary cooperation. Thus, anarchism becomes a synthesis of the two powerful tendencies--political and economic freedom.

Goodman's conception of a self-regulating organism demands freedom for maximum growth. He is led, like Kropotkin, to consider anarchism the only form of government compatible with the nature of man.

As a Libertarian

Goodman, the anarchist, also works the historical tradition of academic liberalism. His ethical posture, his conception of human nature, his construction of the relationship between means and ends and his philosophical commitment to human growth are strikingly similar to the positions taken by John Dewey. Dewey cites three components of liberalism:

> These values are liberty; the development of inherent capacities of individuals made possible through liberty; and the central role of free intelligence in inquiry, discussion and expression.[33]

---

[32] Ibid., p. 226.

[33] John Dewey, Liberalism and Social Action (New York: Capricorn Books, 1963), p. 32.

Dewey, strongly influenced by the evolutionary thoughts of Darwin and Hegel, never forgot that meaningful liberty is a function of the social and economic conditions existing at the moment. In Liberalism and Social Action Dewey stresses this historical neglect on the part of liberals.

> But disregard of history took its revenge. It blinded the eyes of liberals to the fact that their own special interpretations of liberty, individuality and intelligence were themselves historically conditioned, and were relevant only to their own time. They put forward their ideas as immutable truths good at all time and places; they had no idea of historic relativity, either in general or in its application to themselves.[34]

> At one time, liberty signified liberation from chattel slavery; at another time, release of a class from serfdom. During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries it meant liberation from despotic dynastic rule. A century later it meant release of industrialists from inherited legal customs that hampered the rise of new forces of production. Today [1935], it signifies liberation from material insecurity and from the coercions and repressions that prevent multitudes from participation in the vast cultural resources that are at hand. The direct impact of liberty always has to do with some class or group that is suffering in a special way from some form of constraint exercised by the distribution of powers that exists in contemporary society.[35]

Liberals, Dewey says, have too often failed to distinguish between legal freedom--freedom from restraint--and positive freedom--the ability to effectuate one's thoughts and desires. Consequently they have

---

[34] Ibid., p. 41.

[35] Ibid., p. 48.

at times supported the status quo which stood for legal freedom, but which in reality was a barrier to meaningful freedom. The classic example is the liberal fight for laissez faire capitalism long after the large corporate structures were exploitative and monopolistic.

Dewey, like Kropotkin and Goodman, rejected the notion of individuals having a psychological and moral nature independent of their association with one another. Therefore, the institutions of society determine to a significant extent the behavior and beliefs of individuals within the society. This is not to say that certain native organic and biological structures do not remain fairly constant, but, rather, that the "laws" of human nature are laws of individuals in association. Thus, Dewey was critical of the individualistic liberalism which posited opposition between the individual and society.

> The only form of enduring social orgization that is now possible is one in which the new forces of productivity are cooperatively controlled and used in the interest of the effective society. . . . The ends can now be achieved only by reversal of the means to which early liberalism was committed.[36]

But, Dewey, like Goodman, held that the social institutions had gotten out of hand, and further, that there was a need for reform beyond what was typically "liberal."

---

[36] Ibid., p. 54

> It demands no great power of intelligence to see that under present conditions the isolated individual is well-nigh helpless. Concentration and corporate organization are the rule. But the concentration and corporate organization are still controlled in their operation by ideas that were institutionalized in eons of separate individual effort. The attempts at cooperation for mutual benefit that are put forth are precious as experimental moves. But that society itself should see to it that a cooperative industrial order be instituted, one that is consonant with the realities of production enforced by an era of machinery and power is so novel an idea to the general mind that its mere suggestion is hailed with abusive epithets--sometimes with imprisonment.[37]

> In short, liberalism must now become radical, meaning by "radical" perception of the necessity of thorough-going changes in the set-up of institutions and corresponding activity to bring the changes to pass. For the gulf between what the actual situation makes possible and the actual state itself is so great that it cannot be bridged by piecemeal policies undertaken ad hoc. The process of producing the changes will be, in any case, a gradual one. But "reforms" that deal now with this abuse and now with that without having a social goal based upon an inclusive plan, differ entirely from effort at reforming, in its literal sense, the institutional scheme of things. The liberals of more than a century ago were denounced in their time as subversive radicals, and only when the new economic order was established did they become apologists for the status quo or else content with social patchwork. If radicalism be defined as perception of need for radical change, then today any liberalism which is not also radicalism is irrelevant and doomed.[38]

Dewey, like Kropotkin and Goodman, emphatically rejected the use of violence frequently associated with radicalism. Democracy, to Dewey, is associated with organized intelligence, and he sees this as antithetical to violence.

---

[37] Ibid., p. 61.

[38] Ibid., p. 62.

It has not been my intention to demonstrate that Dewey was an anarchist. He was not. It is my opinion, however, that Goodman's philosophical conception of the "good society," particularly his notion of liberality, is closely allied with Dewey's. Further, I suggest that their psychological positions on the nature of man, especially the social nature, are sufficiently similar to warrant identifying Goodman as a liberal in the Deweyian sense.[39]

When I classify Goodman as a liberal I do so at my peril because he unhesitatingly refers to himself as a community-anarchist. And there is no question that he is hostile to modern liberalism as he sees it. He believes that modern liberals have lost sight of the historical libertarian principles--individuality, liberty, intelligence--and have clung tenaciously to an overgrown institutional structure which precludes the very principles it was organized to foster. Goodman also accuses modern liberals of polarizing the powerful state and the "protected" individual. This restricts the use and

---

[39]Dewey, like Goodman, argues for putting "the results of the mechanism of abundance at the free disposal of individuals." However, Dewey speaks in terms of a socialized economy. If he means large centralized state-owned corporate structures he is, of course, not compatible with Goodman's commitment to decentralization. Although Goodman discriminatingly points out that decentralization is an empirical problem and in some cases--e.g. health and transit--we need more centralization. John Dewey, Liberalism and Social Action, p. 89.

development of human capacities and results in anxiety, frustration, boredom, stupidity, and mis-directed aggression. He considers as the essence of community-anarchism that it strengthens every kind of humanly manageable institution and association. Thus, modern liberalism and community-anarchy are similar in their pursuit of humanitarian ends, but they are promoting incompatible means.

In spite of Goodman's acknowledged rejection of modern liberalism I have tried to demonstrate that he is philosophically aligned with liberal tradition as described by John Dewey. Further evidence for this conclusion is contained in an article "Is Anarchism Distinct from Liberalism?" Here Goodman replies to Richard Lichtman, who wrote a critical review of an article by Goodman on the topic of pornography. In the article Goodman identifies freedom.

> In my opinion, we must understand freedom in a very positive sense: it is the condition of initiating activity. Apart from this pregnant meaning, mere freedom from interference is both trivial and in fact cannot be substantially protected. . . . I submit that in the heroic age of the liberal philosophy, gradually extending over religion, science, economics, and politics, from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, liberals were saying pretty much what I have been saying. Freedom meant freedom to enterprise, to bear witness, to initiate and govern.[40]

Goodman says that by the time of John Stuart Mill meaningful liberal thought "has begun to sour a good

---

[40]Paul Goodman, "Is Anarchism Distinct from Liberalism?" Patterns of Anarchy, p. 55.

deal." Goodman, with Dewey, does not view freedom as legal liberty or the absence of restraint, but rather as the ability for individuals to grow in their culture by utilizing their full natural capacities. In the closing paragraph of his reply to Lichtman, Goodman castigates the liberals for their retreat from the battle to improve the quality of life. His final sentence reads, "That is why, since the nineteenth century, some of us liberals have chosen to call ourselves anarchists."[41]

As a Social Critic

Unquestioningly at the heart of Goodman's criticisms of mid-twentieth century society is the idea that the requirements and expectations of man as a citizen, patriot, employee, spouse, parent, and lover are incompatible with his animal requirements for happiness. Clearly this thesis has been most notably promulgated by Sigmund Freud, especially in Civilization and Its Discontents. While Goodman is less pessimistic than Freud as to the prospects for remedying this antagonism, they are in general agreement that the conflict flows from man's instinctual nature. I believe, therefore, that a short treatment of this analysis by Freud will be invaluable as a prelude to the following chapters on Goodman's concept of man.

---

[41] Ibid., p. 56.

Freud sees man as an animal who, lacking any God given purpose, seeks to maximize his pleasure and minimize his pain--the pleasure principle. Happiness is found in a combination of life experiences. He cites intoxication, love, beauty, the use of our mental faculties, work,[42] and the gratification of our instincts. Of particular importance, in light of our concern with Goodman, is Freud's assertion that the highest happiness is spontaneous gratification of the instincts.

---

[42] While Freud claims that intellectual and physical work is a source of happiness, he does not view it as intense a pleasure as is the gratification of instincts. Freud writes: "Professional activity is a source of special satisfaction if it is a freely chosen one--if, that is to say, by means of sublimation, it makes possible the use of existing inclinations, of persisting or constitutionally reinforced instinctual impulses. And yet, as a path to happiness, work is not highly prized by men. They do not strive after it as they do after other possibilities of satisfaction. The great majority of people only work under the stress of necessity, and this natural human aversion to work raises most difficult social problems." (Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents [New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1961], p. 27).

Goodman is in disagreement with Freud on this point. Goodman finds no "natural aversion to work." Rather, he contends that meaningful work is probably a requirement for a happy life. However, the work, to be fulfilling, must be compatible with the nature of the individual worker. It is for this reason that Goodman applauds those who quit their jobs to seek their avocations, and why he recommends that we design jobs to fit people, rather than adjust people to predesigned jobs.

Thus, when Freud argues that the weak point of work as a source of happiness is that it "is accessible to only a few people," he is arguing that job requirements and human instinctual impulses are at odds. Goodman agrees. He asserts, however, that it needn't be that way.

> What we call happiness in the strictest sense comes from the (preferably sudden) satisfaction of needs which have been dammed up to a high degree, and it is from its nature only possible as an episodic phenomenon. When any situation that is desired by the pleasure principle is prolonged, it only produces a feeling of mild contentment. We are so made that we can derive intense enjoyment only from a contrast and very little from a state of things.[43]

> The feeling of happiness derived from the satisfaction of a wild instinctual impulse untamed by the ego is incomparably more intense than that derived from sating an instinct that has been tamed.[44]

In his opening sentence in Civilization and Its Discontents Freud suggests that "people commonly use false standards of measurement"[45] in their pursuit of happiness. If this were his main contention he could simply argue that better education and a revamping of social institutions and mores will produce happiness in our civilized world. This is not the case, however, and herein lie the roots of Freud's pessimism. Freud wants to argue that the instincts of man are in substantial conflict, and that the gratification of some instincts through the development of civilization are possible only through the sublimation of other instincts that can be satiated only in a less civilized culture.

---

[43] Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, p. 23.

[44] Ibid., p. 26.

[45] Ibid., p. 1.

> We believe that civilization has been built up, under the pressure of the struggle for existence, by sacrifices in gratification of the primitive impulses, and that it is to a great extent for ever being re-created, as each individual, successively joining the community, repeats the sacrifice of his instinctive pleasures for the common good.[46]

Therefore, no matter which way he turns man is unable to gratify all his instinctual needs, and to that extent he is unhappy.

Freud cites three sources of unhappiness. First, there is the inevitable decay and pain from our bodies; secondly, the uncontrollable forces of destruction of the external world; and thirdly, the heartbreak and suffering as a result of our relationships with other people. It is this third source of anguish that he believes to be the most painful, and also to which he has dedicated his life's work.

Historically, in order to experience happiness and avoid unhappiness, man has persistently pursued a greater degree of civilization. Inherent in being civilized is the formation of communities.

> In the developmental process of the individual, the programme of the pleasure principle, which consists in finding the satisfaction of happiness, is retained as the main aim. Integration in, or adaptation to, a human community appears as a scarcely avoidable condition which must be fulfilled before this aim of happiness can be

---

[46]Sigmund Freud, A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis (New York: Washington Square Press, 1952), p. 27.

> achieved. If it could be done without that condition, it would perhaps be preferable.[47]

But, says Freud, the attainment of happiness cannot be done without "that condition"--the establishment of communities. The foundation for this essential social institution is Eros and Ananke (Love and Necessity). In order to provide for his means of livelihood and to satisfy his sexual desires primitive man formed bands, which inevitably evolved into more complicated networks.

It is this absolute need to form communities, and the irrevocable restrictions which they inherently impose, that forms the insurmountable paradox on which the ship of happiness must flounder. According to Freud the establishment of a community means that the pleasure principle is circumscribed, for in the process of civilization "the most important thing is the aim of creating a unity out of the individual human being."[48] (In Freud's terms the pleasure principle is modified by the reality principle.) Freud admits that in forming a community the aim of happiness is still prevalent, "but it is pushed into the background. It almost seems as if the creation of a great human community would be most successful if no attention had to be paid to the happiness of the individuals."[49]

---

[47] Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, p. 87.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

Surely one of the decisive contentions in Freud's thesis is the validity of the incompatibility between the pleasure principle and the essential restrictions imposed by the community. It is to these restrictions that one must turn to evaluate his argument. Freud argues that the impositions of civilization are most notable in regards to its demands for beauty, cleanliness, orderliness, a bias toward the intellectual life, and in man's social relationships. Central to all of these modifications of the natural, or uncivilized, life is the renunciation of instinct--which, we recall, is the highest source of pleasure.

Whereas the individual, guided by the pleasure principle, perpetually seeks his own gratification, a community seeks the efficient operation and perpetuation of itself. For instance, surely one of the first requirements for stabilized community institutions is orderliness. Yet, Freud finds that "human beings exhibit as inborn tendency to carelessness, irregularity and unreliability in their work . . ."[50] It is the control of these "inborn tendencies" that characterizes civilization. Freud says, "this replacement of the power of the individual by the power of the community constitutes the decisive step of civilization."[51]

---

[50] Ibid., p. 40.

[51] Ibid., p. 42.

> The final outcome should be a rule of law to which all--except those who are not capable of entering a community--have contributed by a sacrifice of their instincts, and which leaves no one--again with the same exception--at the mercy of brute force.
>
> The liberty of the individual is no gift of civilization. . . . The urge for freedom, therefore, is directed against particular forms and demands of civilization or against civilization altogether.
>
> . . . and this seems the most important of all, it is impossible to overlook the extent to which civilization is built upon a renunciation of instinct, how much it presupposes precisely the non-satisfaction (by suppression, repression or some other means?) of powerful instincts.[52]

The two instincts--I do not mean to imply a mutual exclusiveness--which have been historically contained in the evolution of civilization are the natural tendencies toward aggression and sexual gratification. I believe Freud's analysis of neurosis attributable to unfulfilled sexual urges is common knowledge, and I shan't belabor it here. However, his work on aggression is crucial to Goodman's psychology, and I believe a short sketch of it is necessary.

Civilization, Freud claims, is not content with merely encouraging love relationships between one man and one woman. But, rather, "It aims at binding the members of the community together in a libidinal way as well and employs every means to that end."[53] This is demonstrated in such ideals as "Thou shalt love thy neighbor

---

[52] Ibid., pp. 42, 43, 44.

[53] Ibid., p. 56.

as thyself," and a second commandment which Freud finds incomprehensible, "Love They Enemies." Freud finds an insoluable conflict in this need to bind the members of a community together with the glue of love. For it is not, by his observation, man's nature to love indiscriminately.[54]

In fact, argues Freud, to be loved is not one of man's primary goals.

> The element of truth behind all this, which people are so ready to disavow, is that men are not gentle creatures who want to be loved, and who at the most can defend themselves if they are attacked; they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctive endowments is to be reckoned a powerful share of aggressiveness.[55]
>
> The existence of this inclination to aggression, which we can detect in ourselves and justly assume to be present in others is the factor which disturbs our relations with our neighbors and which forces civilization into such a high expenditure of energy. In consequence of this primary mutual hostility of human beings, civilized society is perpetually threatened with disintegration. The interest of work in common would not hold it together; instinctual passions are stronger than reasonable interests. Civilization has to use its utmost efforts in order to set limits to man's aggressive instincts and to hold the manifestations of them in check by psychical reaction-formations.[56]

---

[54]Perhaps Freud's position could be strengthened if he discriminated between the various kinds of love. He is guilty of setting up an opponent's argument differently than the opponent himself would have done, and then attacking the self-designed argument. I am suggesting that the 'love' intended in "Love Thy Neighbor as Thy Self" is better understood as agapé which implies a love of humanity and not of a particular personality.

[55]Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, p. 58.

[56]Ibid., p. 59.

> In all that follows I adopt the standpoint, therefore, that the inclination to aggression is an original, self-subsisting instinctual disposition in man, and I return to my view that it constitutes the greatest impediment to civilization.[57]

Freud, in language reminiscent of Thomas Hobbes, argues that man makes these sacrifices to civilization only because of his inability to defend himself and provide for himself in an uncivilized setting. In short, civilized man has exchanged the gratification of certain instincts for a measure of security.

It seems necessary at this point to deviate momentarily. Certainly Freud's concept of aggression is incomplete without mention of his "death instinct," which he alludes to in this concise statement on civilization.

> And now, I think, the meaning of the evolution of civilization is no longer obscure to us. It must present the struggle between Eros and Death, between the instinct of life and the instinct of destruction, as it works itself out in the human species.[58]

This thesis, which Goodman finds dubious, is propounded most completely in Beyond the Pleasure Principle. The short sketch which follows is intended only as an acknowledgment of this concept of Freud's, as our main concern--the restrictions on aggression imposed by civilization--is understandable without an exhaustive review of the death instinct.

---

[57] Ibid., p. 69.

[58] Ibid.

Freud contends that early in the process of evolution, life emanated from inanimate substances. And further, that in the mind there exists a compulsion to repeat which overrides the pleasure principle. That is, "instincts tend towards the restoration of an earlier state of things."[59] And, of course, the "earlier state of things was inanimate." Now, coupling this instinct to return to a previous state with the sexual instinct toward a prolongation of life, Freud is able to form his hypothesis which theorizes civilization as a struggle between Eros and Death.

However, the validity of Freud's postulation of inherent aggression does not rest solely, or even significantly, on his death instinct, and as the aggression is our prime concern we shall return to that inquiry. Recalling that civilization results in the strengthening of the masses and thus rendering innocuous several individual instincts, we have occasion to wonder as to the disposure of this instinctual aggression which apparently finds no outlet. Freud's answer, like Goodman's, is that it is "introjected," "internalized," directed back against the ego.

> There it is taken over by a portion of the ego, which sets itself over against the rest of the ego as super-ego, and which now, in the form of "conscience" is ready to put into action against the

---

[59]Sigmund Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1959), p. 69.

> ego the same harsh aggressiveness that the ego would have liked to satisfy upon other extraneous individuals. The tension between the harsh super-ego and the ego that is subjected to it is called by us the sense of guilt; it expresses itself as a need for punishment.[60]

Thus, the feeling of guilt, which Goodman also finds as a pervasive cause of unhappiness, arises initially from fear of authority, and later, after introjection has taken place, from fear of the super-ego. This line of thought is seen in this analysis by Goodman.

> Why are we so well behaved? It seems to require so few in society to deter the rest. I can think of two factors. First, it is not the present threat or risk that deters, but childhood fear and guilt that were implanted when disproportionate strength was indeed brought to bear: the policeman is papa and mama writ large, so we are still disproportionately small. A psychopath is relatively free of these particular internalized fears, so he calculates only the present risk, which is often not great. But, for most, a small deterrent keeps the old time spasm of fear from thawing out; we remain in a state of deep freeze; and so a few easily prevent the happiness of all.[61]

The result is that we cannot liberate ourselves by a renunciation of our aggressive instincts; because in the process of renunciating these instincts we erect a conscience which is a source of unhappiness. Freud says,

> A threatened external unhappiness--loss of love and punishment on the part of the external authority--has been exchanged for a permanent internal unhappiness, for the tension of the state of guilt.[62]

---

[60] Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, p. 70.

[61] Goodman, Five Years, p. 11.

[62] Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, p. 75.

In his closing remarks in Civilization and Its Discontents Freud concludes that he has intended

> to represent the sense of guilt as the most important problem in the development of civilization, and to show that the price we pay for our advance in civilization is a loss of unhappiness through the heightening of the sense of guilt.[63]

The more guilt one experiences, the less happy he is. Civilization, Freud asserts, assumes that a man's ego is psychologically capable of anything that is demanded of it; that is, it can accept any amount of guilt and suppress any instinct. This, argues Freud, is a mistake. Once pushed beyond a specific point man will revolt or develop a neurosis. Freud then raises the question as to whether an entire civilization, "or some epochs of civilization" can become neurotic. He does not speculate as to the possibility of this, but he does suggest that future researchers will. He was right. Eric Fromm acknowledged the challenge by Freud, and Fromm's The Sane Society is a probing analysis as to the extent that the United States has become a neurotic society. This assertion permeates all of Goodman's writing also.

This inclusion of Freud's exploration of the incompatibility between civilization and human instincts is not intended as being part and parcel of Goodman's psychology. Most assuredly it is not; as Goodman is far less Hobbesian in his assumptions about the social nature

---

[63] Ibid., p. 81.

of man, and he is far more optimistic regarding the function of aggression in organisms. Yet, Goodman is in substantial agreement with Freud's thesis that civilization, especially if it evolves mindlessly and without concern for animal instincts, is a potent source of human misery.

Concluding Comments on Goodman's Anarchism

Goodman's anarchism does not emanate from natural law theory. Rather, it is grounded in his psychological beliefs coupled with a humanistic/libertarian philosophical commitment to the growth of man, and tempered by empirical observations of how institutions actually function.

Goodman claims the press speaks of anarchy to mean chaotic riot and meaningless defiance of authority. Reporters tend to lump together "communists and anarchists" and "bourgeoise revisionists, infantile leftists and anarchists." Yet Goodman has little difficulty in making the distinctions between socialism, communism, and anarchy. He demonstrates that even the communists dispel the anarchist.

> The possibility of an anarchist revolution--decentralist, anti-police, anti-party, anti-bureaucratic, organized by voluntary association, and putting a premium on grassroots spontaneity--has always been anathema to Marxist Communists and has been ruthlessly suppressed. Marx expelled the Anarchist Unions from the International Workingmen's Association; Lenin and Trotsky slaughtered the

> Anarchists in the Ukraine and at Kronstadt; Stalin murdered them during the Spanish Civil War; Castro has jailed them in Cuba, and Gomulka in Poland.[64]

Neither is Goodman's anarchism socialistic, if by socialism is meant common ownership. Goodman believes that corporate capitalism, state capitalism, and state communism are all incompatible with maximizing the growth of human beings. In other words, he does not believe that ownership is the determining variable in the problem of humanizing institutions. He finds the centralization, inflexibility, and authoritarianism of all three types of production mentioned above as exploiting man and castrating him of his initiative, aggression, and spontaneity.

Central to community-anarchism as espoused by Goodman is "participatory democracy." Simply put, it demands a say in the decisions that shape the lives of the people involved. It stands against the bureaucratization, social engineering, centralization, the pervasiveness of mass media, as well as taxation without representation. It lauds "grassroots populism, the town meeting, Congregationalism, federalism, Student Power, Black Power, workers' management, soldiers' democracy, guerrilla organizations."[65]

---

[64] Paul Goodman, "Black Flag of Anarchism," New York Times Magazine, July 14, 1968, p. 15.

[65] Ibid., p. 16.

Goodman's confidence in participatory democracy, or spontaneous democracy, naturally flows out of his social-psychology. It centers on his belief that the human organism is both self-regulatory and social in nature. If left alone the free decisions of people working in their common interest will be graceful, forceful, inventive, and intelligent. In opposition, top-down authority and complex situations beyond human comprehension--out of human scale--make people anxious, bored, stupid, and hostile.

In a New York Times article, July 14, 1966, Goodman carefully distinguishes between anarchy as a merely negative philosophy, which he heartily opposes, and anarchism, as an ordered community society based on voluntary enterprise and voluntary institutions, which he advocates. The following summation of anarchism appears in that article.

> Anarchism is not anarchy. It is against existing social and political systems, but it proposes to replace them with some form of ordered decentralized, individualistic community cooperation.
>
> Anarchism is to come about not through violent revolution, since that creates its own rigid counter-organization, but through eventual mass understanding and increased practice of anarchist living--as may be seen, for example, among some of today's students and hippies. Its effect is revolutionary, but in general its means are to be disruptive rather than violent, persuasive rather than dictatorial.
>
> Anarchism would run a complex modern society not by increased centralization but by using cybernetic techniques to make small community

> units viable. With modern technology it would be possible for very small-scale industrial units to maintain their own sources of energy, their own small-scale industrial units, their own computerized agriculture, and so on.[66]

Goodman's community-anarchism, grounded in the assumptions of human nature promulgated by Peter Kropotkin, purports to foster the libertarian principles espoused by John Dewey. And, it is my opinion, that Goodman turns to anarchism because he shares with Freud the view that civilization, improperly structured, can dehumanize man by erecting insurmountable barriers to his spontaneity and natural instincts.

In the Pacifist Tradition

Goodman is unfailingly a pacifist. He successfully resisted the draft during World War II and his writings are consistently scornful of the use of violence. Typical of his abhorrence of violence is this statement from Kafka's Prayer. "Violence is truly as Aristotle said, moving something not by the energy of its own nature; and truly by violence no good thing is accomplished."[67] And in People or Personnel he writes:

---

[66] Ibid., p. 20.

[67] Goodman, Kafka's Prayer, p. 82.

> In the violent situation the evil effect of practicing violence has distinctions. The violence of those who revolt tends to be brutal and vindictive; it is humanity debased and debasing itself further. The violence practiced by the established and powerful is dehumanized, they have become like machines, and this is probably worse.[68]

He is, however, an ardent supporter and participant in non-violent action such as picketing, demonstrating, resisting, and other means of open confrontation. He supports non-violent activity because it generates conflict and fosters the use of intelligence. He writes, "For the most part unanimity is found not by relaxing but by sharpening the conflict, risking natural coercion until the emergence of a new idea."[69] That is, as complex institutions run for their own sake, individuals within are frequently unconcerned and/or ignorant of the consequences of their action or inaction; and "acts which lead to unconcerned behavior are crimes."[70] A confrontation with an aroused public, however, brings the consequences into the open and asks "What is your real will, when you confront our resistance and have to think, feel, and

---

[68]Paul Goodman, People or Personnel and Like a Conquered Province (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 392. These two books have been published in one volume. References will be made to the specific book, not to the entire volume.

[69]Paul Goodman, Drawing the Line (New York: Random House, 1946), p. 44.

[70]Ibid., p. 5.

decide?"[71] Therefore, Goodman both applauded and chastized the Students for a Democratic Society for its activities at Columbia in the spring of 1968. He supported their efforts to confront the administration with the issues involving the new Morningside gymnasium and the university's military affiliations, but he was critical of their going beyond those issues merely to radicalize the student body. Goodman, a student of Kant, argues that everything must be done for its own sake.

> But the concept of "radicalizing" is a rather presumptuous manipulation of people for their own good. It is anarchist for people to act on principle and learn, the hard way, that the powers that be are brutal and unjust, but it is authoritarian for people to be expended for the cause of somebody's strategy.[72]

In opposing the violent activity of the Guevaristas, Goodman uses an ethical principle refuting the difference between means and ends. He argues that he does not condone the use of any activity aimed at reforming a society that he could not use in a good society. Thus, where the Guevaristas are for clandestine conspiracy, he is for open confrontation. In November of 1967 Goodman expressed concern at the young radicals growing attachment to violence. He wrote:

---

[71]Paul Goodman, "The Resisters Support U.S. Traditions and Interests," New York Times Magazine, November 26, 1967, p. 122.

[72]Goodman, "Black Flag of Anarchism, p. 11.

> In my opinion, also, they will have to learn that one is not going to re-structure modern society with a fraction of the 10 per cent Negro population, nor even with the "Third World" ruled by Ben Bellas, Nassers, Maos, Nkrumahs, Sukarnos, or their successors. This is not the stuff of new humanism. For instance, those who objected to being processed at Berkeley will have to think seriously about Chairman Mao's little red book. And those who want to make love not war but who also want to imitate Che Guevara in American cities, must ask themselves what adequate guerilla tactics would be in a high technology, namely to poison the water, wreck the subways, and cause power failures in New York and Chicago; is this what they want?[73]

Clearly Goodman, like Kropotkin, believes that revolutionaries cannot make revolution, rather they can only encourage, link, illuminate, and guide the efforts that originate among the dissatisfied people themselves. Goodman's pacifism is consistent with his ethical stance, and with his pragmatic means-ends continuum.

---

[73]Goodman, Like a Conquered Province, p. 437.

CHAPTER III

MAN AS A SELF-REGULATING ORGANISM

> It's an empirical question what the average norms of inner self-regulation are: for example, Luther said that people should have sexual intercourse twice a week. That's an empirical observation--and a rather good one. To me, this seems to be the most beautiful attitude to take toward things like that--that is, this animal can take care of itself, so if we have to give people advice let's see by and large how that animal does operate.[1]

The dominant thesis central to all of Goodman's proposals and recommendations is the claim that man is a self-regulating organism. Nor is it sufficient to argue that man can be self-regulating. Rather, if he is to fulfill his potential and live with grace, force, and vigor he must be self-regulating. This theme is at the heart of Goodman's ideas for anarchism, decentralization, and a wholesale reduction of top-down influence, whether the arena is the state, the corporation, or school administration.

Goodman is a humanist and a functionalist. The proper life for man is one that enables him to develop

---

[1]Paul Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine (New York: Horizon Press, 1962), p. 84.

and utilize his mental, physical, and sensual capacities. Only then can mankind progress and build a better world. For man to fully utilize his capabilities he must be aware of them and cognizant of the interrelationship with the environment. Goodman adopts a unitary concept when speaking of environment and organism. He finds it senseless to speak of an organism breathing without the environmental air or of the organism stepping without the ground underfoot. The human organism/environment is not only physical but social and cultural. Therefore, in any humane study, Goodman speaks of a field in which social-cultural, animal, and physical factors interact. This is, of course, a Gestaltist approach.

> . . . we believe that the Gestalt outlook is the original, undistorted, natural approach to life; that is, to man's thinking, acting, feeling. The average person having been raised in an atmosphere full of splits, has lost his Wholeness, his Integrity. To come together again he has to heal the dualism of his person, of his thinking, and of his language. He is accustomed to thinking of contrasts--of infantile and nature, of body and mind, organism and environment, self and reality, as if they were opposing entities. The unitary outlook which can dissolve such a dualistic approach is buried but not destroyed and as we intend to show, can be regained with wholesome advantage.[2]

The concept of unity is one reason why Goodman supports psychotherapy rather than psychoanalysis.

---

[2]Frederick Perls, Ralph F. Hefferline, and Paul Goodman, Gestalt Therapy (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1951), p. viii.

Free-association is intended to uncover experiences characteristically hidden in the subconscious. But it relies solely on the patient's ability to recall and to verbalize what he thinks or feels. Psychotherapy, on the other hand, attempts to "recover all experiences concomitantly--whether they be physical or mental, sensory, emotional, or verbal--for it is in the unity functioning of "body," "mind," and "environment" (these are all abstractions) that the lively figure ground emerges."[3]

Goodman argues that neither a full understanding of the organism's functions nor the complete knowledge of the environment will provide sufficient information for psychology. Rather, the Gestalt-psychology approach concerns itself with the relation of figure and background. The healthy figure-ground formation is represented by attention, concentration, interest, concern, excitement, and grace. The unhealthy figure-ground to the contrary is characterized by confusion, boredom, compulsions, fixations, anxiety, amnesias, stagnation, and self-consciousness. It is the function of psychotherapy to enable the patient to produce healthy figure-grounds--which is natural in situations that admit of organismic self-regulation.

---

[3] Ibid., p. 83. Gestalt Therapy is co-authored, but I have used the book under the assumption that Goodman is in agreement with all of the content.

Evidence as to the truth of the unitary conception of the organism may be demonstrated by observing the functioning organism. An organism functioning as a whole--body, feeling, environment--will know what it is about. It will function with clarity and self-awareness.

> When you relinquish your determination to make your behavior fit the arbitrary, more or less fixed pattern that you have taken over from the "authorities," aware need and spontaneous interest come to the surface and reveal to you what you are and what it is appropriate for you to do. This is your nature, the very core of your vitality.[4]

The unitary concept enables Goodman to claim he writes on only one subject--"the human beings I know in their man-made scene." It is this approach which obligates him to punctuate his educational proposals with references and recommendations involving architecture, vocations, government, rural reconstruction, food production, etc. Problems of growth and human development must take into account all contacts between the organism and its environment. The isolation of any single element--e.g. education--must result in error-laden thinking, because, properly considered, education affects and is affected by all existing institutions in the environment.

---

[4] Ibid., p. 112.

Human Nature as Creative Adjustment

> Everybody engages in creative arts and is likely to carry a sketchbook, proving what the psychologists and progressive educators have always claimed, that every child is creative if not blocked. Resigning from the rat race, they have removed the block.[5]

Goodman agrees with Kant that the question "What is man?" is unanswerable. Man is, to a limited extent, malleable and is always changing. In fact, the ability to adjust in favorable circumstances is itself an essential of the basic human nature. Human nature is a sharing of not only animal but extremely divergent cultural factors. For this reason Goodman refuses to identify a human nature, because not all men have the same human nature. Rather, he argues that whatever it is, human nature is a potentiality. In adjusting to its environment human nature creates itself. Living, in fact, is a process of making creative adjustments to further the growth of the self-regulating organism. In this sense psychology is the study of creative adjustment. All men, given proper environmental conditions, are creative.

Goodman cites as evidence that the organism is creative and self-regulating the fact that man evolved "to the point of having approximately the same form and functional properties as modern man prior to the time of

---

[5]Goodman, Growing Up Absurd, p. 176.

the invention of language itself."[6] He anticipates the argument that while this may have been possible in times past, our technological modern civilization simply doesn't admit of self-regulation. His reply is that there is little evidence that a self-regulating organism would tolerate society as it is organized today. This is, of course, the basic thesis running throughout his fiction, non-fiction, and works of art. He argues that the organism must be creative and self-regulating and that education, technology, society, etc. ought to be adjusted to serve the self-regulating needs. Modern society, in contrast, assumes an infinite malleability of man, and seeks to adjust him to the institutional needs of society. In short, to a large extent Goodman's treatment of human nature centers on the growth needs of a creative self-regulating organism.

Spontaneous Consciousness of Organismic Needs

> You can't be interested in making money for somebody, because that isn't interesting. You have to be interested in some product. Profits are not products. But trade is interesting; to distribute goods, and see people better off. Trade could be very interesting.[7]

Organismic self-regulation is the process by which the dominant needs come to the forefront of awareness as

---

[6]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 20.

[7]Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 168.

they arise. No one needs to tell the organism when it should eat, sleep, make love, or cry. These needs arise spontaneously and the organism can reach equilibrium by merely giving way to a felt desire. Crying, for instance, is a felt need for an organism which has sustained loss. If one gives in to the need it enables the organism to release the sense of loss and to once again become aware of other needs. However, if the organism has introjected a social norm which is critical of crying, it may deliberately suppress the tears which has the dual crippling effect of not allowing release and of not freeing the organism to become aware of other needs.

Spontaneous needs cannot be eradicated via punishment. Goodman argues that we punish at our peril. He would have us do so only when the organism's safety is threatened. We may paddle the child to keep him out of the street, but Goodman finds few other instances where punishment has a positive consequence. When strong desires are frustrated or punished the child actively inhibits himself. He then proceeds to identify with those whose authority controls him. When carried far enough the child loses his desire and his power of initiation--which are both necessary for growth. Punishment does not annihilate the need to behave in that way that met with punishment, but it teaches the organism to hold back the punishable responses. However, the

> . . . impulse or the wish remains as strong as ever and, since this is not satisfied, it is constantly organizing the motor apparatus--its posture, pattern of muscular tonus, and incipient movements--in the direction of overt expression.[8]

The position taken here is that the human organism is active, not passive. Thus, the inhibition of spontaneous desires or behaviors is not merely the absence of those behaviors, but is the conscious holding in of those punishable overt performances. Thus, what started as a conflict between the organism and its environment becomes a conflict within the organism itself.[9] The result is an inhibition of felt need and a corresponding loss of grace and vigor as the organism uses energy to suppress spontaneous desires.

Man as a Pleasure Seeking Animal

> "Look here," says the Dutchman in a rasping voice. "An animal that does not move directly toward its chief desires--safety, sexual pleasure, exploration--is demented. (I'm not hungry, I'll eat after a while.) Suppose there are obstacles: then they do not move as directly as possible to circumvent or destroy the obstacles. This is to be simply demented. In fact, long ago they have forgotten what their chief desires are: and they construct and encourage and submit to obstacles in order to distract themselves from remembering what their desires are. Then here comes some fool and proves to them, by the plainest demonstration from the most obvious evidence, that they are acting against their own

---

[8] Perls, Hefferline, and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 146.

[9] This is the source of guilt as analyzed by Freud. See Chapter II.

> welfare. Naturally they turn a deaf ear. They are quite demented." His voice is like an iron file.[10]

So speaks one of the characters in The Empire City. Throughout his writings Goodman makes the comment that life is "simple but hard." He wants to say that man, like other animals, finds growth and satisfaction in the simple things, but that the simple things are frequently difficult to attain. He is fond of quoting from Franz Kafka that "life is a mathematical problem." That is, the means for satisfying the organisms of this world are available, but the organism does not always come into contact with the need fulfilling environment. For instance, potentially there is someone to love for each of us, "but lust seldom meets its most satisfying potential."[11] The following lines are from a poem in Hawkweed.

> People tend to like me who know me
> nor am I shy to pick up friends,
> that I am usually unhappy
> is only mathematical
> rarely is anyone both lovely and available;[12]

Of course, claims Goodman, most of us increase our difficulties by suppressing our animal desires in favor of less satisfying introjected desires--material goods, a

---

[10]Paul Goodman, The Empire City (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1964), p. 301.

[11]Paul Goodman, Adam and His Works (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), p. 381.

[12]Paul Goodman, Hawkweed (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), p. 153.

better job, status, etc. He does not argue that pleasure is the sole criterion of the good, but he does assert that pleasure is an excellent indication of the good.

> So pleasure, the feeling of contact, is always, in whatever form and under whatever conditions, a prima facie evidence of vitality and growth. In ethics it is not the sole criterion--there is no sole criterion--but its occurrence is always positive evidence toward a behavior, and its absence always raises a question.[13]

He says that the hierarchy of needs is "capital for ethics and politics." The hierarchy is, in a sense, an inductive theory of human nature. That is, the concept of healthy self-regulation is, in fact, the theory of human nature. Goodman's hierarchy of values is similar in kind to Abraham Maslow's as presented in Toward a Psychology of Being.

> All of the foregoing may now be related to the general motivation theory, set forth in my Motivation and Personality, particularly the theory of need gratification, which seems to me to be the most important single principle underlying all healthy human development. The single holistic principle that binds together the multiplicity of human motives is the tendency for a new and higher need to emerge as the lower need fulfills itself by being sufficiently gratified. The child who is fortunate enough to grow normally and well gets satiated and bored with the delights that he has savored sufficiently, and eagerly (without pushing) goes on to higher more complex, delights as they become available to him without danger or threat.
>
> This principle can be seen exemplified not only in the deeper motivational dynamics of the child but also in microcosm in the development of any of his more modest activities, e.g., in learning

---

[13] Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 422.

> to read, or skate, or paint, or dance. The child who masters simple words enjoys them intensely but doesn't stay there. In the proper atmosphere he spontaneously shows eagerness to go on to more and more new words, longer words, more complex sentences, etc. If he is forced to stay at the simple level he gets bored and restless with what formerly delighted him. He wants to go on, to move, to grow. Only if frustration, failure, disapproval, ridicule come at the next step does he fixate or regress, and we are then faced with the intricacies of pathological dynamics and of neurotic compromises, in which the impulses remain alive but unfulfilled, or even of loss of impulse and of capacity.
>
> What we wind up with then is a subjective device to add to the principle of the hierarchical arrangement of our various needs, a device which guides and directs the individual in the direction of "healthy" growth. The principle holds true at any age. Recovering the ability to perceive one's own delights is the best way of rediscovering the sacrificed self even in adulthood. The process of therapy helps the adult to discover that the childish (repressed) necessity for the approval of others no longer need exist in the childish form and degree, and that the terror of losing these others with the accompanying fear of being weak, helpless and abandoned is no longer realistic and justified as it was for the child. For the adult, others can be and should be less important than for the child.[14]

However, whereas Maslow posits a reasonably predictable scale from food to self-realization, Goodman is either less certain of the specific arrangement of the values, or is simply not sufficiently concerned about the point to spell it out. He writes:

> In the struggle for survival the most relevant need becomes figure and organizes the behavior of an individual until this need is satisfied, where upon it recedes into the background (temporary balance) and makes room for the next now

---

[14] Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being (New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1962), pp. 53-55.

> most important need. In the healthy organism this change of dominance has the best survival chance.[15]

A cursory reading of Goodman's writings might lead one to believe that he finds sex disproportionally relevant to human satisfaction. But that is false. Goodman views sex as an animal need and, of course, as an animal pleasure. It becomes an all-pervasive need or an obsession when, like food, drink, or creativity, it is left unattended: "as soon as you push sex into the background it begins to pervade all of life."[16] Goodman claims that this is similar to the position espoused by Freud. In A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis Freud wrote:

> You must not be led away by my eagerness to defend myself against the accusation that in analytic treatment neurotics are encouraged to "live a free life" and conclude from it that we influence them in favour of conventional morality. That is at least as far removed from our purpose as the other. We are not reformers, it is true; we are merely observers; but we cannot avoid observing with critical eyes, and we have found it impossible to give our support to conventional sexual morality or to approve highly of the means by which society attempts to arrange the practical problems of sexuality in life. We can demonstrate with ease that what the world calls its code of morals demands more sacrifices than it is worth, and that its behavior is neither dictated by honesty nor instituted with wisdom. We do not absolve our patients from listening to these criticisms; we accustom them to an unprejudiced consideration of sexual matters like all other matters; and if after they have become independent by the effect of the treatment they choose some intermediate course between unrestrained sexual licence and

---

[15] Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. xi.

[16] Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 88.

> unconditional asceticism, our conscience is not burdened by the outcome. We say to ourselves that anyone who has successfully undergone the training of learning and recognizing the truth about himself is henceforth strengthened against the dangers of immorality, even if his standard of morality should in some respect deviate from the common one. Incidentally, we must beware of over-estimating the importance of abstinence in affecting neurosis; only a minority of pathogenic situations due to frustration and the subsequent accumulation of libido thereby induced can be relieved by the kind of sexual intercourse that is procurable without any difficulty.[17]

Perhaps Goodman's most concise statement on sex is:

> My own view, for what it is worth, is that sexuality is lovely, there cannot be too much of it, it is self-limiting if it is satisfactory and satisfaction diminishes tension and clears the mind for attention and learning.[18]

One can identify two grounds for pleasure being a good. First of all pleasure serves as an indicator of what the organism ought to attend to. Goodman believes that over the years the organism has made very conservative creative adjustments. (He likes to demonstrate that anarchists are truly conservative. "It is only the anarchists who are really conservative, for they want to conserve sun and space, animal nature, primary community, and experimenting inquiry."[19] It adjusts to what

---

[17]Sigmund Freud, A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis (New York: Washington Square Press, 1952), p. p. 441.

[18]Goodman, Compulsory Mis-education, pp. 29-30.

[19]Goodman, Drawing the Line, p. 16.

enables it to survive and grow. And pleasure identifies that need. Secondly, however, is the idea that only pleasure allows a man to function at his most productive level. He sees pleasure as not something accidental, ". . . but as a quality of a completed action with important inner drives operating and meeting of those impulses from within by opportunities from without."[20] During the nadir of his frustrating years, 1955-1960, when he sensed he had something to offer the world, but no one wanted it, he wrote:

> I undo myself because of a theory that I, alas, believe: that happiness, satisfaction, is the necessary ground for the full exercise of power. It is not that I am miserable, I can really put up with that philosophically; but that, being miserable, I am wasted. Then all is lost.[21]

Characteristic of his writings is the notion that evil is indicative of an error in social or technological conditions. That is, if, as he claims, modern society does not legitimately allow for the satisfaction of animal needs, the organism will become neurotic or will go outside the legal or social norms for satisfaction. In either case one could argue that neurotic or illegal behavior represents socially contrived error. In short, if society constructs itself solely on the grounds of satisfying animal needs there would be little cause for

---

[20]Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 83.

[21]Goodman, Five Years, p. 10.

delinquency and crime. This point is best understood if we remember that human nature, as a unitary concept, includes a social and cultural facet, and that education is essentially a process of teaching the young to grow up into that culture. From this vantage point Goodman can say:

> Do not be afraid that by dissolving conscience you will become a criminal or an impulsive psychopath. You will be surprised when you allow organic self-regulation to develop and your outgoing drives to contact other persons, how the principles that you ought to live by will seem to emerge from your very bones and will be obviously appropriate for living out regardless of the social situation you are in . . . .[22]

Man as a Social Being

> . . . because the greater part of each man's self is his social self; therefore, we suggest it to one another and we are not ashamed.[23]

Goodman rejects the Hobbesian thesis of a contractual theory of society. Rather, he propounds an "organic theory"; that people exist in society by bonds of animality, fellowship, and loyalty and obedience that are "deeper than rational choice." Psychologically the basis of our society is prior to the formation of the ego. Whereas the social contract theory hypothesizes an interpersonal agreement between individuals, an organic theory approach emanates from an intrapersonal theory grounded in

---

[22]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 220.

[23]Goodman, Empire City, p. 216.

love, fraternity, imitation, learning, sympathy, infantile dependency, the ability to communicate, and companionship. Thus, like Kropotkin, Goodman posits in man an inherent social nature that fulfills itself in social relations and meaningful community. This social nature is repressible, but ineradicable.

Characteristic of Goodman's concern for animal natures--in large part sociable--is his treatment of Benjamin Spock's book Problems of Parents. Goodman initially salutes Spock's earlier book, Baby and Child Care, because it undertook to protect the natural development of the growing animal against the harmful practices and unhealthy customs of society. Spock urged that babies are tough and self-regulating and what they need from adults is nourishment and affection. However, in Problems of Parents Spock does not start with a natural setting--the birth and early development of a child--but rather with an ongoing highly conventional society. And when Spock speaks of "high standards" and the "practices of an established family" he is alluding to practices and customs that emanate from a technological and commercial society which grounds its behaviors in Gross National Product, technological progress, efficiency, nationalism, and not in animal desires. Accordingly, Goodman accused Spock of retreating from the naturalism of his earlier book to a more conventional, and less satisfying position in The Problems of Parents.

Critics have on occasion made light of Goodman's references to his "animal spirits." But, Goodman is indeed in earnest.

> Sometimes since you don't love me any more
> I cannot find an animal spirit
> to move my feet,
> or one quits and leaves me in the street
> among the buses and the traffic's roar
>
> as if I were deep in thought, but I am not
> ---until the animal spirit that preserves
> me still alive
> takes care of where I am and slowly drives
> my feet their way across the street.[24]

Good Contact as a Precondition for the Growth of the Organism

Growth is the normal function of any organism. Growth is psychologically described as:

> (1) After contact there is a flow of energy, adding to the energy of the organism the new elements assimilated from the environment. (2) The contact-boundary that has been "broken" now reforms, including the new energy and the "organ of second nature." (3) What has been assimilated is now part of the physiological self-regulation. (4) The boundary of contact is now "outside" the assimilated learning, habit, conditioned reflex, etc.--e.g., what is like what one has learned does not touch one, it raises no problems.[25]

However, growth is also characterized by restoration, an increase in size, procreation, rejuvenation, recreation, assimilation, learning, memory, habit, imitation, and identification. Goodman makes no pretext

---

[24] Goodman, Hawkweed, p. 91

[25] Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 428.

of explaining how this growth takes place. ". . . [I]ts details belong to physiology--to the extent that they are understood at all."[26]

An organism grows through contact with its environment. Contact--in touch with--refers to both sensory awareness and motor behavior. In its broadest application it means appetite, rejection, approaching, avoiding, food-getting and eating, loving, aggressing, sensing, feeling, manipulating, perceiving, communicating, learning, locomotion, and in general every interaction that occurs at the boundary of the organism/environment field.

The contact itself is the forming of a figure of interest against a ground of the organism/environment field. Good contact is characterized in awareness by a clear, vivid image, insight, or perception. In motor behavior good contact results in movement that has grace, rhythm, and follow-through. On the contrary, when the figure is dull, graceless, lacking in follow-through, confused, ambiguous, etc. it identifies poor contact (a weak gestalt); something in the environment is blocked out, some vital organic need is not being expressed. Establishing good contact, in order to foster growth, is the function of psychotherapy as presented in Gestalt Therapy. The interplay of figure and background determines the strength or richness of the contact, the

---

[26] Ibid., p. 421.

quality of the contact determines what is assimilated by the organism, and assimilation leads to growth. Growth, being a natural function of the organism, is self-justifying.

From this position it can be argued that a humane society, especially its educational institution, ought to be structured to facilitate good contacts. It is this weakness, the lack of opportunity for good contact, that is highlighted in Goodman's criticisms and proposals. It must be recognized that contact is not merely a matter of physical proximity. One can sit in an alcove without contacting the furniture; or scan a painting or make love with more or less contact. But, always, the degree of the contact determines the degree of growth. Goodman asks "Why go to school?" on the basis of his theory of contact. He argues that children read history, study literature, and complete assignments, but little contact is made with the world in which they must live. And not only do they lose the time spent in doing lessons, but they learn to live without good contact, and to be guilty and fearful of it and ultimately adjust to a society where the satisfaction of basic animal desires, via establishing good contacts, is not fundamentally important, or even taken seriously. In Growing Up Absurd Goodman offers an example.

> Let me give a childish but important illustration of how this works out. A boy of ten or eleven has a few great sexual adventures--he thinks they're great--but then he has the bad luck to get caught and get in trouble. They try to persuade him by punishment and other explanations that some different behavior is much better, but he knows by the evidence of his senses that nothing could be better. If he gives in, he lives on in a profound disbelief, a disbelief in their candor and a disbelief even of his own body feelings. But if he persists and proves incorrigible, then the evidence of his senses is attached to what is socially punished, explained away; he may even be put away. The basic trouble here is that they do not really believe he has had a sexual experience. That objective factor is inconvenient for them; therefore it cannot exist.[27]

Good contact requires an active reaching out, excitement, a stretching toward whatever is interesting and holds promise of fulfilling a need. And when this aggressive action toward need fulfillment is punished, discouraged, or frustrated, the organism feels that the environment attacks it;

> . . . but if--and this is what we shall have to prove--the organism, by virtue of fears and trepidations acquired in previous functioning, does not dare to initiate and take responsibility for the necessary contacts, then, since they must occur for life to go on, the initiative and responsibility are thrust upon the environment.[28]

When this happens the organism turns to parents, government, or other authority figures for satisfactions or to be told "what it ought to do." And as long as the

---

[27]Goodman, Growing Up Absurd, p. 38.

[28]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 74.

organism takes the environment as "given" it tends to perpetuate its most undesirable aspects. But, if the organism accepts the environment as part of its very being, if it actively seeks to satisfy its needs by spontaneous contact with the environment, and in so doing acts to restructure the environment so it can more efficiently satisfy organismic needs, then the organism makes good contact and grows. Of course, if the organism has been effective in its restructuring, the environment is able to foster even more growth. This is the message contained in Goodman's collection of letters in The Society I Live In Is Mine. If man is to make contact he must be an active participant in his society and he is part of a society only when that society has provisions for satisfying his needs and for responding to his concerns and recommendations. (We saw earlier that his disenchantment with modern liberals is that their institutional arrangements do not promote contact.)

Much of what follows describes the conditions for good contact. Suffice it here to say that there is much poor contact in long friendships, marriages, and in education. In short, the conditions for good contact--aggression, spontaneity, excitement, need, assimilation--are not met merely by proper physical arrangements or social agreements. Social contact like "mixing with people," "dating," or "talking things over" may well be

contactless. Making genuine contact usually involves destructuring and excited animation. One does not contact music via Muzak, nor news via Time magazine, nor education via the lecture. "Reality, we have been saying, is given in moments of "good contact," a unity of awareness, motor response, and feeling."[29] Central to understanding Goodman is understanding the conditions for good contact. One condition is the need for aggression.

Man as an Aggressor--A Prerequisite for Growth

> At the last moment both had not punched Ostoric in the nose and their pent up aggression turned against each other. There was no longer a congregation of Jews at our camp.[30]

Natural aggression, as used by Goodman, has no negative connotations. It is a healthy function of the organism that includes anything the organism does to initiate contact with the environment. Aggression is the "step toward" the object of appetite or hostility. The passing of the impulse into the step is initiative: "accepting the impulse as one's own and accepting the motor execution as one's own."[31] The infant squalls when hungry. We frequently identify this as impatience or

---

[29] Ibid., p. 274.

[30] Goodman, Adam and His Works, p. 243.

[31] Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 342.

greed when it is really aggression which is functional and healthy in the mother-infant situation. Goodman argues that we may do serious harm by inhibiting aggression. For instance, when children first get teeth there is a natural tendency to try out this new ability by biting into whatever they believe is biteable. Parental interference at this stage is frequently of two types. First, the parents punish biting to impress upon the child the idea that biting is cruel or naughty. Secondly, parents frequently force the child to eat food which the child finds undesirable. Goodman holds the opinion that these parental behaviors are the basic prerequisites for tendencies to introject--"to swallow down whole what does not belong in your organism." Aggression is a necessary part of all good contacts. In The Empire City Goodman informs us that Horatio had an "aggressive prudence" in the certain knowledge of the terrain of New York streets which enabled him to get the most speed with the least effort when traveling astride a bicycle.

In Five Years he writes: "The lad can't hammer a nail because he doesn't hammer on the outbreath, he holds back his anger. They want them to have skill and strength, but they will not speak of aggression."[32] In short, whenever an organism wishes to impose itself on the

---

[32]Goodman, Five Years, p. 7.

environment it must take aggressive action. Thus, in the clinical use of Gestalt theory aggression is indispensible to happiness and creativity.

Aggression has three components: destroying, annihilating, and initiating. When annihilated the object is completely rejected and ceases to exist for the organism. The gestalt completes itself without the object. Annihilation takes place in flight when the organism eliminates the object. Annihilation is a function of defense. There is no lust or appetite involved, as the non-existence of the object is not a source of pleasure; rather merely a removal of a threat. Destroying is, however, a function of appetite. "The anger that arose in them was hygienic, for it helped them to attack and destroy the food itself with more vehemence."[33] The organism grows by assimilating new matter. Before it can assimilate elements, whether it be food or knowledge, there must be a destructuring of what exists. The individual parts of the de-structured object "must be recombined in a fashion more adequate to the requirements of the here-and-now actuality."[34] If the organism is unable to commit the destruction so as to assimilate the parts, it either introjects or inhibits the appetite altogether. Initiative is the

---

[33]Goodman, Empire City, p. 452.

[34]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 67.

passing of the impulse and the accepting of the motor execution as one's own. Much of Goodman's criticism--e.g. People or Personnel--is based on the idea that society as presently constituted inhibits much adult initiative, and thereby restricts growth.

If growth is to occur, and it can only take place through the process of assimilation, there must be de-structuring and initiative; both are overt signs of aggression. Since aggression is a natural drive it cannot be reduced, but its manifestations can only be deliberately suppressed. And when a natural, healthy function of the self-regulating organism is inhibited it causes a malfunction somewhere in the organism. Goodman goes so far as to say that if aggressive drives are anti-social it is the social mores which ought to be reconsidered and not the aggression.

> And thus, to return to our starting point, when the aggressive drives are anti-social, it is that the society is opposed to life and change (and love); then it will either be destroyed by life or it will involve life in a common ruin, make human life destroy society and itself.[35]

That is, anti-social aggression such as "domination, irritability, sadism, lust for power, suicide, murder, and their mass equivalent war" are examples of displaced aggression. It is Goodman's view that in each case of displaced aggression we can find that a natural aggressive

---

[35] Ibid., p. 352.

act was stifled, frustrated, or inhibited and the resultant anti-social behavior is a discharge of this surplus energy. Goodman believes, for instance, that the structure of modern society--which is out of human scale--causes people to act more stupid than they are.[36]

That is, modern society does not allow for the expression of natural aggression, which results in pent-up hostility and anger. When the organism finally discharges this energy out of frustration it may do so in a manner which is both anti-social and unsatisfactory to the

---

[36]Eric Fromm has taken a similar position. In The Sane Society Fromm writes: "In observing the quality in thinking in alienated man, it is striking to see how his intelligence has developed and how his reason has deteriorated. He takes his reality for granted; he wants to eat it, consume it, touch it, manipulate it. He does not even ask what is behind it, why things are as they are, and where they are going. You cannot eat the meaning, you cannot consume the sense, and as far as the future is concerned--après nous le déluge! Even from the nineteenth century to our day, there seems to have occurred an observable increase in stupidity, if by this we mean the opposite to reason, rather than intelligence. In spite of the fact that everybody reads the daily paper religiously there is an absence of understanding of the meaning of political events which is truly frightening, because our intelligence helps us to produce weapons which our reason is not capable of controlling. Indeed, we have the know-how, but we do not have the know-why, nor the know-what-for. We have many persons with good and high intelligence quotients, but our intelligence tests measure the ability to memorize, to manipulate facts--but not to reason. All this is true notwithstanding the fact that there are men of outstanding reason in our midst, whose thinking is as profound and vigorous as ever existed in the history of the human race. But they think apart from the general herd thought, and they are looked upon with suspicion--even if they are needed for their extraordinary achievement in the natural sciences." Eric Fromm, The Sane Society (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1955), p. 154.

the organism itself. This Goodman calls "reactive stupidity." He applauds the idea put forth by William James that we need a moral equivalent of war. Throughout his writings Goodman argues that it is not enough to simply be against war, we must actively, aggressively wage peace. This waging of the peace is not merely picketing the Pentagon. Rather, it refers to a reconstruction of society so that human beings can implement their aggressions in naturally and socially satisfying ways. Thus, Goodman urges a speedy continuation of the sexual revolution, the development of a genuine folk culture to enliven community, decentralization in industry and education so that persons can effectuate desires and decisions, and a redesigning of jobs so as to utilize individual capacities rather than design production so that individuals are freely interchangeable.

> An occasional fist fight, a better orgasm, friendly games, a job of useful work, initiating enterprises, deciding real issues in manageable meetings, and being moved by things that are beautiful, curious, or wonderful--these diminish the spirit of war because they attach people to life.[37]

> Waging peace is the best means of preventing war, and pacifists do well to invent and support programs for the use of our wealth and energy freed from the expense, fear, and senselessness of war. In my opinion, let me say, there is also natural violence that diminishes war, e.g., the explosion of passion, the fist fight that clears the air, the gentle forcing of the virginal, the quarrel

---

[37]Goodman, Drawing the Line, p. 84.

> that breaks down the barrier to interpersonal contact. War feeds on the inhibition of normal aggression.[38]

It is evident that Goodman views the inhibition of aggression as a major cause of human unhappiness and of people's infatuation, and even exaltation, of war, airplane crashes, natural disasters, brutal sports, and other forms of destruction and human suffering.

It is because of his concern for human growth and his pacifist nature that Goodman urges the full release of the self-regulating natural aggressions. Later we will see that this plays a significant part in his proposals that there cannot be too much sex, that the Socratic model is best for education, and that, in general, education must allow for more freedom on the part of those to be initiated into the culture.

Man as a Functional Being

> In our view the body is full of inherited wisdom--it is roughly adjusted to the environment from the beginning: it has the raw materials to make new wholes, and in its emotions it has a kind of knowledge of the environment as well as motivations of actions; the body expresses itself in well-constructed purposive series and complexes of wishes.[39]

Goodman, as a naturalist, argues that every impulse, instinct, emotion, feeling, or natural ability has a

---

[38]Paul Goodman, Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), p. 77.

[39]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 440.

function that works to the satisfaction and growth of the organism. And to resist, frustrate, or inhibit these functions is to do so at a cost--the ultimate cost may be the mass annihilation of mankind itself in a self-inflicted holocaust.

Thus, the function of aggression is to initiate action so that the organism can grow. The function of the dream is to keep the animal asleep. He sees blotting out and hallucination as "healthy temporary functions in a complicated organism/environment field."[40] Consciousness, of course, has the function of making selections in an environment where growth is dependent upon discriminatory responses. Pain, disgust, and repulsion are disagreeable, but not accidental; they make the organism aware of something in the environment that needs attention. Crying enables the organism to relieve itself of the burden of loss. The function of contact is growth. Intelligence serves to solve problems; or where problems are insoluable to dissipate energy in fantasy and ideas. It is interesting to note that Goodman assumes a function even if empirical evidence is not conclusive. For instance, he asks himself about the prolonged suffering among human beings. And he answers the question with

---

[40] Ibid., p. 262.

> We hazard the guess that it is to get us to attend to the immediate present problem and then to stand out of the way, to give the threat all our powers, and then to stand out of the way, to relax useless deliberateness, to let the conflict rage and destroy what must be destroyed (emphasis mine).[41]

He implicitly assumes that all functions of the organism work to its advantage. It is this assumption which enables him to say that anti-social aggression is an example of wrong-headed social structuring or social mores, because human aggression has a self-regulating function.

The function of emotions are particularly misunderstood according to Goodman. He claims it is ". . . biologically absurd on Darwinian grounds" to argue that emotions have no knowledge value. He says, "Experiencing the organism/environment field under the aspect of value is what constitutes emotion."[42] An emotion is not merely a state of the organism, but rather it constitutes a relationship between the organism and its environment. Emotion, too, is a "continuous process" since every moment of life is to some degree pleasant or unpleasant. The emotions are not mediated by thought and deliberate concentration but are immediate. They provide a basis for what in the organism/environment field is important,

---

[41] Ibid., p. 359.

[42] Ibid., p. 95.

and it energizes the satisfying action or, at least, initiates the search for the satisfying response.

> Emotions per se are not vague and diffuse, but are just as sharply differentiated in structure and function as is the person who experiences them. If a person experiences his emotions as confused and crude, then these terms apply also to him. From this it follows that emotions in themselves are not something to be rid of on such trumped-up charges as being impediments to clear thought and action. On the contrary, they are not only essential as energy-regulators in the organism/environment field, but they are also unique deliveries of experience which have no substitute--they are the way we become aware of our concerns, and therefore, of what we are and what the world is.[43]

A proper understanding of emotion locates emotional responses precisely in places thought to be devoid of feeling. Frigidity and boredom, for instance, are very strong feelings. Even numbness is a strong feeling, so strong that it is excluded from awareness. Only by the recognition of these emotions can a biological organism know what threats or opportunities are presented to it by the environment. Goodman acknowledges the wisdom in the James-Lange theory that one runs away not because he is afraid, but he is afraid because he is running away.[44]

---

[43] Ibid., p. 96.

[44] Goodman argues, however, that the theory is only half right. He says that "bodily actions or condition are also a relevant orientation to, and a potential manipulation of, the environment; for example it is not just running, but running away, running away from something, running away from something dangerous, that constitutes the situation of fear." Ibid., p. 98.

It is only by acknowledging a loss and a sense of grief that one can weep, or by recognizing your anger at frustration that one can mobilize his energies in order to overcome the barriers to one's appetite. Thus, emotions, like pleasure, serve as a primary indicator of growth-fostering ethical behavior. While Goodman claims there is no single criterion for ethical behavior, he does find emotional response of primary importance.

> Whether or not we can logically ground ethical sentences depends on how complexly and humanly we take our primitive propositions, how much of the speaker and his behavior we want to include in their meaning. Further, it is certainly false that feelings and emotions have no cognitive value; they are structures of the relation of organism and environment, and they give motivating information (how else would an animal survive?). And even more, by the working up of feelings and emotions into articulate literary speech--which is a storehouse of perceptions and memories, nicely discriminating and structured from beginning to end, and, not least, embodying the social wisdom of the vernacular--we are given ethical premises grounded in the nature of things. Indeed, if we consider the human sciences, we may say that the concrete "complex words" of stories, plays, and eloquence are more adequate observations and hypotheses of reality than any formulae and samplings of psychologists and sociologists; but besides, they are exemplary and moving. In brief, students of poetry, history, philosophy, and natural philosophy, do not in fact find the gap so unbridgeable between "what is the case?" and "what ought we to do?"[45]

Goodman's emphasis upon the organism as a collection of self-regulating functions does not end with the biological. He also extends his functionalism into the

---

[45]Goodman, Utopian Essays, pp. 252-253.

social and cultural fields. That is, considering growth as the normal function of an organism he urges that social institutions be structured upon a functional basis.

> The functions of civilization include production, trade and travel, the bringing up of the young in the mores; also subtle but essential polarities like experimentation and stability; also irrational and superstitious fantasies like exacting revenge for crime and protecting the taboos. Different interests in the whole will continually conflict, as individuals or as interest groups, yet, since all require the commonwealth there is also a strong functional interest in adjudication and peace, in harmonizing social invention or at least compromise.[46]

It is this requirement that we always turn to function as a guiding light, that undergirds Goodman's proposals. His mild acceptance, given mid-twentieth century choices, of socialism, is grounded in the philosophical functionalism of socialistic production, but his fear of socialism is based on the inflexibility of large organizations and on their tendencies to put their own growth and security in front of social functions.[47] His anarchist/pacifist position, too, is grounded in part on the basis that only small, controlled-by-those-involved type communities or groups can continually operate according to life functions. He defines normal politics as ". . . the constitutional relations of functional

---

[46]Goodman, People or Personnel, p. 181.

[47]This is one of the main themes in John Kenneth Galbraith's The New Industrial State.

interests and interest groups in the community in which they transact."[48] He finds the imposition of national states, political parties, electioneering, and bureaucratic rule as anathema to growth producing functions like aggression, initiation, spontaneity, assimilation, and excitement. His detestation of the educational administration hierarchy springs from what he believes to be its dysfunctionalism. Goodman views small group dialogue as the proper model for education, with a totally flexible physical structure which allows the learner to relocate to wherever fosters the best education at the moment. He sees the bureaucratization of education as systematically oriented to rigidity, the curtailment of spontaneity, and the replacement of an educational function with a political one. Thus, ". . . the teachers are relegated to being forever academics, but it is their embarrassment, timidity, and lack of function in the world what make them so."[49]

It is Goodman's adherence to functionalism which causes him to be critical of academic sociologists. He finds them quite reluctant to mention function, satisfaction, process, product, or utility. Rather, they concentrate on roles and there ". . . is no factual criterion

---

[48]Goodman, People or Personnel, p. 12.

[49]Goodman, Drawing the Line, p. 12.

outside the system of roles to justify liquidating some of the roles."[50]

When the normal functions of the organism--biological or social--are thwarted there is a reaction-formation. And the reaction-formation is an inhibition or curtailment of normal growth. If the means are available to remove the barrier there may be rebellion. Thus, history presents numerous examples of rebellion over issues of starvation, free speech, free thought, taxation without representation, and subsistence wages. But, when a life-style becomes so specialized and technical that people no longer know what they are about, they cease to oppose the oppressors and begin to identify with them.[51] He writes, "The more powerless people are,

---

[50] Ibid.

[51] Eric Fromm, in The Sane Society, stresses this theme of alienated persons identifying with powerful forces that may have caused their alienation. In a chapter titled, "Man in Capitalistic Society" he writes: "Every act of submissive worship is an act of alienation and idolatry in this sense. What is frequently called "love" is often nothing but this idolatrous phenomenon of alienation; only that not God or an idol, but another person is worshipped in this way. The "loving" person in this type of submissive relationship, projects all his or her love, strength, thought, into the other person, and experiences the loved person as a superior being, finding satisfaction in complete submission and worship. This does not only mean that he fails to experience the loved person as a human being in his or her reality, but that he does not experience himself in his full reality, as the bearer of productive human powers. Just as in the case of religious idolatry, he has projected all his richness into the other person, and experiences this richness not any more as something which is his, but as

the more they put their faith in princes; and the more they put their faith in princes, the more powerless they are."[52]

---

something alien from himself, deposited in somebody else, with which he can get in touch only by submission to, or submergence in the other person. The same phenomenon exists in the worshipping submission to a political leader, or to the state. The leader and the state actually are what they are by the consent of the governed. But they become idols when the individual projects all his powers into them and worships them, hoping to regain some of his powers by submission and worship. Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 113.

[52]Goodman, People or Personnel, p. 91.

CHAPTER IV

MAN AS A SPONTANEOUS BEING

> We speak of 'paying attention', but in fact we can become absorbed in only what meets our underlying needs. We speak of 'excluding our surroundings', but this is possible only within the limits of not arousing anxiety. An artist makes what solves his inner conflict; he cannot integrate what fails to solve it.[1]

The idea of spontaneity is like a ubiquitous spirit throughout the works of Goodman. It is one of the corner stones for each of his recommendations and proposals. In order to emphasize this point I quote a passage from Franz Kafka which Goodman applauds with much gusto.

> Human nature, essentially unchangeable, unstable as the dust, can endure no constraint; if it binds itself it soon begins to tear madly at its bonds, until it rends everything asunder, the wall, the bonds, and its very self.[2]

The organism grows by assimilating contacted elements in the environment. The degree of growth, however, is a function of the quality of the contact. The richest contact--where the object brightens and becomes more unified, but also more detailed as figure and the background darken--is a result of spontaneous attention.

---

[1]Paul Goodman, Structure of Literature, Phoenix Books (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), p. 6.

[2]Goodman, Kafka's Prayer, p. 238.

As the organism is self-regulating the implicit assumption is that the spontaneous attention ". . . becomes more and more the carrier of functions and importances that are matters of excited concern to the organism."[3]

Spontaneity may best be understood by contrasting it to deliberateness. In deliberate concentration one attends to what he feels he should, or ought to, or to what he believes is expected of him, or, in gestalt terms, the deliberate effort to control is the ground. The figure clamors for attention, but a new situation arises to which one feels he ought to attend. In meeting this new situation, the old spontaneous unfinished situation must be suppressed. But it exists as part of the ground and not figure. The total energy of the organism undergoes a three-way division: "part goes to the task, part goes to energizing the resister, and part goes into fighting the resister."[4]

In Five Years Goodman distinguishes between deliberate and spontaneous behavior.

> Phases: (1) Threshold of perception or fantasy, (2) passage into muscular action. Both these require a prior accumulation of latent energy. The passage into muscular action is known as 'will.' There is an interval during which the 'idea' does not change, but much energy must be added to it till the result of overt behavior. In this context, however, we must also contrast deliberateness and spontaneity. In deliberateness much

---

[3]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 63.

[4]Ibid., p. 55.

> energy is extrinsically employed in inhibiting other activity, in paying attention rather than being 'distracted' (attracted elsewhere). In spontaneity, it is as if we were already well toward the phasic change of state, so to speak, 'over the hump'--and so in spontaneous action there is little 'idea'; the idea does not continue to be energized, and the energy of the idea itself merges into the overt act. E.g., orgasm is murky.[5]

Spontaneous interest is the forming of a figure/ground without deliberate concentration. In Gestalt Therapy we are told to "close your eyes and daydream. This will frequently provide a clear notion of what you want to do."[6] The spontaneous excitements are one's nature, "the very core of your vitality." Ghandi, for instance, says Goodman did not fast as a calculated threat, but rather because under the conditions with which he was confronted food was spontaneously nauseating to him. It was a physiological judgment and thereby an identifiable characteristic of the nature of the man.

The most easily identified spontaneous behaviors are those involving muscular action: the thrust of the pelvis before orgasm, the swallowing of well-chewed food, and most actions of children as they attend to what they find exciting and interesting. But, it is central to Goodman's thesis that spontaneous behavior has meaningful characteristics that indicate growth even though the

---

[5]Goodman, Five Years, p. 17.

[6]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 100.

overt response is less identifiable than reaching out or swallowing. Spontaneous behavior may have subtle characteristics, whereas deliberate behavior may be gross and obvious. In Compulsory Mis-education Goodman argues that operant conditioning, deliberate behavior, is vastly overrated even though its results are clearly observable. He finds it rather uninteresting to be informed that an animal's behavior can be radically shaped if we deprive it of its natural environment and restrict it to minimal spontaneous motion. Further, he argues that behavior learned via operant conditioning is of a different kind than spontaneous learning.

> It has been a persistent error of behaviorist psychologies to overlook that there are overt criteria that are organically part of meaningful acts of an organism in its environment; we can observe grace, ease, force, style, sudden simplification--and some such characteristics are at least roughly measurable. It is not necessary, in describing insight, knowledge, the kind of assimilated learning that Aristotle called 'second nature,' to have recourse to mental entities. It is not difficult to see when a child knows how to ride a bicycle; and he never forgets it, which would not be the case if the learning were by conditioning with reinforcement, because that can easily be wiped away by a negative reinforcement.[7]

Goodman is quite reticent to precisely spell out the characteristics of healthy spontaneous behavior. Perhaps the closest he comes to pinning down what he means by spontaneous human behavior characteristics is

---

[7]Goodman, Compulsory Mis-education, p. 89.

with his frequent usage of the terms "force, vigor, grace, intellect, and feeling." In the quotation cited above he identifies "grace, ease, force, style, sudden simplification." In Growing Up Absurd he says that human nature ". . . is what, when appealed to in the right circumstances, gives behavior that has force, grace, discrimination, intellect, feeling."[8] In an article written for Commentary in 1961 he justifies freedom on the basis that the best human actions require initiative and "only free action has grace and vigor." In 1962 he gave a talk to a sociology seminar at Carleton College. During the time allotted for questions he was asked why he stressed "interest" so much in regard to city planning. His response, in part, was,

> So insofar as we're interested in the perfection of everybody's life we must try as much as we can to have a basis of spontaneous interest for anything that is done. The reason is that it will be done better, more accurately, with more grace, more intelligence, and more force.[9]

These terms are, as Goodman concedes, only roughly measurable, but they are typical of his writing. I suspect that he believes that words like force, vigor, intellect, grace and feeling have common meanings and are observable to the intelligent and alert person. He has little sympathy with attempts to quantify all human behavior.

---

[8]Goodman, Growing Up Absurd, p. 6.

[9]Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 143.

Just as there are characteristics of spontaneous behavior there are contrary characteristics of repressed spontaneity and deliberate concentration. During deliberation, since the dominant need--spontaneous need--cannot reach the foreground, it creates a disturbance in the background, and the threefold division of the self occurs. Consequently, one cannot draw on full energy and to that extent the figure becomes less clear and less detailed. And when attention is paid to something lacking spontaneous interest the result is boredom. Flights from boredom include daydreaming, staring, fantasy, stubbornness and sleep, or frequently, insomnia. Chronic boredom is a major contributor to what we call stupidity, because, Goodman asserts, we cannot learn or be intelligent about what we do not find interesting. (This is not to say that what we initially contact via deliberate concentration cannot become spontaneously interesting.)

In Growing Up Absurd he writes: "Considering our wonderful faculties and powers, people on the average have never accomplished much."[10] He goes on to attribute much of the waste of human talents to repressed spontaneity. Since certain aims are forbidden and punishable, or unattainable under societal conditions, we inhibit them or suppress them altogether. Soon we come to reject

---

[10]Goodman, Growing Up Absurd, p. 71.

not only the overt behavior but the aims as well. We become apathetic, and seemingly stupid.

Cumulatively our society has become bored, anxious and unhappy. The fact is that we have far fewer satisfactions than we could have. Unhappiness is so prevalent, in the first place, because the person who gives way to his spontaneous interest may not achieve final contact. It is definitely Goodman's view that our social structure is not designed with the satisfaction of spontaneous interest in mind. In fact, spontaneous recreation, sex, work, or intimacy are rarities. Thus, one who gives way to his spontaneous self will encounter disruption, frustration, and rage. The result is misery, not happiness. On the other hand, one can resist his spontaneous interests, which leads to neurosis, ". . . neurosis is the avoidance of spontaneous excitement and limitations of the excitements."[11] Goodman holds that many of the well-established values of modern man are symptoms of neuroses; particularly compulsiveness, ". . . the outstanding neurotic symptom of our time," habitual deliberateness, factuality, non-commitment, and excessive responsibility.

Goodman further claims that we will be an unhappy people--unless we end it all in massive war--until we

---

[11]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 432.

allow our spontaneous interests to naturally arise, and until we are willing to construct society so that they can be attended to. It is on this basis, he says, that many psychoanalysts who deal with nervous break-downs urge patients to quit their job and seek their avocation. He claims he quit practicing psychotherapy in part because there are simply no jobs available suitable to the spontaneous interests of human beings, and this, more than anything else, is what was needed. Jobs, of course, are designed with just the opposite in mind--to make human labor into interchangeable parts. Thus the instinctive and spontaneous pleasures of work have been systematically removed. Goodman, a student of Marx, airs his views on the instinct of workmanship in Communitas.

> Men like to make things, to handle the materials and see them take shape and come out as desired, and they are proud of the products. And men like to work and be useful, for work has a rhythm and springs from spontaneous feelings just like play, and to be useful makes people feel right. Productive work is a kind of creation, it is an extension of human personality into nature. But it is also true that the private or state capitalist relations of production, and machine industry as it now exists under whatever system, have so far destroyed the instinctive pleasures of work that economic work is what all ordinary men dislike. . . . Mass production, analyzing the acts of labor into small steps and distributing the products far from home, destroys the sense of creating anything. Rhythm, neatness, style belong to the machine rather than to the man.[12]

---

[12]Paul Goodman and Percival Goodman, Communitas (New York: Random House, 1947), p. 153.

Goodman's high regard for the abilities springing from spontaneous interest are consistent with his thinking on decentralization and anarchism. He wants sufficient flexibility and lack of structure so that those involved can act according to their individual natures, which are characterized, of course, by grace, vigor, intellect, force, and feeling.[13]

This problem of the incompatibility between human instinct and spontaneity on the one hand and the desire for maximizing production and material prosperity on the other was Freud's concern in Civilization and Its Discontents. Goodman acknowledges the argument, but claims that Freud was overly pessimistic about productivity potential under social and economic conditions allowing for, or even fostering, spontaneity and self-regulation.[14]

---

[13]However, as demonstrated in Chapter II, Goodman's faith in anarchism and spontaneous community spirit does not lead him to support planlessness. In The Empire City he writes, "The lack of a plan is not no plan but only a bad plan" (p. 267).

And in an article for the New Republic he wrote, "A master plan is a directive for the progressive development of a region toward its ideal form" (Percival and Paul Goodman, "Master Plan for New York," New Republic, November 20, 1944, p. 656).

[14]Although I can locate no reference by Goodman to Herbert Marcuse, I believe he would be sympathetic to Marcuse's conception of "surplus repression" as elaborated in Eros and Civilization. Marcuse's book is essentially a challenge to the pessimism of Freud's Civilization and Its Discontents. Freud contended that no matter how rich, civilization depends on steady and methodical work, and thus on unpleasing delay in satisfaction. And as primary instincts rebel against delays, they have to be

It is difficult to overestimate the centrality of spontaneity in Goodman's concept of human nature. It is, in fact, the essence of the self, the ego, and of one's individual nature. It is at the heart of Goodman's concept of psychological health.

> The description of psychological health and disease is a simple one. It is a matter of the identification and alienations of the self. If a man identifies with the forming self, does not inhibit his own creative excitement and reaching toward the coming solution; and conversely, if he alienates what is not organically his own and therefore cannot be vitally interesting, but rather disrupts the figure/background, then he is psychologically healthy, for he is exercising his best power and will do the best he can in the difficult circumstances of the world. But on the contrary, if he alienates himself and because of false identifications tries to conquer his own spontaneity, then he creates his life dull, confused and painful. The system of identifications and alienation we shall call the 'ego.'

---

continually repressed. Marcuse challenges some of Freud's basic assumptions, particularly those involving the need for instinctual repression in the interest of productivity. Marcuse's hypothesis flows from this analysis.

"In order to meet this argument, we would have to show that Freud's correlation 'instinctual repression--socially useful labor--civilization' can be meaningfully transformed into the correlation 'instinctual liberation--socially useful work--civilization.' We have suggested that the prevalent instinctual repression resulted, not so much from the necessity of labor, but from the specific social organization of labor imposed by the interest in domination--that repression was largely surplus-repression. Consequently, the elimination of surplus-repression would *per se* tend to eliminate, not labor, but the organization of the human existence into an instrument of labor. If this is true, the emergence of a nonrepression reality principle would alter rather than destroy the social organization of labor: the liberation of Eros could create new and durable work relations." Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, Vintage Books (New York: Random House, 1955), p. 140.

> From this point of view, our method of therapy is as follows: to train the ego, the various identifications and alienations, by experiments of deliberate awareness of one's various functions, until the sense is spontaneously revived that it is I who am perceiving, feeling, and doing this at this point he takes over on his own.[15]

Spontaneity and Ethics

> Man does not strive to be good, the good is what it is human to strive for.[16]

Clearly Goodman's conception of the self-regulating organism, particularly his propensity to give free reign to spontaneity, raises questions about man's relationship to man. Yet, Goodman would argue that inherent in his self-regulating theory is an ethical postulate. Goodman wants to argue that naturalism leads "us to an honest ethics, intrinsic in animal and social conditions."[17] Ethics in any conventional or academic sense simply disappears in a natural setting because man, as a self-regulating organism, is able to conserve the whole. Ethical problems occur when the environment stifles self-regulation, inasmuch as the natural environment is conducive to self-regulation. The ethical problem is then one of institutions, norms, laws, or customs.

---

[15] Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 235.

[16] Ibid., p. 335.

[17] Goodman, Compulsory Mis-education, p. 114.

> In natural ethics there is no such principle as the choice of the lesser of two evils. Such a principle is self-contradictory, for any free action or abstention must draw on natural power and cannot depend on a negation. When a social issue has come to pass of a choice between evils (as, conscripting an army to resist a tyrant), then we know that the citizens have long neglected their welfare; the free actions that we can then invent are all attended with great suffering. They must involve withdrawing utterly from the area of guilt, a painful sacrifice--and more and more painful till all the consequences work themselves out. The lesser evil is a sign that an interest has been allowed to develop in isolation until it now threatens even our lives. It is the isolation of the issue from its causes that restricts the choice to the lesser evil. Those who break the spell and again draw on all their forces will find other choices.[18]

Goodman argues that the natural hierarchy of values is "capital for ethics and politics." And that this ordered hierarchy "is really nothing less than an inductive theory of human nature."[19] That is, recalling Goodman's belief of the inherited wisdom of the body, the organism avoids sudden death before quenching thirst, and it quickly attends to the speck in the eye. Goodman suggests the affirmative principle: "the basic law of life is self-preservation and growth."[20]

When this hierarchy is coupled with Goodman's humanistic philosophy it provides the basis for his concept of the whole. Goodman, who argues that the greater

---

[18] Goodman, Drawing the Line, p. 42.

[19] Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 279.

[20] Ibid.

part of human nature is a social nature, emphatically urges us toward a brotherhood of man. The purpose of education, he says, is to get each man "into the one humanity." Subsequently, a naturalistic ethic is one that attends to the lowest values on the hierarchy for all men before committing human powers and material resources to the higher values. It is this principle that ought to guide the actions of men. And Goodman claims, ". . . I never do what I 'prefer,' but always what, according to my lights, best conserves the whole."[21] But, Goodman argues that not only he works to conserve the whole, but that it is a natural behavior of man. However, as Goodman insists that education is a natural community function, his conception of a naturalistic ethics assumes, concomitantly, a natural education. Therefore, he is able to say what his critics believe to be naive. When speaking about managers Goodman says:

> This is quite contrary to the anarchist idea of a collective, where each man plans for the whole, understands what he is about and makes a rational choice, and exercises himself mentally and physically without a basic division of labor.[22]

The same ethical principle is embodied in Goodman's assertions that ". . . it is impossible for anyone to be

---

[21]Goodman, Five Years, p. 249.

[22]Goodman, Kafka's Prayer, p. 119.

extremely happy until we are happy more generally,"[23] and, "There is no happiness without virtue."[24]

Goodman, with Dewey, believes that happiness is not something we consciously strive for, but, rather it is a result of growth. And growth is the outcome of worthwhile activities. ("A sage, on the other hand, is a man who has come to want what he can do, and so he causes life to spring around him.")[25] So, while Goodman says, "By bad they mean, I trust, simply that it does not work for happiness but creates unhappiness,"[26] he is offering less substance than when he says that moral questions turn on "whether it leads to growth." That is, "happiness, satisfaction, is the necessary ground for the full exercise of power."[27]

Therefore, Goodman does not find relevance in the commonly asked questions about whether man is basically "good" or basically "bad." Man is. He finds happiness by actualizing his powers. His powers, by nature, are subordinate to a hierarchy of needs. Thus, we have an

---

[23]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 251.

[24]Goodman, Five Years, p. 27.

[25]Ibid., p. 89.

[26]Goodman, Empire City, p. 385.

[27]Goodman, Five Years, p. 10.

"immediate ethics, not infallible and yet in a privileged position."[28] The privilege comes from this:

> . . . that what seems spontaneously important does in fact marshal the most energy of behavior; self-regulating action is brighter, stronger, and shrewder. Any other line of action that is presumed to be 'better' must proceed with diminished power, less motivation, and more confused awareness; and must also involve devoting a certain amount of energy, and distracting a certain amount of attention, to keeping down the spontaneous self, which is seeking expression in self-regulation.[29]

How then does one account for evil or corruption? Goodman offers two answers: [it springs from ignorance or frustration.] Delinquency, for instance, is "to a large extent a matter of inaccurate orientation, a misunderstanding of the person's role in society."[30] Goodman, like Socrates, finds evil as error. Also, it comes from dammed up potential or frustration. "People don't want power, but activity, to realize potential."[31] And when realizing potentials people are responsible.

Subsequently, Goodman believes that the evil is drastically reduced by conserving the whole--i.e. subjecting all decisions to the growth needs of humanity, for "activity cannot make social sense without mind and concern

---

[28]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 275.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid., p. 220.

[31]Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 138.

at every step."[32] Therefore, when confronting the negative activity of youth Goodman invokes his prerequisites for growth--education and worthwhile activities.

> The cure for their violent sexuality is to allow them guiltless sex. The cure for their defiance is to teach them their real enemies to fight. The cure for their foolish activism is to provide them a world that has worthwhile tasks.[33]

His ethical posture helps to illuminate why Goodman so fears institutions--they are unethical, they do not attend to the whole. And in this neglect they constitute what Goodman believes is the gravest threat to mankind. A Sovereign State, for example, does not concern itself with the needs of its professed enemies; a profit seeking corporation is heedless to individual nature, workmanship instincts, and other employee growth needs; political bodies enact sexual restrictions oblivious to natural homosexuality; factories pollute the air and the waterways; religious doctrine counsels us to have faith, frequently to the exclusion of reason; schools are organized by subjecting an animated, passionate, excited, active youth to the requirements of quietness, orderliness, and control; and social norms and traditions are established explicitly to curtail what to some are natural propensities and growth needs. Goodman smiles:

[32]Goodman, People or Personnel, p. 85.

[33]Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 163.

> The gentlemen who sleep drunk on the sidewalks and in doorways are usually past middle-age, as though it took a lot of living to get rid of the conventions inhibiting normal lust for ease.[34]

Only man thinks and feels. Only free man, uncoerced by institutions and other man-made restraints, is flexible, creative, able to conserve the whole. Inflexibility and mindlessness is inadequate for an organism perpetually in the process of social evolution.

Goodman, in no way, wants to argue that his theory of naturalistic ethics will eliminate all evil. Rather, he argues it is the best system we have, and will provide for considerably more happiness than any alternative presently known.[35]

---

[34] Goodman, Five Years, p. 3.

[35] A significant contrast to Goodman's anarchist model for preserving the whole is offered by Elijah Jordan in The Good Life. Jordan and Goodman are in substantial agreement on the contents of the good life . . . i.e. in regard to aesthetics, religion, community, craftsmanship . . . , but especially in their insistence that ethical behavior must always be grounded in the growth of man. Jordan argues that institutions, to act ethically, must function in a manner both compatible to and in support of the functions of all other institutions. But, whereas Goodman stresses decentralized, small, independent, cooperative units, Jordan opts for large, socialistic, and state-owned institutions. Much of the strife in the United States during the late 1960's has revolved around the advantages and disadvantages of these two structural formulations.

CHAPTER V

MAN AS AN ORGANISM THAT BOTH ASSIMILATES AND INTROJECTS

> In imposing its culture, our society was the most disastrous in history, not by evil intention but simply quantitatively. The culture, like any culture, imposed itself on every function and through the most multifarious channels; but what was imposed was so extremely complicated and technical that it was quite unassimilable by an animal whose powers had developed during a million years of very different circumstances. No wonder the culture imposed itself in stereotyped patterns (authors spoke of "patterns of culture"); and the live animal froze and had to adapt itself by blind trial and error, like any creature in a maze.[1]

The organism persists in its environment by maintaining its difference, and, specifically, by taking on part of the environment so that it becomes at one with the organism. What is selected by the organism must be unlike the organism at first contact, and for growth to occur it must become like the organism. Thus, growth occurs only by assimilating the novel. All contact then must be creative and dynamic. It cannot be routine or stereotyped because it must continually cope with the novel, for "only the novel is nourishing." In order to

---

[1]Goodman, Empire City, p. 410.

nourish, the contact cannot simply accept or adjust to the novelty, because the novelty must be taken into the organism so as to be at one with it. Therefore, the novel must be de-structured in some manner and taken on by the organism so that the transition leads to growth. Goodman writes that "psychology is the study of creative adjustment. Its theme is the ever-renewed transition between novelty and routine, resulting in assimilation and growth."[2]

Certainly the clearest example of assimilation--"literally, made similar to"--is the eating of food. Properly digested food becomes stored energy in the tissues and organs of the body. It has become "naturalized" and it and the organism are one.

We may recall the discussion, in Chapter III, of the role of aggression in assimilation and growth. New matter must be destroyed or destructured into its assimilable elements. Food which is improperly chewed or swallowed whole becomes foreign to the organism and must be vomited up or passes through the organism without becoming at one with it.

Goodman has no hesitancy in applying this seemingly physiological phenomenon to mental processes. He believes

---

[2]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 230.

that the acquisition of habits, attitudes, ideals, or knowledge is quite analogous to the process of taking food.

> When it is not physical food but concepts, "facts," or standards of behavior, the situation is the same. A theory which you have mastered--digested in detail so that you have made it yours--can be used flexibly and efficiently because it has become "second nature" to you. But some "lesson" which you have swallowed whole without comprehension--for example "on authority" --and which you now use "as if" it were your own, is an introject. Though you have suppressed your initial bewilderment over what was forced into you, you cannot really use such foreign knowledge and, to the extent that you have cluttered your personality with gulped-down morsels of this and that, you have impaired your ability to think and act on your own.[3]

Thus, a proposition, theory, lecture, or idea being taught or expressed needs to be destructured by the learning organism into easily identifiable elements. Each element then needs to be examined, tested, and compared to what the organism already feels or believes to be true.[4] Only that which is consistent with the nature of the organism can be readily assimilated without inner conflict. In Compulsory Mis-education Goodman writes that certain subjects--"sociology, anthropology, world literature"--cannot be taught to boys and girls because they have had no experience with which to assimilate the new. Under those circumstances learning is verbal wisdom

---

[3] Ibid., p. 189.

[4] One is reminded of William James saying in Talks to Teachers that education is the process of weaving something new to something old.

and may easily result in a withdrawal from the real world and into an academic world of no or poor contact. It is for this same reason that he is critical of the "great books" theories of Robert Hutchins and why he proposes that certain colleges require entering freshman to have had two years of experience after high school before being admitted. The experience could be working for a living; community service, such as volunteer service in a hospital or a domestic Peace Corp; or independent enterprise in art, business or science. He offers two purposes for the experiment. First, it breaks up the twelve consecutive years of assigned lessons and allows the student to discover some intrinsic motivation. Secondly, it might provide some life experience so that the social sciences and humanities have some meaning. Here, as in all of his proposals, he prepares the way for assimilation--spontaneous interests and real life experience. In short, to assimilate knowledge one must destructure it, and take it in one element at a time. However, each element must be understood and evaluated according to the experiences and judgments of the organism. But the novel is, of course, delimited in how far it can be destructured into assimilable elements. If the organism cannot, because of a lack of experience, knowledge, or judgment, assimilate the destructured elements it cannot then become one with the new knowledge.

Goodman reminds Hutchins and Mark Van Doren that Plato put off until age 35 the teaching of philosophy.

Goodman's notion of community is, in part, grounded in his assimilation concept. He argues that close friendship requires aggression, initiation, and destructuring; that a person must be explored closely like a painting, "so that his parts become reconstituted in relation to one's own background needs, and these, precisely in contact with the other person, now become foreground and figure."[5] Close contact requires destroying the barriers to communication and understanding.

Recalling Goodman's unitary concept and his belief that a large part of human nature is social nature we can conclude that education is the process whereby human nature assimilates a culture, and therein completes its nature. And if we understand what Goodman means by assimilation, we realize education is not lectures, assignments, and examinations, but it is experiencing the world in which he lives and actively seeking to alter that world so he can experience it even more fully.

Introjection

> Forced feeding, forced education, forced morality, forced identifications with parents and sibling, result in literally thousands of unassimilated odds and ends lodged in the psychosomatic organism as introjects. They

[5]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 68.

> are both undigested and, as they stand, indigestible. And men and women, long accustomed to being resigned to "the way things are," continue to hold their noses, desensitize their palates, and swallow down still more.[6]

An introject is material, feelings, ideals, beliefs, ways of acting, etc. which one has taken into his system of behavior, but which has not been assimilated and made at one with the organism. Again Goodman draws the analogy between physiological processes and mental processes. He cites as a case of perfect introjection a patient who has an eidetic memory and can remember with photographic exactness whole pages of information, yet in no way understands the content.

If one governs his behavior according to an imposed set of rules which he never questions or considers their reasons for being in light of other things he holds to be true, he has introjected this outside authority. He has taken it in without destructuring it, assimilating it. Thus, each introject is an item of "unfinished business." Every introject is the acceptance of a conflict given up before it was resolved. The self gives up and identifies with the conqueror. There are multiple partial-identifications; these destroy self-confidence and the organism becomes even less aggressive and more willing to introject norms, standards, ideals, and beliefs.

---

[6] Ibid., p. 202.

Then for instance, introjected social norms may be slavishly followed, indignantly vocalized to friends, and one may be willing to fight to the death for an ideal or slogan.

In Compulsory Mis-education Goodman writes that the high school teenager is defeated in his search for meaningful-growth providing satisfactions, ideals, and functions. Thus, he identifies with mass society and rationalizes a desire for a $50,000 a year job, or to get married and raise a family. In short, he foregoes the search for his own nature and natural avocation, and introjects societal norms.

Significantly Goodman is critical of the alternative taken by hipsters and beatniks. While he applauds their rejection of the dysfunctional values of modern society, he is less sanguine about their potential for growth in the beat culture. The beat exhausts himself in staying ahead of the game and in castigating what he holds in contempt. But "playing it cool" and "dropping out," says Goodman, provide little opportunity for meaningful aggression, love, and assimilation. Rather than dropping out Goodman chooses to reconstruct his society. His lectures, his art, his non-fiction are dedicated to that cause. This message comes across with exquisite clarity in The Society I Live In Is Mine.

Fixation is another characteristic of the introjected syndrome. Fixations are the tendencies to cling to customs, memories, morals, friends, etc. that are no longer functional. Even though the organism involved is no longer nourished by the behavior, one is unable to aggressively "bite through" and sever the connections. He cannot finish what is unfinished and seek novelty elsewhere. This comes about because if one did not understand--assimilate--the conditions under which he accepted a belief he is unable to acknowledge when those conditions are no longer valid or functional. For instance, if one has been told and accepts that nationalism is good in itself, it becomes extremely difficult to move oneself to a position more compatible with one world or internationalism, simply because the beliefs one holds are not subject to worldly conditions or rational thought. That is, if one did not assimilate the various components of a nationalistic philosophy or belief, he is unable to eliminate dysfunctional parts and renew them with functional ones. He must completely accept the introject or spew it forth.[7]

---

[7]Milton Rokeach, in The Open and Closed Mind, suggests that closed-minded persons can replace a belief easier if the replacement belief is presented all at once. I believe this is the same position as that held by Goodman. Rokeach concludes his chapter "On Party-Line Thinking" with: "From these results we tentatively conclude that closed persons work more efficiently with 'silver-platter handouts' because the new beliefs need not be reconciled with old beliefs, thereby removing a

Clearly a dangerous adjunct to introjection is the resultant inhibition of aggression. Introjection needs no aggression and initiation. If biological activities are not utilized in growth functions it creates a store of surplus energy. The surplus energy finds discharge in displaced aggressions. Goodman emphatically wants to argue that assimilation is a proper function of the organism and that introjection is the avoidance of that function. But, one cannot allow functions to lie fallow without the organism seeking a secondary outlet. And with introjections the secondary outlets tend to reduce human satisfactions, and are in themselves a source of much human misery.

> The outgoing satisfaction of introjection is masochism--nausea inhibited, jaws forced open in a smile, pelvis retracted, breath drawn in. Masochistic behavior is the possibility of creatively adjusting the environment in a framework of inflicting pain on oneself with the approval of one's false identifications. Intensifying the identification and turning further against the self he indulges in sadistic biting, complaining, etc.[8]

---

major obstacle to synthesis leading to the formation of new systems. Open persons, however, resist having new beliefs 'rammed down their throats' without first working them through cognitively for themselves. This may account for the fact that open persons take longer than necessary over the problems in the Silver-Platter Condition. In the end this pays off, because it leads to creative problem-solving which in no case, under any experimental conditions, is inferior to the problem-solving behavior of persons with closed belief systems. Milton Rokeach, The Open and Closed Mind (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1960), p. 242.

[8]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 453.

Goodman's treatment of advance guard art helps to clarify his concept of introjection. He argues that within the advance guard artist the societal norms exist as introjects; and the irritation they cause to the organism is the special problem of the artist. The advance guard artist wants to remove the irritant. He must either remove it or assimilate it. "All creative work occurs at the limit of knowledge and feeling, and the limits here are the risky attack on the unassimilated, and perhaps unassimilable, as if to say, 'Until I get rid of this, I cannot breathe.'"[9]

It is significant that Goodman writes that advance guard art is not directly an attack on the inhibiting mores, but is that secondarily. This is because it is precisely the sensitive and precocious children--future artists frequently--who most identified themselves with whatever values the accepted culture offered. Subsequently, their art work is an attempt to make discriminations aimed at promoting the good in the culture and annihilating the bad.[10]

---

[9]Goodman, Utopian Essays, p. 193.

[10]Kenneth Keniston in the Young Radicals comes to similar conclusions regarding the youth who participated in Vietnam Summer in 1967. He says that the young radicals are in no way making a sweeping assault on the American culture. But, rather, it is just the brighter than average youngsters who have accepted the ideals of the culture. What they are rejecting is the previously introjected processes of effectualizing those ideals. Keniston writes, "This points to one of the central

Goodman claims that evidence for this position is found in the fact that audience reaction to avant garde is not defense and counterattack--the expected reply to direct assault--but outrage on the part of the audience which indicates an inner empathy, but an unwillingness to accept it. That is, the artist by attempting to destructure the introject threatens the audience because they too have introjected the social standards. And introjections are not readily broken down into components. Thus the artist flails away at the introject, and the audience becomes outraged and threatened as they find whole beliefs exposed to doubting scrutiny. It is for these reasons that advance-guard art is never the best art. "Advance-guard works tend to be impatient, fragmentary, ill-tempered, capricious."[11] The advance-guard artist must spend his energy destructuring, destroying, and in some cases, annihilating the introject, which leaves less energy for the development of creative achievements.

---

characteristics of today's youth in general and young radicals in particular: they insist on taking seriously a great variety of political, personal, and social principles that 'no one in his right mind' ever before thought of attempting to extend to such situations as dealings with strangers, relations between the races, or international politics." Kenneth Keniston, Young Radicals (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1968), p. 238.

[11]Goodman, Utopian Essays, p. 195.

CHAPTER VI

MAN, HUMAN SCALE, AND COMMUNITY

> By relevance I mean concern for human scale, the time, size, energy, need for space of actual people, rather than with the calculating of efficiency in abstract units of time, space, and energy.[1]

This chapter has three objectives. The first is to illustrate how Goodman's concept of the nature of man circumscribes, for him, the ethical size and complexity of our man-made environment. That is, to every form of potential progress he would have us ask, in addition to "Can we do it?" the ethical question, "Ought we to do it?" His psychological postulates commit him to a decentralist position where the total life-style is in human scale. The second is briefly to illustrate Goodman's conception of institutions. Basically, Goodman believes that institutions tend to frustrate the normal function of the self-regulating organism. Third, a short sketch of Goodman's concept of community is presented. The community is the natural outgrowth of his humanism and social psychology. It is in the community that man as "a

---

[1]Goodman, Like a Conquered Province, p. 313.

playful, hunting, sexy, dreamy, combative, passionate, artistic, manipulative and destructive, jealous and magnanimous, selfish and disinterested animal"[2] realizes his potential and joins the one humanity.

Human Scale

> The groups must be small, because mutual aid is our common human nature mainly with respect to those with whom we deal face to face.[3]

Goodman relentlessly argues for keeping economic, social, and political institutions and affairs compatible with the nature of man, i.e. in human scale. The environment is in human scale when these institutions are functioning so as to maximize human growth and happiness. Growth occurs only when the organism assimilates the novel in the environment; and happiness is not a constant goal that one consciously strives for, but, rather, is the outcome of active utilization of one's capacities. Therefore, institutions in human scale must provide for meaningful participation, aggression, initiation, and good contact. This human scale requirement is ubiquitous in Goodman's work. It influences his thinking in regard to nation states, city-planning, multiversities, seating arrangements, architecture, class size, home appliance

---

[2]Paul Goodman, "The Present Moment in Education," The New York Review of Books, April 10, 1969, p. 16.

[3]Goodman, Drawing the Line, p. 35.

design, social relationships, work organization and ultimately leads him to his formulation of the community.

Politics

> The fault is not with democracy, but that we have not had enough of it. If our emphasis had been on perfecting the town meeting and the neighborhood commune, there would not be ignorant electors and they would choose great officers.[4]

Goodman registers neither surprise nor indignation when he is confronted with the apathy and ignorance characteristic of all forms of government in a mass society. For instance, on university campuses, where enrollments frequently exceed twenty-five thousand, student leaders habitually chide the student body for its disinterested attitude toward the whole election process. In national, state, and even local elections it is often deemed necessary by local groups to mount "get out the vote" drives. Many school levies are lost because the voter turn out is not large enough to meet legal requirements (e.g., in the state of Washington a school levy vote must be 40% of the previous general election in order to be valid). Goodman says that the apathy is natural and predictable. The situations are simply out of human scale. Individual persons cannot comprehend the totality of the process in which they are requested to be a part--albeit a small one in the examples cited above. They (a) do

---

[4] Goodman, Growing Up Absurd, p. 107.

not understand the issues involved, particularly the far reaching consequences; (b) they do not see how their involvement or non-involvement makes a difference--they have an awesome sense of powerlessness; (c) they are seldom exposed to all intelligent alternatives, as winning elections generally requires a middle-of-the-road appeal. Thus citizen reaction is indifference, boredom, and self-admitted stupidity. The average voter cannot contact the candidates or the issues. He therefore exercises little aggression or initiation, and as a result he cannot assimilate and grow. He withdraws.

Therefore, Goodman, who has voted only once in a presidential election--for Norman Thomas--champions the town meeting and face to face politics. His critics charge that he refuses to face the twentieth century, mass media, megalopolis and the realities of international politics and conflict.[5] His reply would be that a pragmatic humanist, first of all, must face the nature of man. And it is simply not the nature of man to be animated, excited, and spontaneously interested in regard to distant candidates and obscure issues, especially when his common sense tells him that his vote, his voice, or his letter

---

[5]A critic writing for Partisan Review made this comment on Goodman's article The State of Nature: "To go the whole way with him one has to be able to hate the mere bigness of a ship lying in the Hudson almost as much as one hates war." Elizabeth Hardwicke, "Fiction Chronicle," Partisan Review, Vol. 14 (Spring, 1947), p. 196.

is, by and large, unequivocally irrelevant to future consequences. In Utopian Essays he writes:

> For the system has sapped initiative and the confidence to make fundamental changes. It has sapped self-reliance and therefore has dried up the spontaneous imagination of ends and the capacity to invent ingenuous expedients. By disintegrating communities and confronting isolated persons with the overwhelming processes of the whole society, it has destroyed human scale and deprived people of manageable associations that can be experimented with.[6]

Therefore, politics, which he defines as "the constitutional relations of functional interests,"[7] must be brought into human scale--decentralized, made functional, and built around face to face involvement.

Economic

> . . . and at best, indeed, the conditions of advancing civilized life seem to make important powers of human nature not only neurotically unused but rationally unusable.[8]

Goodman makes it quite clear that his concern for human scale does not preclude large numbers. That is, the quantity of goods and services produced is not, per se, detrimental to human growth. Rather, it is his criticism that unless the gigantic interlocking system--corporate institutions, full capacity, investments, and employment--is running at full capacity it is "also

---

[6]Goodman, Utopian Essays, p. 10.

[7]Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 66.

[8]Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 318.

impossible to buy bread." The interlocking superstructure necessitates that decisions be based not on human needs and capabilities, but on the requirements of full production and maximum profits.

Goodman recommends that a dual economy is far more compatible with the diversity of individual needs, and is thus more in human scale. He proposes that the government provide subsistance directly, and that the private economy concern itself with non-subsistence production. He judges that from 10 to 15 per cent of our economy is geared toward subsistence goods.

This has the dual effect of eliminating the 20-40 million poverty-bound people identified by Harrington in The Other America, and allowing people more freedom to regulate themselves. Work beyond subsistence would be voluntary, and leisure could be spent satisfying the individual growth requirements of the organism, rather than in maintaining the equilibrium of the interlocked structure.

If the design and production of objects were in human scale they would be constructed so as to be at one with the owner. "If possible, the operation of a machine should be Transparent and Comprehensible to its users."[9]

---

[9]Goodman, Utopian Essays, p. 32.

He further urges that the machine be repairable by the user.[10]

In order to grow, the manipulator of tools and machines needs good contact with the environment. Good contact requires aggression, excitement, initiation, and assimilation. If we consider machines as extensions of our appendages we are at one with them only to the extent that they respond to our will--both in operating them and in repairing them. As, in the main, they do not, they are not in human scale.

Goodman, like Marx and Weber, postulates an instinct for workmanship. His model for working arrangements is the guilds and craftsmen of the Middle Ages. He also applauds syndicates and worker's management. He encourages the contracting of jobs to groups of workers and

---

[10]This criticism, that the tools and processes in our capitalistic society are beyond human comprehension and are consequently a source of alienation, is one of the main themes in Fromm's treatment of alienation in The Sane Society. Fromm writes: "There is another aspect of alienation from the things we consume which needs to be mentioned. We are surrounded by things of whose nature and origin we know nothing. The telephone, radio, phonograph, and all other complicated machines are almost as mysterious to us as they would be to a man from a primitive culture; we know how to use them, that is, we know which button to turn, but we do not know on what principle they function, except in the vaguest terms of something we once learned at school. And things which do not rest upon difficult scientific principles are almost equally alien to us. We do not know how bread is made, how cloth is woven, how a table is manufactured, how glass is made. We consume, as we produce, without any concrete relatedness to the objects with which we deal; we live in a world of things, and our only connection with them is that we know how to manipulate or to consume them." Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 122.

letting them cooperatively organize the production. The worker must be totally involved in the process; be able to see his own contribution; and to see the inter-relationship between his work and the total product or process. Goodman acknowledges that this may be less efficient economically, but he is concerned with the whole, so economic efficiency is not an absolute.

Thus, his criticism of the structure of the American economy is that both production and distribution are subordinate to other than human needs. The interwoven production structure results in subsistence goods responding to the vicissitudes of the market which is in large part dominated by non-subsistant goods. Production, ignoring the psychological and physical needs of the workers, is geared to maximum profits. The total economy is out of human scale, and the result is manifest uneasiness.

> More than ever in history there are comforts, luxuries, entertainments.
>
> Psychologically the picture is more dubious. There is little physical survival frustration but little satisfaction, and there are signs of acute anxiety. The general bewilderment and insecurity of isolated individuals in a too-big society destroy self-confidence and initiative, and without these there cannot be active enjoyment. Sports and entertainments are passive and symbolic; the choices on the market are passive and symbolic; people make and do nothing for themselves, except symbolically. The quantity of sexuality is great, the de-sensitizing is extreme. It used to be felt that science, technology, and the new mores would bring on an age of happiness.

> This hope has been disappointed. Everywhere people are disappointed.[11]

Social

> At the road-stand I said, "Give me a black cow." "We don't serve ice-cream sodas," said the big washed-out blonde, "just cream in a dish or cone." "O.K., give me a dish of vanilla and a bottle of root beer. Can you give me a glass?" "Gee, you Yankees are funny; why cancha drink outta a bottle like everybody else:" I began to put the ice cream in the glass. "No!" she said, "I know what you're up to!" and she snatched away the glass.[12]

Goodman speaks of paradise lost; we have not learned to, or dared to, extract the pleasures and satisfactions available in the organism/environment field. Goodman, with Freud, sees advancing civilization being accompanied by a host of discontents. But, as mentioned earlier, unlike Freud, he is not convinced that this need be. Goodman, who has said, "Perhaps it is because I am so crazy with hope that I live in constant terror,"[13] believes that happiness has eluded us basically because we have not accepted that man is self-regulating, and that if left free he can grow and experience happiness in that growth process.

No small part of man's restrictions on freedom and self-regulation stem from social institutions, norms, laws, and traditions. Formulated out of prejudice, fear,

---

[11] Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, p. 347.

[12] Goodman, Five Years, p. 31.

[13] Ibid., 559.

special interests, jealousy, and stupidity, these attempts to harness his animal nature have resulted in his dehumanization.

> . . . For I see that all of us, not only I, are treated like stepchildren of nature. Nobody gets what he needs. And if you make the mistake of asking directly for what you need, ha, you'll find that you're the one that's moved, nobody else, and you'll wish you hadn't mentioned it because the truth is too hard to take. My life-story is no worse than the rest, only more obvious, more spectacular, so nobody can deny the truth. (Yet surely there is a misunderstanding, for indeed we are not the stepchildren of nature but her children and rightful heirs.)[14]

The reform needed is to alter our culture so that it is compatible with human nature; that is, to bring it into human scale.

This would result in the liberalization of laws to make it legal for people to do what free, uncoerced people do anyway. Therefore, he would simply eliminate laws on homosexuality and all other sexual practices; as well as on censorship and pornography. He would encourage more tolerance in extra-marital sex relations, and encourage and provide for the natural sexual exploration among adolescents.

He would consider criminals as sick people and treat them accordingly--aiming at rehabilitation and not punishment.

---

[14]Goodman, Adam and His Works, p. 168.

> Punitive police laws that prohibit people from doing what they want to do not only result in inhibition, but they have a further and much more disastrous results: they tend to aggravate and create anew the very evils that they are supposed to be deterring. I think that the entire history of punitive police legislation has shown this.[15]

Goodman would abolish narcotics laws. He makes no pretense of arguing that this would eliminate their usage, but, rather, "All of the evils would not vanish, but I think we'll have fewer than now."[16] Again and again Goodman implicitly invokes the anarchist principle that the state cannot, without serious consequences, eliminate practices that people find natural and consistent with their personal constitutions: "I am a conservative by nature and am not ready to remake human nature."[17]

Institutions and Human Scale

> Perhaps the concept of 'Normal Neurosis' is the defining mark of an 'Institution.' It is the nonrational system that seems to be, and is taken as, a law of nature, and so it generates its own persistence. If the permanence of an institution is threatened, there is at once anxiety and a fear of emptiness. It is believed that except in the Institution, a particular social function could not be carried on, though indeed it might be carried on better. As if bridges could not exist without tolls, or children be born and reared without marriage licenses, or education occur without schools. Wherever there is an Institution, like

---

[15] Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 84.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Goodman, People or Personnel, p. 155.

> Marriage or the School System or the State, look for repression and transference.[18]

One of the central tenets common to all anarchists is the postulated antagonism between institutions on the one hand, and individual freedom and happiness on the other. Institutions, by their very nature, assert anarchists, have a propensity to grow out of human scale. And once society's institutions and organizations become more important than the individuals who comprise them, then man must suppress his humanity to suit the inhuman system. As this argument is crucial to Goodman's educational thoughts, a short analysis of it is provided.

Institutions, although they may be initially organized to serve a human function, soon become dysfunctional. This phenomenon occurs for reasons inherent in the characteristics of large bureaucracies, and, because of this, institutions do not admit of reform and improvement as planned for by suggestion boxes and steering committees. Therefore, Goodman urges not mild reform, but radical decentralization.

> Throughout society, the centralizing style of organization has been pushed so far as to become ineffectual, economically wasteful, humanly stultifying, and ruinous to democracy. There are overcentralized systems in industry, in government, in culture, and in agriculture. The tight interlocking of these systems has created a situation in which modest, direct, and independent action has become extremely

---

[18]Goodman, Five Years, p. 156.

> difficult in every field. The only remedy is a strong admixture of decentralism. The problem is where, how much, and how to go about it.[19]

Goodman's concern is that people have become powerless, and to that extent they have become less human. Aggression, instincts, and initiative run up against insurmountable barriers. Man becomes frustrated, anxious, guilty, compulsive, hostile, and stupid.

> Subordinates tend to become stupider more rapidly and directly, simply because they cannot learn anything by exercising initiative and taking responsibility.[20]

> There is no test for performing a highly departmentalized role except evidence of playing a role and of ability at routine skills. Inevitably, the negative criteria for selection become preponderant--the reasons why a man won't do--and so the whole enterprise becomes still stupider. . . . In brief, as those who judge--colleagues, consumers, the electorate--become stupid, management also becomes stupid. So after a while we cannot maintain the assumption that in established firms top-management <u>can</u> be wise and capable.[21]

What reasons does Goodman offer for his belief in the natural malfunctioning of large institutions? The reasons given below are summed in his statement: "In corporate society--no matter how good the goals, the style of execution is dehumanizing."[22]

---

[19]Goodman, <u>People or Personnel</u>, p. 3.

[20]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 79.

[21]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 84.

[22]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 125.

Size

> The limitation in size is essential to Kafka's thought, and it is a true idea. In Kafka's terms, there is no telling the amount of evil one sets going outside the scope of one's comprehension and responsibility; yet it is evil to be alone; therefore a small comprehensible size.[23]

The first reason has to do with the limitations imposed by size itself. Largeness requires a certain amount of centralization. This results in major policy decisions being made at high levels and superimposed on those below--"top down authority." That is, the bureaucratic structure of large institutions--universities, governments, industries--necessitates the establishment of rules and procedures that preclude individual persons from effectuating their desires on the behavior of the institution. This stifling of initiative and creativity is not a by-product of centralization, rather it is the end-in-view of centralization. That is why Goodman shuns the "liberal" crusade for the election and appointment of benevolent and enlightened leaders. On election days Goodman pickets the polls with "Don't Vote" signs.

> It is said that governmental power has all gravitated to the Executive, away from the Congress who, like people, can only consent or balk. Extreme liberals are now hot to streamline Congress so it cannot even balk. But in the system we have been describing, the Executive also is not a governing person nor group of persons, any more than the baronial corporations are persons except as a fiction. During the activist Kennedy regime, frustration was

---

[23]Goodman, Kafka's Prayer, p. 118.

> continually expressed because, somehow, the Cabinet and the President himself were powerless. Just so the heads of giant corporations and of apparently autonomous universities claim that they are powerless to alter policies that they say they disapprove of. It is inherent in centralization that powerlessness spreads from the bottom to the top. There is certainly a structure of power in the country, but it seems to be a misnomer to call it a power elite.[24]

Yet, as demonstrated in Chapter III, a healthy self-regulating organism requires that the environment provide for spontaneity, aggression, and initiation. If this provision is to be meaningful, in that it allows for affecting consequences, it must enable individuals to meaningfully impose themselves on their work. This is precisely what centralization resolves to curtail; bureaucratic procedures are virtually impervious to individual interest, aggression, initiation, or nature.[25]

---

[24]Goodman, People or Personnel, p. 47.

[25]Edgar Friedenberg, in Coming of Age in America, offers an interesting observation as to why businessmen require high school diplomas even though the work can be done easily by non-graduates. "In this context, the attitude of the department-store manager who spoke at the conference on school dropouts becomes understandable. He has good reason to avoid hiring people who are not interested in advancement, even though they can do the jobs they were hired for well enough. Such people are likely to be relatively immune to external motivation, and inclined to seek satisfaction from the job itself; and from his point of view, no good can possibly come of this. His low-level jobs really are repetitive, monotonous, and highly rationalized; the people who hold them are likely to become dissatisfied and quit, unless they view the job as a step toward a better one. If they actually like the job, they are probably either imposing some personal style on it, expressing an idiosyncrasy of their own in the way they do it that will confuse his

Preclusion of Alternatives

> These correspondents, however, want me to speculate and find 'alternatives' (e.g. containment, a Berlin policy) within the very framework of war-games and power-politics that itself is deadly.[26]

Human beings have different needs and therefore different requirements for growth. It is Goodman's thinking that these can best be met by a multitude of small independent bands of people working cooperatively. Small, independent units can go it their own way, at their own speed, making their own creative adjustments. Individual persons can select among the diverse units the one which is most compatible with their own needs and nature. One of Goodman's persistent criticisms of large institutions is that they destroy competitors by "pre-empting the means and channels" and then argue that the absence of alternatives demonstrates that the public wants what it has--e.g. TV programming, automobile design.

Closely tied to this argument is that, to a large extent, large institutions foresake experimentalism.

---

system, or they are exaggerating its importance in relation to other things that go on in the mercantile process and thereby making of themselves an irritating and compulsive bottleneck. They are also likely to antagonize their fellow workers by grossly exceeding the informal work-norms that they have established among themselves and thus putting them on the spot. The last thing management needs, at almost any level, is a self-generating enthusiast." Edgar Friedenberg, Coming of Age in America, Vintage Books (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 176.

I am suggesting that the thoughts in this analysis are shared by Goodman.

[26]Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, p.66.

Being centralized they adher to one policy or process. Also, no smaller units are available to try a new way which might prove to be better.

> In this view, political institutions are nothing but deliberate social experiments. In a beautiful passage, Madison explains the advantages of decentralism: each autonomous unit can experiment; if the experiment fails, only a small community is hurt, and the others can help out; if the experiment succeeds, it can be imitated to everybody's advantage. (It is a misfortune that the Federal system of States has not operated in this way. I can think of only a few radical experiments, in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Louisiana. If Upton Sinclair's EPIC program in California had come to power, it might have been the most interesting.)[27]

And Goodman, a proponent of the social evolution espoused by Kropotkin, insists that experimentalism in social, economic, and political institutions is necessary as a concomitant to the creative adjustment faculty in man.[28]

Dysfunctional

> In the first place, as technology increases, as there is a proliferation of goods, and civilization becomes more complex, there is a change in the scale on which things happen. Then, if we continue to use the concepts that applied to a smaller scale, we begin to think in deceptive

---

[27] Goodman, People or Personnel, p. 34.

[28] Goodman does not argue simply that conspiracy keeps dissent from a hearing. Rather massive communication is so pervasive that dissent is merely drowned out. To counteract the effects of mass media Goodman has proposed that we build into the system its own antidote. He urges that we affix an excise tax on mass-media per thousand audience; the revenue to be used to subsidize small theaters and newspapers.

> abstractions. There are certain functions of life that we think we are carrying on, and that were carried on, on a smaller scale, that are only apparently being carried on. And sometimes, indeed, because of the error in our thinking, the effects are contrary to those we intended.29

Goodman reserves his most severe criticism for what he finds as the most detrimental consequence of large established institutions: they promote the very evils they are initiated to remedy. Whereas institutions are philosophically structured to serve a human need, that is they have a function, they inevitably lose sight of that function. Goodman argues, in good anarchist tradition, that the functions necessary for happiness are rather modest. However, empirical observation, he asserts, will reveal that institutions fail to serve even these modest functions. Thus, "In the case of schools, the internal organization prevents the function, educating."[30] And, "The regulatory agencies, sponsored by the older liberalism, have become accommodations with the giant monopolies, rather than means of pluralizing."[31] Also, he argues that sovereign nation states, conceived to promote the general welfare, have evolved primarily as instruments to wage war.

---

[29]Paul Goodman, "Two Issues on Planning," Commentary, Vol. 44, August, 1967, p. 75.

[30]Goodman, People or Personnel, p. 55.

[31]Ibid., p. 29.

> The very futility of the States, however, commits them rigidly to the Cold War. Without it, it is doubtful if the great sovereignties could survive with anything like their present personnel, vested interest, motivations, and ideology. Their one function seems to be to continue a clinch and hinder the evolution of the world community.[32]

The heart of Goodman's argument is simply that established organizations do not have a social function as their primary purpose. But, rather, growth, security, and employee remuneration replace the social function.[33] Vital to understanding Goodman is to recognize this fear he holds for entrenched institutions: "The chief danger to American society at present, and to the world from American society, is our mindlessness, induced by empty institutions."[34]

The behavior of institutions raises a problem for Goodman. He is not an out and out ascetic. The good life for him is compatible with growth-fostering material

---

[32]Goodman, Drawing the Line, p. 93.

[33]John Kenneth Galbraith in The New Industrial State puts forth the argument that the gigantic corporations of the 1960's do not function according to the 'maximum profits' theory of classical capitalism. But, rather, that both growth and security rank above a satisfactory level of profits. In short, large corporations are not subject to the strict laws of supply and demand imposed by a desire to 'maximize profits.' Therefore, neither the social function nor the 'watch-dog' of the social function, profits, is the principle guide for corporate behavior. This is, I believe, consistent with Goodman's contentions.

[34]Goodman, People or Personnel, p. 271.

production, technology, space exploration, city-life, material progress and invention. Yet, he finds the modern arrangements of people, tools, buildings, and equipment as promoting evil ends by way of evil means. Modern government, education, and industry are detrimental to the growth needs of individuals--they are out of human scale. They coerce, stifle, frustrate, and dehumanize man both as a producer and a consumer. Yet, he readily contends, human beings need material production and social arrangements--"it is not our nature to go it alone." Therefore, Goodman, as anarchist, as decentralist, as humanist urges the development of communities.

Community

> The happiest times I've had, the most exciting, have been in community. Like at the progressive school I taught at, or at Black Mountain. When I was twenty I had a whole gang of friends, and I still have them, and they'd come to our house every Saturday and we'd play ball, bridge, and read one another stories.[35]

Goodman's conception of community, as do all of his major ideas, grows out of his social psychology and his humanistic philosophy: "Fraternity is the opposite of panic."[36] He wants to promote the natural growth of the natural man. Growth requires objects--food, clothing, shelter, recreation, and education facilities. These

---

[35]"Disturber of the Peace: Paul Goodman," Mademoiselle, Vol. 58, February, 1964, p. 105.

[36]Goodman, Empire City, p. 271.

ends can be, and by and large are, efficiently manufactured by modern techniques featuring vigorous divisions of labor and large centralized facilities that are administered by bureaucratic management.[37] However, this, Goodman insists,

---

[37]Goodman insists that the efficiency of centralization is greatly overrated, basically because of our system of cost allocation. For instance, social costs are not included in corporate accounting. Thus, it may be cheaper for a corporation to centralize facilities because they do not pay the cost of worker time spent in travel. If they did, and if they considered the cost of automobiles, roadways, and air pollution, they would, Goodman believes, find that decentralizing and shipping materials is more efficient. Goodman has addressed himself to this point in 1962 in a letter to the Columbia University Forum. As this argument is at the heart of his decentralist position it is provided here in full.

August 28, 1962

Editor, Columbia University Forum

Dear Sir:

I must object to a line of argument in Dennis Wrong's pious essay on Max Weber in your summer issue. When Weber is accused of underestimating the clogging of initiative and the bloated overhead of bureaucracies, Wrong says this is 'irrelevant. . . . The point remains that most of the activities of bureaucracies today could not under modern conditions even be carried out badly by nonbureaucratic organization.' But in principle, if inefficiencies tend to accumulate, there could be a point at which they outweigh efficiencies; and nevertheless the bureaucracies will expand, perpetuate and solidify themselves. And empirically, my rough judgment is that the point of inefficiency could be shown to be already far exceeded in many areas, certainly in urbanism, communications, education, much industrial production, and much trade in commodities, if the total social labor is taken into account and if the standard of living is criticized.

The bother is that the style of bureaucracy itself hampers such empirical investigation. It usurps the field and dictates research; its 'narrow criteria of efficient performance' are indeed narrow; its departmentalizing defeats a holistic approach; its method of cash-bookkeeping

is incompatible with the end--human growth and happiness. In short, man's total needs and nature, have been subordinated in the interest of efficient mass production. The only solution, Goodman argues, is for men to live in communities, where their material needs can be met through processes which attend to their other needs, such as social intercourse, love, the exercise of aggression and initiative, the opportunity to be creative, and, in general, so that the organism can self-regulate.

> I am, as is evident in these letters, a community anarchist. I hold, for instance, that sovereign power must be diminished because it is too dangerous to live with; that people must be free of coercion in order to grow and adventure; that administration should be decentralized as much as possible, in

---

speciously prejudges some of the most essential costs and gains by disregarding them. Bureaucracy itself is a crucial factor in the 'modern conditions,' and indeed, Professor Wrong's easy-going assumption that our technology, population, etc. 'could not be' organized otherwise is precisely the nothing-can-be-done attitude of bureaucracy.

Weber understood that rationalization is a moral and religious style, and a rather lifeless one; nevertheless he was deeply hypnotized by it--his politics never transcended it. Therefore he lays undue emphasis on its polar opposite, charisma. (It is grim how his disciple, C. Wright Mills, forgot that rationalization was a style at all, and began to think of it as the nature of things, and so conceived his fantastic admiration for concentrated 'decision-making.') But Weber is wrong, the charismatic leader is not ethically 'neutral.' In extreme degrees, both rationalization and charisma are base, unworthy of human communities. They are wasteful of man and resources; they are slavish and superstitious; they diminish the quality of life; they stand in the way of the spirit. It is the course of a reasonable (practical) sociology at present to de-energize any such polarity.

Yours,

(Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, pp. 16-17.)

> order to multiply sources of initiative and experiment; and that there is a creative and secure-making virtue in face-to-face association in urban and scientific societies. Yet, although an anarchist on principle, I write letters to governors, I serve on a municipal school board, I visit colossal universities, etc. In my opinion, there is no inconsistency.[38]

Subsequently, a community is a process aimed at harmonizing the means and ends into an ethical whole so as to maximize human growth. Such a community has several features.

Face to Face Relations

> It is not unusual, it is the kind of under-the-skin intimacy that develops among any group that lives and eats together day by day, whether soldiers, or collegians at school, or kids at a summer-camp; yet if in this intimacy there is also taken for granted an excellent common purpose and a shared ethics that makes for living well, what further justification is required? We have a good in itself.[39]

Goodman's notion that mutual aid works best in face to face relationships is reminiscent of David Hume's claim that human sympathy applies to one's family, and gradually extends outward only to one's friends and acquaintances. That is, man is a social being when he can directly see the humanistic consequences of his behavior. In these relationships--built on trust, empathy, function--he lives according to the naturalistic ethics described in Chapter IV.

---

[38] Ibid., pp. ix-x.

[39] Ibid., p. 125.

What Goodman is saying is that person to institution or institution to institution relationships are not person to person contacts. Institutions are not persons and the employees of an institution are fulfilling a role, they are personnel. The social nature of man does not embrace a brotherhood with personnel. Contractual relationships provide an excellent contrast which illuminates this distinction. Contracts between people and institutions are formal, legal, distrustful, protective, and frequently designed to mislead. Whereas, Goodman asserts, contracts or "agreements" between intimate members of a community are informal, positive, based on trust, common sense, and mutual aid. The first breeds cynicism, hostility, insecurity, withdrawal, and reactive stupidity. The second encourages faith, confidence, initiative, security, and good contact. Institutions, by their very nature, are incapable of fostering the human benefits inherent in face to face interaction.

Functional

The community action always revolves around a function. It is Goodman's claim that when a free, uncoerced gathering of people live together they will cooperatively and voluntarily come together to perform necessary functions. One of the reasons, he says, that Americans have abdicated their natural community powers to institutions is because they have been led to believe

that only institutions can get things done. In a chapter on "power" in People or Personnel he chides:

> . . . There is a certain amount of normal function surviving or reviving--bread is baked, arts and sciences are pursued by a few, etc.; mostly we see the abortions of lively social functioning saddled, exploited, prevented, perverted, drained dry, paternalized by an imposed system of power and management that preempts the means and makes decisions ab extra. And the damnable thing is that, of course, everybody believes that except in this pattern nothing could possibly be accomplished: if there were no marriage license and no tax, none could properly mate and no children be born and raised; if there were no tolls there would be no bridges; if there were no university charters, there would be no higher learning; if there were no usury and no Iron Law of Wages, there would be no capital; if there were no markup of drug prices, there would be no scientific research. Once a society has this style of thought, that every activity requires licensing, underwriting, deciding by abstract power, it becomes inevitably desirable for an ambitious man to seek power and for a vigorous nation to try to be a Great Power. The more some have the power drive, the more it seems to be necessary to the others to compete, or submit, just in order to survive. (And importantly they are right.) Many are ruthless and most live in fear.[40]

But, he believes, the empirical evidence suggests otherwise.

> The principle of decentralism is that people are engaged in a function and the organization is how they cooperate. . . . Historically, this system of voluntary association has yielded most of the values of civilization, but it is thought to be entirely unworkable under modern conditions and the very sound of it is strange.[41]

---

[40] Goodman, People or Personnel, pp. 183-184.

[41] Ibid., p. 4.

Goodman clearly does not oppose organization. What he does oppose is the creation of non-functional institutions beyond human scale. He envisages a community of manageable associations, "intermediary between the individuals and families and the metropolis; it is to counteract the isolation of the individual in mass society."[42] These associations are to be designed, not merely to "protect" or tc "serve" a passive people, nor to provide for a superficial "participation." Rather, they are geared to be flexible so as to be affected by individual spontaneity, aggression, and initiation. Only in this way can they expend their efforts on the function, and modify their behavior as the function changes--or quit when the function disappears.

The ability of voluntary associations to quit when the function ceases to exist is significant. An institution which outlives its function is a source of unmitigated evil in anarchist thought.

Process Oriented

One of Goodman's more poetic definitions of community is the one found in Making Do. Here he defines community "as people using one another as resources."[43] In short,

---

[42]Goodman, Utopian Essays, p. 151.

[43]Paul Goodman, Making Do, Signet Books (New York: The American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1964), p. 108.

persons in a meaningful community are not interested merely in the efficient accumulation and consumption of objects, but they find happiness in the interaction these processes provide. For instance, objects can be produced in assembly-lines using men as uncommunicative interchangeable parts, or they can be produced by a group of workers who decide their own procedures.

> Except for unusual circumstances, there is not much need for dictators, deans, police, pre-arranged curricula, imposed schedules, conscription, concise laws. Free people easily agree among themselves on plausible working rules; they listen to expert direction when necessary; they wisely choose pro tem leaders. Remove authority and there will be self-regulation not chaos.[44]

Likewise, other necessary functions can be undertaken by attending to the process. Small ugly towns can be renewed by extrinsically motivated commercial enterprises, or they can be beautified by the efforts of the local citizens--the elderly who need work and a social life; or by teenagers who are being dehumanized in a high school contemptuously ill-suited to their needs; or by the unemployed who surely have skills needed in making run-down towns more pleasant. In short, if we produce, labor, and expend energy for human happiness, why should we not avail ourselves to the potential happiness found in the process? It is this sense of wholeness, of

---

[44]Goodman, Black Flag, p. 16.

attending to all the needs of the community members, through cooperative, voluntary active involvement in work and play that constitutes Goodman's community. The emphasis is on the activity, not the location or the objects.

> But to make neighborhood planning work, the physical planning is only trivially important compared to the really important thing: neighborhood function. And in order to make any community-function work as community, you must give the community authority, power to make decisions. The only way you will ever get any neighborhood planning that amounts to anything is to dare to decentralize the administration and allow local initiative. Of course you can't give initiative; but you can give people the right to exercise initiative and make crucial decisions. (It is said that one person in ten is a 'leader.' That is enough, if the others have face-to-face access to him.)[45]

Goodman is quick to point out that his conception of community does not restrict itself to small rural communities. He believes that cities like New York can be "wisely administered, in important respects, like 3500 neighborhoods of 2000."[46]

A community then, is characterized by face-to-face cooperative efforts in functional endeavors. It features small, manageable associations and institutions that are organized and operated by those involved. It is Goodman's position that only in this way can we build

---

[45]Goodman, The Society I Live In Is Mine, p.132.

[46]Ibid., p. 127.

into our systems the psychological requirements for the health and happiness of man.

It is not Goodman's contention that community involvement and cooperative planning and choosing will result in the best architecture, the best method, or the best anything, he simply wants to say that, on the whole, it is the best way to live. This point is made explicitly in a talk he gave to a sociology class at Carleton College in 1962. In part, he said:

> Even more important, perhaps, are housing and urban renewal. They too could be localized. A reasonable method would be to invite people from a university to make alternative sets of plans for a neighborhood. Perhaps by competition, with a board of architects, etc., to rule out the plans that are just impossible. Perhaps six workable plans will remain. Then you educate people by inviting them to the school. You have a party or bazaar; you explain the plans, and point up the features of this one and that one. You carry on communication for six months, a year. Perhaps the plans become a local political issue. Finally, a vote--whatever they choose they get. No faking. Usually they won't choose the best. How could they possibly? But they'll choose something that will almost surely be better, more fitting their local needs, than what some bureaucrat in the City Planning Commission of New York City will give them. By giving the neighborhoods the power to decide, I think you will eventually get real neighborhoods, and you might even get good plans.[47]

But this decentralist scheme requires active citizens who are willing to make decisions, trust one another, assert their aggression in positive ways, and become a

---

[47] Ibid., p. 136.

meaningful part of the lives of persons and institutions in their community. They must regain the power they have abdicated and which has passed to our centralized and bureaucratic institutions. How can individual persons develop this attitude? It is definitely Goodman's contention that persons have become powerless, reactively stupid, hostile, apathetic, and have come to identify with the powers that be. So Goodman, like many anarchists before him, addresses himself exhaustively to the education of our youth. If we are to regain a portion of paradise lost, we must fan the internal sparks of animal spirit, social nature, creativity, native intelligence, and allow the self-regulating organism to function.

CHAPTER VII

HUMAN NATURE AND EDUCATION

> We can, I believe, educate the young entirely in terms of their free choice with no processing whatever. . . . Freedom is the only way toward authentic citizenship and real, rather than verbal, philosophy.[1]

Goodman has written that "The philosophic aim of education must be to get each one out of his isolated class and into the one humanity."[2] In this endeavor he urges us toward more education--in terms of both activities for youth and money spent for education. However, he makes a clear distinction between education and schooling. In April, 1969, he offered this concept of schooling.

> Yet with trivial exceptions, what we mean by School--namely, curriculum generalized from the activities of life, and divided into departments, texts, lessons, scheduled periods marked by bells, specialist teachers, examinations, and graded promotion to the next step--is a sociological invention of some Irish monks in the seventh century to bring a bit of Rome to wild shepherds.[3]

---

[1] Paul Goodman, "Freedom and Learning: The Need for Choice," Saturday Review, May 18, 1969, p. 73.

[2] Goodman, Compulsory Mis-education, p. 21.

[3] Paul Goodman, "The Present Moment in Education," New York Review of Books, April 10, 1969, p. 15.

His flagrant attacks on modern schooling grow out of his concern that contemporary schools are custodial social institutions characterized by irrelevant non-educational activities. They serve to keep youth off the labor market and out of the streets, and frequently as training establishments for industry; particularly in the sense of training in conformity and teaching respect for established authority.[4] He challenges that since we do not know what

---

[4]This theme of conflict between the growth needs of adolescents and the requirements and expectations of a mass culture is given empirical validity by Edgar Friedenberg in Coming of Age in America. Friedenberg, drawing on the data of his own research, argues that the schools are more concerned with efficiency of operation and in obtaining conforming behavior from its students, than in fostering growth. He writes: "In the process, the school affects society in two complementary ways. It alters individuals: their values, their sense of personal worth, their patterns of anxiety and sense of mastery and ease in the world on which so much of what we think of as our fate depends. But it also performs a Darwinian function. The school endorses and supports the values and patterns of behavior of certain segments of the population, providing their members with the credentials and shibboleths needed for the next stages of their journey, while instilling in others a sense of inferiority and warning the rest of society against them as troublesome and untrustworthy. In this way, the school contributes simultaneously to social mobility and social stratification. It helps to see to it that the kinds of people who get ahead are those who will support the social system it represents; while those who might, through intent or merely by their being, subvert it are left behind as a salutary moral lesson" (Coming of Age in America, p. 49).

"Self-conscious non-conformity, for the time, has become quite fashionable, and schools rather encourage its more conventional manifestations as evidence that they favor creativity. They cannot, however, favor genuine diversity of response among students without jeopardizing the underlying institutional assumptions and arrangements on which a mass society depends; and they do not favor it" (Coming of Age in America, p. 190).

is right education--e.g. school grades have no relationship with life achievements--we simply have everybody go to school more.

The academic school establishment, Goodman admits, had a function in 1900 when only six per cent went through high school. (He accepts an academic education for the academically talented, and he tenuously accepts Conant's opinion that about 15 per cent of our populace is academically inclined.) Now, however, the educational institution has aggrandized itself, "hoaxed the public," and operates as if it were an essential institution for all youths. Consequently it has tried to make each student adjust to the requirements of a large interlocking institution--e.g. grades, course requirements, educational TV, lectures, tests--rather than adjust the institutions to fit the needs of the youth. The result is boredom, introjection, stupidity, hostility, and a destruction of youthful spirit. Ultimately some drop out, others picket; there is a generation gap. Goodman wants to say that by mis-reading human nature we have erected a false god. Now when the exalted edifice shows signs of cracking--this month the universities are under seige and policemen patrol the halls of the high schools--the response has been to intensify the very processes that produced the cracks. Goodman writes:

> Predictably, the response of school administrators is to refine the processing, to make the curriculum still more relevant, to enrich the curriculum, to add remedial steps, to study developmental psychology for points of manipulation, to start earlier, to use new teaching technology, to eliminate friction by admitting students to administrative functions.
>
> But social engineering is uneducational in principle. It pre-structures behavior and can become discriminating, graceful, and energetic only if the organism creates its own structures as it goes along.[5]

He suggests many reforms. He argues vociferously for the utilization of enterprises other than the present school institution for the education of the young. He scoffs at the notion that the growth of children can best be done in large boxes with thirty seats facing front. Rather, he suggests that the on-going city and country is a proper educational environment. And since he believes that socially useful work is an indispensable element in the education of most adolescents, he finds a natural cohesion between societal needs and educational needs. He has faith that by multiplying options it is possible to plan an interesting educational course for each individual youth in the same manner that some of the better schools have done for the emotionally disturbed. He applauds progressive education which, he asserts, has never been tried.

Goodman would have us eliminate compulsory attendance, grades, required courses, and the use of tests for

---

[5]Goodman, "The Present Moment in Education," p. 16.

other than pedagogic purposes. He would have us maintain an open campus--whether it be college or grade school--so that kids can come and go as they please. They need both the physical freedom of movement and the psychological freedom of being able to seek their own satisfactions. Goodman heartily concurs with Dewey's statement that the idea that education is a "preparation" for life is monstrous. That is, children as children have a life of their own to live.

He would allow for and provide for far more sexual expression at all ages. He is somewhat ambivalent, however, as to just how much sexual education he would offer. He argues that sex loses some of its spontaneous joy and excitement if made routine, clinical, and bookish. He has suggested that sex should be learned in the streets, yet in Compulsory Mis-education he has written, "Therefore, sexual expression should be approved in and out of season, also in school, and where necessary made the subject of instruction."[6] One might conclude that he would be rather conservative in his judgment of when it is "necessary." Sexual desire is a spontaneous interest, and the organism can suppress it only at a loss of grace, force, and vigor to whatever it turns its deliberate attention and concentration. (Goodman fondly quotes Bertrand Russell who

---

[6]Goodman, Compulsory Mis-education, p. 28.

said, "Let them copulate so we can get on with mathematics.")

As we have seen, Goodman considers intrinsic motivation as the ground for self-regulation. Therefore, grades, credits, and other extrinsic rewards are anathema to growth and development of the individual nature. Only spontaneous interest admits of good contact, so students ought to be allowed to choose courses and teachers. Forced courses result in divided attention, boredom, inhibited aggression, and learned stupidity. And since education is essentially an interchange between persons, learners should be able to select teachers with whom they can establish good contact.

He believes that the current reliance on various kinds of testing encourages the students to introject required facts and to spew them forth on the examination; they fail to assimilate material because assimilation is not rewarded, and the necessary time and effort to assimilate would have to be taken from studying for examinations, which can be passed equally well with introjected knowledge.[7]

---

[7]This position may be contrasted with that of B. F. Skinner. In Technology of Teaching, where Skinner puts forth his appeal for deliberate "contingencies of reinforcement" he argues that the teacher who uses natural contingencies of reinforcement really abdicates his role as a teacher. Skinner writes: "Natural contingencies of reinforcement, moreover, are not actually very good. They are more likely to generate idleness than industry. Trivial, useless, exhausting, and harmful behaviors are

The thesis of this paper is that Goodman's educational proposals stem directly from his concept of human nature, and that to fully understand his proposals one must understand his views on the nature of man. In this chapter we shall examine the central principles of his proposals and demonstrate how those proposals emanate from his theories on contact, spontaneity, aggression, assimilation, and the self-regulating organism in general.

Goodman's educational recommendations are both numerous and diversified. (A listing of his proposals is provided in Appendix A.) His ideas range from store front mini-schools for elementary children to the secession of bands of teachers and students from the major colleges and universities. He opts for using as an educational environment the sparse farmlands of northern Wisconsin, as well as the crowded streets of New York City. He urges us

---

learned in the real world. The human organism pays for its great speed in learning by being susceptible to accidental contingencies which breed superstitions. Many natural reinforcers are too long deferred to be effective. No child really learns to plant seed because he is reinforced by the resulting harvest, or to read because he enjoys interesting books, or to write because he passes notes to his neighbor, or not to break windows because the room would then grow cold. The behavior which satisfies these terminal contingencies is not taught by the contingencies themselves, and programs are by no means always naturally available. The deferred consequences of precurrent responses of self-management are particularly unlikely to shape the behavior they eventually sustain. For example, natural consequences seldom if ever induce a student to study, either in nature or in school. B. F. Skinner, The Technology of Teaching (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968), p. 154.

to spend more money on education and to "dismantle the present school machinery." Yet, if he is consistent, and I conclude that he is, underlying each of these ideas is Goodman's concept of human nature; especially how man grows by using his natural creativity in adjusting to new situations.

One of his more provocative proposals, and certainly one which encompasses virtually all of his concepts on the nature of man, is his experimental plan for the creation of mini-schools in New York City. In this chapter we will examine the mini-school formulation to ascertain specifically how this educational arrangement anticipates the natural development capacities of children, and in so doing provides an effective means of "getting each one out of his isolated class and into the one humanity."

It is my contention that this analysis is preferable to a systematic treatment of all his proposals, as I hold that each of his recommendations is grounded in the same cluster of concepts, and the mini-school plan embraces nearly all of them.

The Mini-School

A mini-school is a decentralized neighborhood elementary school (ages 6-12), supported by the public, and administered entirely by the students, parents, and teachers of that neighborhood. The building to be used is selected on the basis of accessibility, safety,

flexibility, and cost. Potential facilities would include vacant store fronts, church basements, settlement houses, and housing projects. The school is to be located near the homes of the children so they can "escape from it to home, and from home to it."[8] Attendance at the school is not compulsory, but Goodman explicitly believes that intelligently managed schools will attract nearly all students.

Each mini-school houses 28 children and 4 adults. The adults include a licensed teacher, a housewife who can cook, a college senior, and a teen-age school drop-out.

The mini-school concept is a natural outgrowth of Goodman's anarchistic posture. He argues, much as John Dewey does in the early chapters of Democracy and Education, that education has been traditionally a normal function of the community. Goodman stresses this point in Compulsory Mis-education.

> Education is a natural community function and occurs inevitably, since the young grow up on the old, toward their activities, and unto (or against) their institutions; and the old foster, teach, train, exploit and abuse the young. Even neglect of the young, expect physical neglect has an educational effect--not the worst possible.[9]

However, Goodman recognizes, as did Dewey, that a complex industrial society can no longer correct the bad and preserve the good merely by allowing the young to

---

[8]Goodman, "Freedom and Learning: . . .", p. 74

[9]Goodman, Compulsory Mis-education, p. 16.

wander about the city talking with adults and exploring aimlessly. Dewey hoped that the schools could be a community superior to society and serve as a change agent, but Goodman, who says that Dewey was naive on that point, claims that empirical evidence will not substantiate that ideal. Rather, says Goodman:

> Our schools reflect our society closely, except that they emphasize many of its worst features, as well as having the characteristic defects of academic institutions of all times and places.[10]

Education, he believes, even in modern society, need not be academic schooling, although he concedes that formal schooling is a reasonable "auxiliary of the inevitable process, whenever an activity is best learned by singling it out for special attention with a special person to teach it."[11] In April, 1969, he wrote an extensive article for the New York Review of Books. The theme of the article is that contemporary schools are non-educational because they attend to schooling, which is deliberate and unnatural; and that quality education is "incidental learning."

> To be educated well or badly, to learn by a long process how to cope with the physical environment and the culture of one's society, is part of the human condition. In every society the education of the children is of the first importance. But in all societies, both primitive and highly civilized, until quite recently most education of most children

---

[10] Ibid., p. 24.

[11] Ibid., p. 16.

> has occurred incidentally. Adults do their work and other social tasks; children are not excluded, are paid attention to, and learn to be included. The children are not "taught." In many adult institutions, incidental education is taken for granted as part of the function: families and age-statuses, community labor, master-apprentice arrangements, games and plays, prostitution and other sexual initiation, religious rites and churches. In Greek paideia, the entire network of institutions, the polis, was thought of as importantly an educator.[12]

Subsequently, Goodman finds himself in a dilemma. He agrees with Dewey that education must now be a conscious and deliberate process, but, true to his undergraduate anarchistic influences, he applauds incidental learning and fears the establishment of any educational means which hints of bureaucracy, standardization, centralization, or complexity which precludes face to face communication. His mini-school, grounded in anarchistic social psychology, is his solution to the dilemma.

Self-Regulation

Freedom.--Clearly at the heart of Goodman's educational proposals is his concept of positive freedom. If the child is to self-regulate he must be freed of external coercion and restraint. The child must have the psychological freedom that comes with knowing he can seek his own satisfactions, and the physical freedom to enable him to follow through.

---

[12]Goodman, "The Present Moment in Education," p. 14.

The mini-school is structured around self-regulation. Attendance is voluntary, and the child is free to leave the school at his own discretion. Thus, he need not feel trapped or constrained against his will.

Goodman intends the 7 to 1 pupil-teacher ratio to allow for far more physical freedom than is permissable in contemporary classrooms where ratios of 30 to 1 are not uncommon. An imaginative mind can conceive of numerous combinations of adults and children that a 7 to 1 ratio permits. Virtually none of the activity of the mini-school will require the passivity that the conventional classroom does. This is especially true in light of Goodman's notion that the building serving as the classroom can be, and ought to be, left frequently. He foresees small groups of children moving about their community gaining first-hand experiences of the place in which they live; although he fears the dangers of our poorly planned cities.

The mini-school setting drastically reduces the need for rules, regulations, schedules, and rigidity. There are no buses to necessitate inflexible scheduling; the building can take abuse; there is no intra-scheduling of library time, band time, patrol time, or lunch time; the class need not meet a standardized requirement in reading, writing, or mathematics. Thus, student projects need not be worn out "taking them out and putting them

away" as the children can attend to what they want for as long as they want. In short, when Goodman says that we can "educate the young in terms of their free choice" he presupposes an arrangement where freedom is pervasive. The child is free to leave, to work at what he chooses, as intensely as his interests dictate, and to travel where and when he wants within the limits imposed by a 7 to 1 pupil-teacher ratio and the dangers of city movement.

Hierarchy of Values.--According to Goodman's hierarchy of values as soon as one need is satisfied another quickly rises to take its place. Implicit in this formulation is a hierarchy whereby a lower need must be satiated before the organism can give full attention to a higher one. Clearly life sustaining needs are the lowest ones. Goodman's housewife who can cook is a recognition of the hierarchy. Hungry children are poor learners.

The mini-school is planned, also, to provide security for the children so they are free to attend to higher needs.[13] It has no letter grading, no threats of failure,

---

[13]One of the dominant themes in Maslow's Toward a Psychology of Being is that growth and security are both needs, but that security, which is a deterrent to growth, is a lower need and must be satisfied first. "But we know also that curiosity and exploration are 'higher' needs than safety, which is to say that the need to feel safe, secure, unanxious, unafraid is prepotent, stronger over curiosity." Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, Insight Book (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1962), p. 61.

John Holt, in Why Children Fail, tells us that his experience has been that children are scared much of

no coercion or external standards, no extrinsic rewards, and has absolutely no concern in measuring the child's growth by a quantitative measurement contrasted against others in his class. The child need not fear being in the lower quarter or in getting a C-. Properly conceived the mini-school should provide the child the security he needs to enable him to respond to his innate desires for creativity, learning, and exploring in order to understand both himself and his environment. If this seems like a very simplistic purpose for the mini-school, it is because that is the intention. Goodman, who has said, "my bias is that 'teaching' is largely a delusion,"[14] has no grandiose plans for elementary education.

---

the time they are in school. "What is most surprising of all is how much fear there is in school. Why is so little said about it? Perhaps most people do not recognize fear in children when they see it. They can read the grossest signs of fear; they know what the trouble is when a child clings howling to his mother; but the subtler signs of fear escape them. It is these signs, in children's faces, voices, and gestures, in their movements and ways of working, that tell me plainly that most children in school are scared most of the time, many of them very scared. Like good soldiers, they control their fears, live with them, and adjust themselves to them. But the trouble is, and here is a vital difference between school and war, that the adjustments children make to their fears are almost wholly bad, destructive of their intelligence and capacity. The scared fighter may be the best fighter, but the scared learner is always a poor learner." John Holt, Why Children Fail, Delta Book (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1964), p. 49.

To the extent that Maslow and Holt are correct, the present school set-up does not maximize growth activities.

[14]Goodman, "The Present Moment in Education," p. 15.

> The goal of elementary pedagogy is a very modest one: it is for a small child, under his own steam, to poke interestedly into whatever goes on and to be able, by observation, questions, and practical imitation, to get something out of it in his own terms. In our society this happens pretty well at home up to age four, but after that it becomes forbiddingly difficult.[15]

Spontaneity

Intrinsic Motivation.--The inherent flexibility of the mini-school allows the adult staff to respond much more effectively to what the children find interesting and challenging. Again, of course, the 7 to 1 ratio permits the child to engage in different endeavors and/or at different times than his classmates.

Goodman adheres to Dewey's belief that anything is educational that results in the child wanting to learn something more.

> Dewey's maxim is a good one: there is no need to bother about curriculum, for whatever a child turns to is potentially educative and with good management, one thing leads to another. Even skills that are considered essential prerequisites, like reading, will be learned spontaneously in a normal urban and suburban condition.[16]

And of course he wants to argue that children will want to learn only when the desire to learn stems from organismic felt needs, or spontaneous awarenesses. The flexibility and lack of a prescribed course of study is geared toward the spontaneous interests of the students.

---

[15] Ibid., p. 20.

[16] Ibid., p. 21.

Full Concentration.--In Chapter IV we analyzed Goodman's distinction between spontaneous attention and deliberate attention. During deliberate attention the energy of the organism undergoes the three-way division: energy is expended on the task, to the resister, and in fighting the resister. Consequently, during deliberate attention the organism is utilizing only a fraction of its potential. This waste of energy is one of the reasons Goodman says that given their potential human beings don't accomplish very much; they have given too much to repressing spontaneous interests. Goodman is talking about out-of-school activities as well as formal schooling, but he believes that habits and attitudes are significantly affected during the 12 years of lessons, assignments, manipulation, and coercion. The child grows up with the attitude that normalcy is doing "enough to get by," playing the game, staying cool, looking to outside sources for what one ought to do, to identify with those in authority, to introject the notion that his life is regulated by the institutions and roles prescribed, and to sense guilt if his spontaneous self tells him that this is not in his best interest. The mini-school aims at encouraging the child to forego the three-way division of energy. Hopefully, he can learn to devote all his energy to his self-chosen task, and to drop that task as soon as he finds it no longer meets his needs.

Assimilation

Aggression.--Aggression is the step toward the object of appetite or hostility, and is absolutely essential for assimilation. Recalling the three components of aggression--annihilation, destroying, and initiative--we should expect the mini-school to provide for each.

Annihilation is making into nothing, typified most commonly in the school setting by flight. Goodman provides for this. His liberal attendance policy enables the child to assert his aggression by escape whenever he deems it desirable.

Destroying in order to destructure means the organism must exercise its appetite in the interest of its own need or satisfaction. This opportunity is severely restricted when individual appetites are circumscribed by the inflexibility imposed by predetermined course content, materials, schedules, and a class ratio of 30 to 1. The mini-school, being decentralized and a unit unto itself, has no district-wide curriculum or comprehensive plan that locks the teachers and students into a planned week by week progression. The adults are able to respond to spontaneously expressed interests and desires. Goodman has written that lesson plans should not be written more than one day in advance, and the mini-school, where the

adults are responsible to no one save those they meet face tc face, is consistent with that belief.[17]

It is difficult to assess what the removal or reduction of threat from authority will have on the attitude of the children, but Goodman emphatically believes it will be both positive and significant. That is, according to the experiences of Friedenberg and Holt, with whom Goodman allies himself, the modern school is a repository of fear, anxiety, and tension. Holt argues that this stems from the teachers obsession with correct answers. The children have reacted by subordinating their schccl behavior and responses to their estimation of the

---

[17]In 1959 in Croton Falls, a teacher, James Worley, was punished for his refusal to prepare advanced lesson plans. Goodman wrote a letter to the Commissioner of Education in defense of Worley's insubordination. The letter, in part, read:

"I am told that the case of James Worley of Croton Falls has come to you for review. Allow me to say something on his behalf.

"In content his original protesting action seems to me beyond doubt correct. I myself have taught every age from ten-year-olds through Ph.D. candidates and older adults; it has been my universal experience that formal preparation of a lesson-plan beyond the next hour or two is not only unrealistic but can be positively harmful and rigidifying, for it interferes with the main thing: the teaching-contact between the teacher and his class. Worley's disagreement with the administrative order is, to me, simply presumptive evidence that he is a good teacher and knows what the right teaching relation is. A teacher who would seriously comply with the order would likely be a poor teacher. (Our model must always be the Socratic dialogue, for the aim is not to convey some information but to get across the information as part of the student's nature and second-nature, so he can make an individual and creative use of it.) On the other hand, if the compliance is not serious it is a waste of time, and, as you know, teachers are burdened with paper-work, much of which is absolutely necessary." The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 10 .

likelihood of their being wrong. The more chance a given action has of being wrong the less likely they are to initiate it. Their natural curiosity, propensity for experimentation, and their desires to learn are suppressed in the interests of security. This is implicitly Goodman's contention; that this unnatural passivity of school children is generated out of the overpowering influence of rules, regulations, grades, threats, boredom, and psychological domination inherent in the authoritarian structure of the schools. In defense of his conception of "incidental learning" he has written:

> Generally speaking, this incidental process suits the nature of learning better than direct teaching. The young see real causes and effects, rather than pedagogic exercises. Reality is often complex, but the young can take it by their own handle, at their own times, according to their own interest and initiative. Most important, they can imitate, identify, be approved or disapproved, cooperate and compete, without the anxiety of being the center of attention; there is socialization with less resentment, fear, or submission.[18]

His mini-school is, in no small part, aimed at the removal of external coercion. His intent is to encourage the children to give way to their natural appetites, aggressions; to challenge, to question, to defy, and to de-structure their environment so that in reassembling it they can assimilate and take it on as their own.

---

[18]Goodman, "The Present Moment in Education," p. 14.

Initiation is the passing of the impulse and the acceptance of the motor execution as one's own. Goodman intends for the adults in the mini-school to respond to the aggressive appetites of the children by encouraging them to follow-up their spontaneous interests. Again, the class ratio, the flexibility, and the mobility afforded allows for initiating activity on the part of the learner.

Good Contact.--Permeating all of Goodman's work on education is his insistence that under present conditions education is characterized by poor contact. Teachers do not contact students, and students do not contact relevant subject matter.

Upon reflection, we can see that good contact in an educational setting has two components. First, as good contact requires animation, excitement, a stretching toward what is interesting, it is necessary for the learning situation to flow out of organismic felt needs. We have seen how the mini-school is organized around freedom so those felt needs are expressable. Secondly, however, good contact in a school setting requires a response to the student's aggressive actions. The teacher must act upon the child's aggression and manipulate himself and the environment so that the child is able to destructure the unassimilable parts. This is why Goodman claims that the proper model for education must always be the Socratic dialogue. The teacher must be willing to

identify and tear down the barriers to assimilation, to interact with the child in an open face to face situation. Surely this meaningful interaction was on Goodman's mind when he elected not to staff his mini-school with four professionally certified instructors. He is critical of the interferences to honest communication brought about by the requirements for certification. So Goodman, who has said that any benevolent adult has a lot to teach an eight year old, was not being haphazard when he selected as co-workers for the licensed instructor a high school drop-out, a college senior, and a housewife who can cook. He was thinking of contacting students and enabling students to contact the environment. His notion that non-professionals might be able to contact elementary kids is no longer a "radical" idea.[19]

---

[19]For instance, Kenneth Clark, who addresses himself to New York City as does Goodman, expresses a bias toward the ghetto community drawing on its own human resources. In Dark Ghetto he asks:

"Who are the most effective workers in such programs? As catalysts in this enterprise, Haryou found during its planning explorations that it could make use of artists and ex-delinquents as well as trained social workers. The advisability of recruiting large numbers of professionally trained social workers and teachers has been seriously questioned. Often it appears that professional training itself enhances the "flight from the client." Furthermore, large numbers of trained personnel are not available. The best recruits for these jobs may be residents of the community themselves who stand to benefit not only financially but also by gaining status, self-esteem and the new satisfaction of "meaningful" work. With such workers there is less of a possibility, also, that the communication barrier will be a factor, since they are literally part of the world of their clients. They will probably be more willing to endure the long hours which some of the programs require,

Human Scale

As to Organization.--The mini-school is comprehensible to those involved. There is no central bureaucracy with coordinators, consultants, standard procedures, directors, assistant and deputy superintendents, and standing committees to form a rigid hierarchy of command that is not well understood by those on the outside. The organizational setting is simple, functional, anarchistic.

Due to the lack of outside authority the mini-school can be effectively managed by those involved--teachers, students, and parents. Each school can take advantage of local events, sites, and personalities. Parents, if they wish to involve themselves in the affairs of the local school, need not fear the complexity and depersonalization characteristic of large institutions.[20] The reader is urged

---

since they have not developed a working tradition which shies away from sustained relationship with clients, from week-end and night work. They have not yet developed professional ennui. Kenneth B. Clark, Dark Ghetto, Harper Torchbooks (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), pp. 50-51.

[20]The Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (1965) included a criticism of the community-school relationship in the riot torn cities.

"Teachers of the poor rarely live in the community where they work and sometimes have little sympathy for the life styles of their students. Moreover, the growth and complexity of the administration of large urban school systems has compromised the accountability of the local schools to the communities which they serve, and reduced the ability of parents to influence decisions affecting the education of their children. Ghetto schools often appear to be unresponsive to the community, communication has broken down, and parents are distrustful of officials responsible for formulating educational policy.

to keep in mind Goodman's concept of community. He considers education a natural community function, and he anticipates that the adults of the community enrich their lives through intimate contact with the activities and personalities of the school. The operation of the mini-school is not something the community does, but, rather, part of being a community is the democratic operation of the school.

Psychological Freedom for Teachers.--Goodman has written that a teacher can only teach skillfully what he considers important. Also, he has implicitly said that each teacher must use his natural talents and capacities and that methods courses are degrading and psychologically indefensible. He says, "The only profitable training for teachers is a group therapy, and perhaps, a course in child development."[21] I am of the opinion that Goodman

---

"The consequences for the education of students attending these schools are serious. Parental hostility to the schools is reflected in the attitudes of their children. Since the needs and concerns of the ghetto community are rarely reflected in educational policy formulated on a citywide basis, the schools are often seen by ghetto youth as being irrelevant. . . . The absence of effective community-school relations has deprived the public education system of the communication required to overcome this divergence of goals. In the schools, as in the larger society, the isolation of ghetto residents from the policy-making institutions of local government is adding to the polarization of the community and depriving the system of its self-rectifying potential. "Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders," Otto Kerner, Chairman (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1968), pp. 436-437.

[21]Goodman, "Freedom and Learning: . . .", p. 73.

would be receptive to the ideas of Arthur Combs as set forth in his The Professional Education of Teachers. Combs argues that teacher preparation, beyond the academic education, is essentially teaching the individual to understand and utilize his own unique personality in the classroom. Combs writes:

> As we have seen, research on competencies has been unable to isolate any common trait or practice of good teachers. But this unanimous failure in itself demonstrates an important fact: a good teacher is primarily a unique personality. If good teachers are unique individuals, we can predict from the start that the attempt to find common uniqueness would be unlikely to get results.[22]

> If we adapt this "self as an instrument" concept of the professional worker to teaching, it means that teacher-education programs must concern themselves with persons rather than with competencies. It means that the individualization of instruction we have sought for the public schools must be applied to these programs as well. It calls for the production of creative individuals, capable of shifting and changing to meet the demands and opportunities afforded in daily tasks. Such a teacher will not behave in a set way. His behavior will change moment to moment, from day to day, adjusting continually and smoothly to the needs of his students, the situations he is in, the purposes he seeks to fulfill, and the methods and materials at his command.
>
> The good teacher is no carbon copy but possesses something intensely and personally his own. Artists sometimes call this "the discovery of one's personal idiom." The good teacher has found ways of using himself, his talents, and his surroundings in a fashion that aids both his students and himself to achieve satisfaction--their own and society's too. We may define the effective teacher formally as a unique human being who has learned to use himself effectively and efficiently to carry out his own and society's purposes in the education of others.[23]

---

[22] Arthur W. Combs, The Professional Education of Teachers (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1965), p. 6.

[23] Ibid., p. 9.

I hold the opinion that teachers trained by Arthur Combs would be the ones Goodman would choose to staff his mini-schools.

It is Goodman's position, in line with anarchistic tradition, that free, intelligent, secure, and interested adults can work together voluntarily and cooperatively to develop the natural capacities of the community's young. The mini-school arrangement affords the freedom for the staff as well as the children. It is indeterminable how much good teaching remains only in the potential of teachers because of the fear of a distant and omnipotent bureaucracy. It takes no great insight to realize that traditional, conservative, methodical, and non-controversial teaching is far safer than that which flows from the spontaneous interaction between students and teachers. The mini-school is so structured that the teachers need to justify their actions only to those persons who are face to face with them--colleagues, students, and parents who are concerned enough to contact the school itself. The students and staff of the mini-school need not feel stupid or awed by layers of authority over them. Goodman blames most apparent stupidity on some form of defensive technique, frequently chronic boredom, but he also says, "Another large part of stupidity is stubbornness, unconsciously saying 'I won't. You can't make me.'"[24] It is this type

---

[24]Goodman, Growing Up Absurd, p. 72.

of stupidity and hostility that he attempts to eliminate. Inherent in this view is that we hold less fear of the known and the familiar than of the unknown and the alien.

Experimental Education.--Implicit in the human scale concept is flexibility. That is, when people cooperate intelligently in a functional way they can immediately adjust to new circumstances and consequences. They are free to create, experiment, retreat, and to admit that certain attempts were miserable failures. Goodman insists that large institutions do not have these virtues. Rather, by their very natures they preclude small-scale experimentation, particularly if the success of the experiment hangs on a unique personality. Large institutions and centralized systems function best with quantifiable data and detailed preplanning. They do not, cannot, make allowances for "finishing business," for spontaneous behavior, for trial and error, for momentary flight to escape, for the multitude of variables that occur every day in every classroom. This is the intended virtue of the mini-school. No two mini-schools need be alike. No two days in one school need be alike.[25] The students and parents and teachers are free

---

[25]Based on the recommendations of the Plowden Committee in 1966 a number of the English elementary schools have experimented with a flexible and non-structured approach. These schools are, I believe, quite compatible with Goodman's recommendations. Appendix B offers excerpts from Joseph Featherstone's observations of these schools. The three Featherstone articles appeared in the New Republic in September and August, 1967.

to adjust to the daily developments of their own comprehensible educational setting.

Goodman is an intellectual, a lover of books, dedicated to the development of our reasoning faculties. He sincerely wishes each of us could enjoy and learn from Kant, Milton, Kafka, Freud, Aristotle, and Tao. Surely he believes that a better world might result if all citizens could assimilate the contents of the one hundred great books. But, he is a pragmatist. He makes every attempt not to let his ideals interfere with what his empirical evidence tells him is true. His starting point is what he thinks is true of the nature of man. From his observations he concludes that "incidental education" is the only way, compatible with human nature, to increase the world's happiness.

To those critics who fear that his proposals will result in a degeneration of standards, loss of rigor, student apathy to the sciences and humanities, and a disrespect for the intellect, Goodman would ask, What has the present educational establishment wrought? Are we pleased? Have we educated a society where love, community, affection, curiosity, peace, reason, and happiness abound? Or do we weep at these ideals, and at Goodman's proposals, in acknowledgment of paradise lost?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Paul Goodman: Literary Works

Adam and His Works. Vintage Books. New York: Random House, 1968.

"Eagle's Bridge, the Death of a Dog." Madamoiselle, April, 1962, pp. 190-192.

Five Years. New York: Brussel and Brussel, 1966.

Hawkweed. Vintage Books. New York: Random House, 1967.

Kafka's Prayer. New York: Vanguard Press, Inc., 1947.

Making Do. Signet Books. New York: The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1963.

Stop-Light. Harrington Park, New Jersey: 5 x 8 Press, 1941.

The Copernican Revolution. Saugatuck, Connecticut: 5 x 8 Press, 1947.

The Empire City. New York: Macmillan Company, 1964.

The Lordly Hudson. New York: Macmillan Company, 1962.

The Structure of Literature. Phoenix Books. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954.

The Young Disciple; Faustina; Jonah. New York: Random House, 1965.

Paul Goodman: Critical Works (Books)

Art and Social Nature. New York: Vinco Publishing Company, 1946.

Compulsory Mis-education and The Community of Scholars. Vintage Books. New York: Random House, 1962.

Drawing the Line. New York: Random House, 1946.

Growing Up Absurd. Vintage Books. New York: Random House, 1956.

People or Personnel and Like a Conquered Province. Vintage Books. New York: Random House, 1968.

The Society I Live In Is Mine. New York: Horizon Press, 1962.

Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals. Vintage Books. New York: Random House, 1964.

Goodman, Paul, and Goodman, Percival. Communitas. New York: Random House, 1947.

Perls, Frederick; Hefferline, Ralph F.; and Goodman, Paul. Gestalt Therapy. Delta Books. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1951.

Paul Goodman: Critical Works (Articles)

"A Few Questions to Mr. Minow." New Republic, March 2, 1963, pp. 35-37.

"Between the Flash and the Thunderstroke." Poetry, 87 (March, 1956), 366-370.

"Black Flag of Anarchism." New York Times Magazine, July 14, 1968, pp. 10-22.

"Chance for Popular Culture." Poetry, 74 (June, 1949), 157-165.

"Children of Birmingham." Commentary, September, 1963, pp. 242-244.

"Choral Odes of Dr. Sitwell." Review of The Song of the Cold by Edith Sitwell. Poetry, 74 (July, 1949), 239-241.

"Cold Violence of the Self-Righteous is the Worst Kind." New York Times Magazine, April 28, 1968, pp. 25-29.

"Columbia's Unorthodox Seminars." Harper's, January, 1964, pp. 72-82.

"Community of Scholars." Commentary, March, 1962, pp. 205-217.

"Cutting Back." Atlantic, June, 1968, p. 94.

"Don't Disturb the Children." New Republic, March 16, 1963, p. 29.

"Empty Society: Excerpts from Massey Lectures." Commentary, March, 1967, p. 30.

"Extreme Situation." New Republic, October 19, 1963, p. 7.

"For a Reactionary Experiment In Education." Harper's, November, 1962, pp. 61-70.

"Freedom and Learning: The Need for Choice." Saturday Review, May 18, 1968, pp. 73-75.

"How the School Establishment Hoaxes the Public." Phi Delta Kappan, 49 (September, 1968), 18-19.

"Human Uses of Science." Commentary, December, 1960, pp. 461-472.

"Ineffectuality of Some Intelligent People." Commentary, June, 1962, p. 447.

"In Praise of Populism." Commentary, June, 1968, pp. 25-26.

"Is Little TV Possible?" New Republic, May 18, 1963, pp. 26-28.

"Is Anarchism Distinct from Liberalism?" Patterns of Anarchy. Edited by Leonard I. Krimerman and Lewis Perry. Anchor Books. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1966.

"Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited." Commentary, September, 1967, pp. 41-43.

"Louis Sullivan, Artist in America." Commentary, October, 1960, pp. 335-339.

"New Deal for the Arts." Commentary, January, 1964, pp. 68-71.

"Non-Commercial Channels." New Republic, April 13, 1963, pp. 32-34.

"Notes on the Underworld." Nation, March 11, 1961, pp. 215-217.

"Not Forgotten Genius." New Republic, December 11, 1944, p. 806.

"Pornography and Censorship." Commentary, August, 1961, pp. 159-161.

"Pornography, Art, and Censorship." Commentary, March, 1961, pp. 203-212.

"Sarnoff Fights Back." New Republic, April 20, 1963, pp. 25-27.

"Saving the Liberal Arts." Commonweal, June 12, 1964, pp. 359-361.

"Schools Videotica." New Republic, March 30, 1963, pp. 26-28.

"Susskind and Sevareid." New Republic, February 23, 1963, pp. 24-26.

"The Camera's Glass Eye." New Republic, May 25, 1963, pp. 24-26.

"The Present Moment in Education." The New York Review of Books, April 10, 1969, pp. 14-24.

"The Resisters Support U.S. Traditions and Interests." New York Times Magazine, November 26, 1967, pp. 122-125.

"Two Issues in Planning." Commentary, August, 1967, pp. 75-77.

"Utopian Thinking: Excerpt from Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals." Commentary, July, 1961, pp. 19-26.

"Why Can't We Be Great?" Madamoiselle, July, 1960, pp. 44-47.

"Why Go to School?" New Republic, October 5, 1963, pp. 13-14.

Goodman, Paul, and Goodman, Percival. "A Master Plan for New York." New Republic, November 20, 1944, pp. 656-659.

Other Sources

Abel, Lionel. "Seven Heroes of the New Left." New York Times Magazine, May 5, 1968, pp. 30-31.

Aiken, Henry D. "Inductive Criticism." Kenyon Review, XIII (Winter, 1955), 304-311.

Barrett, William. "Man Without Superego." Partisan Review, XIII (Summer, 1946), 393-394.

Brinkley, David. "Goodman and the TV Networks." New Republic, March 23, 1963, p. 39.

Carruth, Hayden. "Intelligence, Rebellion, Interest." Poetry, 104 (April, 1964), 44-45.

Clark, Kenneth B. Dark Ghetto. Harper Torchbooks. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.

Combs, Arthur W. The Professional Education of Teachers. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1965.

Cowan, Paul. "Public and Private." Review of Five Years by Paul Goodman. Commentary, 44 (July, 1967), 89-92.

Dennison, George. "The Tetralogy Concluded." Review of Empire City by Paul Goodman. Kenyon Review, 21 (Summer, 1959), 498-504.

Dewey, John. Democracy and Education. New York: Macmillan Company, 1916.

_____. Individualism Old and New. New York: Capricorn Books, 1962.

_____. Liberalism and Social Action. New York: Capricorn Books, 1963.

"Disturber of the Peace: Paul Goodman." Madamoiselle, February, 1964, pp. 104-150.

Featherstone, Joseph. "How Children Learn." New Republic, September 2, 1967, pp. 17-21.

_____. "Schools for Children: What's Happening in British Classrooms." New Republic, August 19, 1967, pp. 17-20.

_____. "Teaching Children to Think." New Republic, September 9, 1967, pp. 15-19.

Freud, Sigmund. A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis. New York: Washington Square Press, 1952.

_____. Beyond the Pleasure Principle. New York: Bantam Books, 1967.

_____. Civilization and Its Discontents. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1962.

_____. The Future of an Illusion. Anchor Books. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1964.

Friedenberg, Edgar Z. Coming of Age in America. Vintage Books. New York: Random House, 1967.

Fromm, Erich. The Sane Society. Fawcett Premier Book. Greenwich, Connecticut: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1955.

Galbraith, John Kenneth. The New Industrial State. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967.

Hamilton, William. "Exile from Paradise, A Garland for Paul Goodman." Christian Century, August 16, 1967, pp. 1046-1048.

Hardwick, Elizabeth. "Fiction Chronicle." Review of The State of Nature by Paul Goodman. Partisan Review, 14 (Spring, 1947), 196-197.

Harrington, Michael. "On Paul Goodman." Atlantic, August, 1965, pp. 81-91.

_____. The Other America. New York: Macmillan, 1962.

Havighurst, Robert J. "Requirements for a Valid 'New Criticism.'" Phi Delta Kappan, 49 (September, 1968), 20-26.

Hentoff, Nat. "Village Anarchist." Review of The Society I Live In Is Mine by Paul Goodman. Reporter, July 18, 1963, pp. 54-55.

Holt, John. How Children Fail. Delta Books. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1964.

Horowitz, Irving L., ed. The Anarchists. Laurel Edition. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1964.

Jacker, Corinne. The Black Flag of Anarchy. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968.

James, William. Talks to Teachers. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1958.

Jordan, Elijah. The Good Life. Chicago: University Press, 1949.

Justice, Donald. "Occasional Poetry." Review of Copernican Revolution by Paul Goodman. Poetry, 89 (November, 1956), 120-122.

Keniston, Kenneth. Young Radicals. Harvest Books. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1968.

_____. The Uncommitted. Delta Books. New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1960.

Kostelanetz, Richard C. "Haphazard Collection." Review of Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals by Paul Goodman. Kenyon Review, 24 (Summer, 1962), 573-575.

_____. "Prevalence of Paul Goodman." New York Times Magazine, April 3, 1966, pp. 70-100.

Krimerman, Leonard I., and Perry, Lewis, ed. Patterns of Anarchy. Anchor Books. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1966.

Kropotkin, Peter. "A Scientific Approach to Communist Anarchism." Patterns of Anarchy. Edited by Leonard I. Krimerman and Lewis Perry. Anchor Books. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1966.

_____. Mutual Aid. Boston: Extending Horizons Books, 1955.

Leverton, Denise. "One of the Lucky." Review of The Lordly Hudson by Paul Goodman. Nation, April 13, 1963, p. 310.

Levine, Daniel U. "Views Shared by Max Rafferty and Paul Goodman." Phi Delta Kappan, VII (March, 1966), 387-389.

Lovejoy, Arthur O. Reflections on Human Nature. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1961.

McCaslin, Walter. "Absurdities of an Addled Society." Review of Utopian Essays and Practical Proposals by Paul Goodman. Saturday Review, February 17, 1962, pp. 23-24.

Marcuse, Herbert. Eros and Civilization. Vintage Books. New York: Random House, 1955.

Maslow, Abraham H. Toward a Psychology of Being. Insight Book. Princeton, New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1962.

Oliver, Edith. "Jonah. Criticism." Review of Jonah by Paul Goodman. New Yorker, February 26, 1966, pp. 71-72.

Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. Otto Kerner, Chairman. New York Bantam Books, Inc., 1968.

Rokeach, Milton. The Open and Closed Mind. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1960.

Rosenberg, Harold. "An Hypothetical Tale." Review of Empire City by Paul Goodman. Partisan Review, 3 (Summer, 1959), 493-499.

Rosenfield, Isaac. "Stories With Infinite Interiors." Review of The Facts of Life by Paul Goodman. Kenyon Review, 7 (Winter, 1945), 709-712.

Roskalenko, Harry. "Question of Governance." Poetry, 89 (November, 1956), 118-119.

Schrag, Peter. "Education's Romantic Critics." Saturday Review, February 18, 1967, pp. 80-82.

Schroth, Raymond A. "Paul Goodman's Pain." Review of Five Years by Paul Goodman. America, July 22, 1967, p. 86.

Sheed, Wilfred. "Jonah. Criticism." Review of Jonah by Paul Goodman. Commonweal, March 18, 1966, p. 699.

Skinner, B. F. The Technology of Teaching. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968.

Sugrue, Thomas. "Portrait." Review of Facts of Life by Paul Goodman. Saturday Review, August 11, 1945, p. 10.

Woodcock, George. Anarchism. Meridian Books. New York: World Publishing Company, 1961.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GOODMAN'S PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDIX A

The following list of proposals and recommendations has been selected from Goodman's books and articles. They constitute the primary proposals that he has put forth since the publication of Growing Up Absurd in 1956.

1. Abolish Grades and Testing*

Let half a dozen of the prestigious Universities--Chicago, Stanford, the Ivy League--abolish grading, and use testing only and entirely for pedagogic purposes as teachers see fit.

. . . . . .

It is really necessary to remind our academics of the ancient history of Examination. In the medieval university, the whole point of the gruelling trial of the candidate was whether or not to accept him as a peer. His disputation and lecture for the Masters was just that, a master-piece to enter the guild. It was not to make comparative evaluations. It was not to weed out and select for an extra-mural licensor or employer. It was certainly not to pit one young fellow against another in an ugly competition. My philosophic impression is the medievals thought they knew what a good job of work was and that we are competitive because we do not know. But the more status is achieved by largely irrelevant competitive evaluation, the less will we ever know.

. . . . . .

A miserable effect of grading is to nullify the various uses of testing. Testing, for both student and teacher, is a means of structuring, and also of finding out what is blank or wrong and what has been assimilated and can be taken for granted. Review--including high-pressure review--is a means of bringing together the fragments, so that there are flashes of synoptic insight.

There are several good reasons for testing, and kinds of tests. But if the aim is to discover weakness,

---

*Titles mine.

what is the point of down-grading and punishing it, and thereby inviting the student to conceal his weakness, by faking and bulling, if not cheating? The natural conclusion of synthesis is the insight itself, not a grade for having had it. For the important purpose of placement, if one can establish in the student the belief that one is testing not to grade and make invidious comparisons but for his own advantage, the student should normally seek his own level, where he is challenged and yet capable, rather than trying to get by. If the student dares to accept himself as he is, a teacher's grade is a crude instrument compared with a student's self-awareness. But it is rare in our universities that students are encouraged to notice objectively their vast confusion. Unlike Socrates, our teachers rely on power-drives rather than shame and ingenuous idealism.[1]

2. Students and Professors Secede from Large Universities

Now, in the sixties, a small secession from about twenty colleges and universities would be immensely profitable for American education. I propose that a core faculty of about five professors secede from a school, taking some of their students with them; attach to themselves an equal number of like-minded professionals in the region; collect a few more students; and set up a small unchartered university that would be nothing but an association for teaching-and-learning. Ten teachers would constitute a sufficient faculty for such a studium generale. (For comparison, Jefferson's University of Virginia had eight teachers; Joseph Priestley's Warrington had a maximum of thirteen.) Instead of five professionals, there could be a few more, some teaching part-time. With a class size of twelve to fifteen for ten teachers, there would be 120 to 150 students.

I choose the class size of twelve to fifteen as a mean in my own not untypical experience. It gives a sufficient weight of thoughts, objections, and questions to oppose and activate the teacher. When the number falls below this, to seven or eight, I begin to feel that I am leading a group therapy; I am overly conscious of the individual personalities coping with the subject, rather than teaching the objective subject. When the number rises to between twenty and thirty, I begin to feel I am lecturing the subject, with a question-and-answer period, and perhaps leading a "discussion." But

---

[1] Compulsory Mis-education, pp. 127-129.

of course the mean number varies with the subject, the character of the persons, and how the subject is handled. E.g., in teaching a course in writing, I combine several approaches: structural analyses of classical texts, and these are largely lectures, with questions, that could be given to a group of thirty-five; psychological unblocking exercises, and exercises on points of style and technique, for both of which I like the class of twelve to fifteen; reading and criticism of the students' own writing, which I prefer in groups of five or six and not in a classroom. There are similar variations in anything else I would teach; and I presume it is the same for other teachers.

Throughout this book I have explained the advantages of a strong weight of professionals on a faculty. It is especially important in a small school composed entirely of teachers and students in close relation and without administrative rules, for otherwise it can become clubby, like excellent progressive schools or like Black Mountain College. These are lovely intentional communities, but they are not small universities; they do not sharply turn to the world. Furthermore, if a small school purports to be a studium generale it must have resources available outside itself. Suppose that a teacher teaches an elementary and a more advanced course, taking two years; then he will want to take his students nearer to real practice in the city, and the professionals have access to such practice.

It is evident, I hope, that I am not thinking of any particular educational experiment or ideology, like Goddard, Antioch, Sarah Lawrence, etc., aiming at democracy, communal living, community service, individual development, creativity and so forth. These are fine things. But I am proposing simply to take teaching-and-learning in its own terms, for the students and teachers to associate in the traditional way and according to their existing interest, but entirely dispensing with the external control, administration, bureaucratic machinery, and other excrescenses that have swamped our communities of scholars. I have no doubt that many such faculties, of dissatisfied academics and professionals who would like to teach, are ready in existence. At present there is no dearth of students; but of course such academic and professional faculties would choose the students very strictly, perhaps unduly so.

Three problems immediately arise: (1) the economics of the community; (2) its plant, library, and equipment; and (3) its relation to the chartered academic world and the rest of society, that is, the need for accredited degrees.

(1) We are not thinking of a social experiment, so let us pitch our prices according to the current inflated national scale of living. This is psychologically quite unrealistic (and perhaps any merely economic discussion would be), for teachers who would engage in such an experiment would also be less interested in the current standards; and of course, psychologically committed to it, they would have to make the experiment succeed, even if it cost them heavily financially. The professionals would be the doctors, lawyers, reform politicians, etc., who work too hard for too little reward anyway. And such a faculty would find it hard to exclude serious youngsters who could not foot the inflated bill.

Nevertheless, since we are thinking precisely of acting in society and or preparing professionals, we have to take the world as it is. This is the irony of actuality: those who want to transform a system of society, rather than to withdraw from it or destroy it, must operate practically within it. Our economy is administrative and venal through and through, and <u>therefore</u> inflated; but it is only the academic administration <u>that</u> we propose withdrawing from!

The relevant comparative figures are:

Median College Salaries, 1961

Professor	$10,250
Associate Professor	8,200
Assistant Professor	6,900
Instructor	5,600
(Assistant Instructor, Preceptor, etc.)	2,000-3,000

Typical College Tuition (plus fees), 1961

Cornell	$ 1,600 plus 260
Dartmouth	1,550
Harvard	1,520
Columbia	1,450 plus 10
New York University	1,280 plus 100
Swarthmore	1,250 plus 150
Oberlin	1,150 plus 80
University of Chicago	1,140
Amherst	1,150 plus 110

State Colleges for Out-of-State Students, 1961

Michigan	$750
Rutgers	500
California	500
North Carolina	500

Let us fix the salaries for teachers in two opposite ways: as a guild of teachers, and as a guild of students. For the first, we can adopt the national median for full professor, $10,000. (This is, of course, lower than the top at the great Eastern schools.) Then, the expenses are:

Salaries	$100,000
Rent (10 rooms, urban middle-class)	4,000
	$104,000

Divided among 150 students, this comes to tuition of $685. Among 120 students, $850. This is $300-500 less than the good liberal arts colleges, and half of the Ivy League. It includes, of course, no extras whatever, importantly no Medical; and there are no endowed library, laboratories, gymnasium, stadium, which are usually, however, paid for by the special "fees," not as "tuition." No school provides books.

Conversely, we might assume that the students as a guild would be satisfied to pay the tuition of an average State university, $500 plus fees. Then,

Income from 150 students	$75,000
	- 4,000
	$71,000
Income from 120 students	$60,000
Rent	- 4,000
	$56,000

This would pay each teacher $7,100, a little more than the median for Assistant Professor, or $5,600, the median for an Instructor.

Perhaps the teachers and students might compromise on the median for Associate Professor, $8,200! This is for forty weeks. And we must remember that especially the professionals would have subsidiary income.

(2) With regard to plant and equipment, let us envisage several possibilities. But we must keep in mind that this is a community of scholars. It would immediately have available for its use 10,000 to 20,000 carefully selected books and some apparatus. Its professional associations would give it some access to the laboratories and equipment that the teaching professionals would happen to be interested in.

It is simplest to think of such a little community as located in a large city, with a municipal library, a Y, and many available part-time professionals. On the other hand, there are obvious charms and advantages to location in a town and its region; nor need such places be lacking

in excellent professionals with a lively local practice. (I do not much picture a school of this kind as isolated in the country.)

But another possibility for providing books and plant is to consider the small university as next to, and unofficially adjunct to, some great university which extends to it friendly services because it is a necessary experiment and a source of good graduate students. The economic independence of the community dissociates it from the great school; the administration of the great school has no responsibility for it whatever; yet the secession of a small faculty need not mean a rupture of friendly relations. That is, we can conceive of a free academy set up in the neighborhood of a great university to their mutual advantage.

Historically, this is almost familiar. In Germany, our teachers paid directly by the students would be recognized as Private-Docents of the University, officially associated with it and teaching in its classrooms. What we propose is simply the secession and association of these Independents, so that they become again, what they were in the beginning, regent masters of their own guild.

(3) Finally, a major difficulty of any unchartered ad hoc association of scholars is that it cannot grant degrees leading to licenses. It is not to be expected, and it is not desirable, that young people spend their years and money in study that does not lead to careers in society.

An obvious possible solution is the European plan: to have the graduates matriculate for a term in an accredited school and pass the comprehensives. (E.g., the University of Chicago used to accept candidates for comprehensives after one Quarter, three months, of residence.) To my mind this solution has a theoretical drawback. The comprehensives of an accredited school must necessarily follow the curriculum of that school; and this cannot, of course, be a determining "goal" for the community of scholars which has been teaching-and-learning according to its implicit goals, without extrinsic "motivation." But it is likely--and perhaps I am sanguine--that for many of the students it would not be difficult, after several years of good education, to make up the usual requirements with a semester's cramming.

Far more attractive, however, would be a friendly arrangement whereby graduate and professional schools, that compete for good students, would accept these students on their merits. In this case their first accredited degree would be a master's or doctor's.[2]

---

[2] Community of Scholars, pp. 330-336.

3. Board Slum Kids on Farms

Proposal:

To board three to six slum kids of ages ten to eleven with a marginal farmer in a depopulating area (e.g. northern Wisconsin, northern New York, Vermont, northern New Hampshire.)

The kids will go to a country school for an entire year, with an option to repeat. The program is voluntary. The farmer has no responsibility except to feed them and not beat them. (In fact, they would take part in farm work in most cases.) Inspection by the County Agent. If there are five or six kids, a job could be provided for an aged woman or man--from the city or rural locality--as housekeeper.

The immediate advantages are manifold:

1. To give farmers a source of cash by growing people.
2. To cut down overcrowding in city schools and avoid the need for building new schools for which there is no space. (A new school for twelve hundred in New York City costs $2,500,000.)
3. To save the now under-used country schools in depopulating areas. And also upgrade them.
4. Radical improvement in the education of slum children. At present, a child of thirteen will not have been half a mile from home in his entire life. A radical change of environment is far more liberating than "upgrading" the curriculum.
5. 4-H has expressed interest in the chance of doing an exciting useful job in giving these children a social life and introducing them to a new world. It enables 4-H to play a vital role in the problems of urban life.
6. Racial integration. (Preferably the kids would be mixed Negro, Spanish, white.)

I choose ages ten and eleven in order to avoid too early separation from even bad homes, and on the other hand, to avoid the problems of puberty. At this age, further, the receiving localities would have a chance to do something for integration without having to cope with difficult cases or emotional opposition in the community.

The program must be entirely voluntary. It should be possible to make it clear to Negro or Puerto Rican leaders that it is advantageous.

The hope, in the long run, is that a certain number of children will take to the new environment, perhaps opt for another year of it. And ultimately, that as many as 2 or 3 per cent will decide for the country as life career.

Rural reconstruction is possible on the basis of helping to solve urban problems.

Costs:

Such a program could really be covered by city school systems alone. E.g. this year in New York City it takes $700 (excluding capital costs) to keep one child in school. Such a sum, divided between farmer and local school, could give the farmer $1,600 for four kids (at $400), and the under-used school one teacher (at $6,000) for twenty kids (at $300).

Evidently the city schools will not give up the money, especially the State aid. Here the poverty program--or perhaps HEW--can provide the difference.[3]

4. Mini-Schools

Proposal:

A demonstration of radically decentralized primary schools (ages six to twelve), to tiny units of thirty children and three adults.[4]

These can be located in store fronts on the child's own street, or in settlement houses unused from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. What is essential is easy passage in and out. Given this high teacher-student ratio, there can be continuous use of the city itself as the educational background, its transit, its museums, homes, colleges, restaurants, business offices, etc. This exposure to the going life of middle-class society was the chief principle of Higher Horizons during its early successful period. By radical decentralization, we can dispense almost entirely with administration costs and sharply diminish capital costs. Thus available money can be spent on teachers.

The need for many new teachers (or teaching assistants) can be met by recruiting in the graduating class of any university those who "like children, will pay attention to them, show them things, and answer their questions." Nothing more is required for primary education. Thousands of young college graduates are eager for such a job for a couple of years, and they are among the most vital; but these same young people are unlikely to take "education courses" or be willing to work in bureaucratic school structures.

---

[3] People or Personnel, pp. 199-200.

[4] In a later article Goodman altered some of the details of this proposal--e.g. teacher-student ratio of 7 to 1. The details outlined in Chapter 7 were taken from the Saturday Review, May 18, 1968.

Model:

The First Street School in the Lower East Side in New York City is run on these principles--population one third Negro, one third Puerto Rican, one third "white." Teacher-pupil ratio is at present about one to seven, yet the total cost per pupil is about equivalent to that in the New York City public system. (This school is an offshoot of the Sollaberg Summerhill School in Stony Point, New York, the thought being that this free form of education is even more desirable for the poor.)

Remarks:

Such little street schools allow for close contact with the parents, who can be used as helpers (e.g. cook). Also with well-disposed knowledgeable adults in the neighborhood--e.g. the pharmacist--who can give special teaching and information. It is just this interpenetration of city and school that is difficult in the official big schools, and that makes it hard for the young to grow up into the adult world.

Such little schools can be used to provide for the overflow in the present system, instead of continually building big new buildings.

For purposes of general assembly--bringing together several hundred children for a collective event--the small schools can use the auditoria of the present big schools.

To regularize and control the small schools, each school can have one official teacher on the usual license (at $6,000 for forty weeks), plus two assistants (at $4,000).5

5. Non-Scholastic Educational Experiences

Proposal:

Instead of putting all the new capital and operating money into new schools, I propose supporting or underwriting existing or new non-scholastic educational environments for bright under-achieving youth. E.g. community radio stations, local newspapers, little theaters, design offices.

These would provide real social needs now not economically feasible, instead of passed (or failed) examinations by those who are not suited for the academic environment.

---

[5] People or Personnel, pp. 205-206.

I am thinking of enterprises run by about six professional and twenty to twenty-five apprentices of ages sixteen to twenty. The apprenticeship is to serve as an alternative to the last two years of high school (and perhaps first year of college).

Apprentices to be paid $20 a week, in lieu of the $1,000 a year for schooling. Enterprises to be further helped out of the capital costs saved from new school construction.

Remarks:

What is needed for such a program is an earnest search around the country for existing small independent enterprises that warrant supporting, e.g. country papers that could provide a more valuable service than they do (they are mainly Social Notes) if they had the staff.

Halleck Hoffman, the president of Pacifica radio federation, has expressed eagerness to provide or suggest professionals.

The program could be, in one way, regarded as a means of upgrading the present Job Training Corps program, providing educational opportunity for intellectually superior youth (and being a means of desegregation).

A preferable way of looking at the program is as aid to small businesses--giving seed-money as part of an educational function.

Finally, after two or three years, many such apprentices will want to continue in college. I do not think it would be difficult to arrange for their admission.[6]

6. College for the Non-Bookish

Finally, to fill a bad gap in our present framework of higher education, we need colleges for the altogether non-bookish, who nevertheless want to be informed and cultured citizens and to share in the experience of a college community. A model is on hand in the remarkable Danish Folk-Schools, where youngsters who have left school to go to work can return between the ages of 18 and 25, to learn oral history, current events, practical science and the politics of science, and to act plays and play music.[7]

---

[6] Ibid., pp. 202-203.

[7] Compulsory Mis-education, p. 153.

7. Class Attendance Voluntary

Make class attendance not compulsory (A.S. Neill). If the teachers are good and the subjects worthwhile, this should soon eliminate absence. The justified reason for the compulsory law is to get the children from the parents, but it must not serve as a trap for the children. A modification might be permission to spend a week or month in any other worthwhile enterprise or environment (Frank Brown).[8]

8. No School for Some

Have "no school at all" for a few classes. These children should be selected from tolerable, though not necessarily cultured, homes. They should be numerous and neighborly enough to be a peer-society for one another. Will they learn the rudiments anyway? The experiment could not harm them, since there is evidence (from Sloan Wayland of Teachers' College) that normal children can make up the first six or seven years with a few months' good intensive teaching.[9]

9. Professional Schools Working With Practitioners

The original purpose of the State universities and the land-grant colleges was to lead their communities, especially in the mechanical and agricultural arts. In this function, they would be admirable centers of administration and design of the public enterprises mentioned above: town improvement, broadcasting station, rural culture, health and community service. The value of any youth work camp depends on the worth of the project; the departments of the University could design the projects and give university-level guidance. Conversely, the students who come to the State universities would have been already working in the field on these projects, and the State universities could soft-pedal the present compulsory academic program that wastefully leads to 50% flunking.

By the same reasoning, the professional and graduate schools could work far more closely with the working professionals and industries in society, with whom their students would already have served apprenticeships as adolescents. This would avoid the present

---

[8] The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 24.

[9] Ibid., p. 23.

absurdity of teaching a curriculum abstracted from the work in the field, and then licensing the graduates to return to the field and relearn everything in terms of the actual work. And there would be less tendency for the contracted research that is appropriate to these institutes and professionals to dominate the curricula in all schools.

The liberal arts colleges, in turn, could resume their authentic intellectual tradition of natural philosophy, scholarship, and the humanities, without having to flirt with either narrowly technical research or hotel management. Academic high schools would, in effect, be prep schools for these colleges.10

10. Useful Activities Rather Than High School

At the high school level, directly useful real activities would be more cultural than the average classroom for the average youth.

The liberal economists who propose using a larger share of production in the public sector are precisely not thinking of employing 15-year-olds; on the contrary, a chief motive of their plans is to diminish the unemployment of adults. But suppose, for a change, we think of the matter directly, without political overtones: on the one hand, there is a great amount of work that needs doing and has been shamefully neglected; on the other hand, there are millions of young people who could do a lot of it and are otherwise not well occupied. Further, it costs about $1000 a year to keep a youth in high school (and more than $2000 in reform school); suppose we paid this money directly to the youth as he worked on an educative job.

Here are four great classes of youth jobs: construction--e.g. improving the scores of thousands of ugly small towns; community service and social work--like the Friends' Service, or working in understaffed hospitals or as school-aides, or janitoring public housing; assisting in the thousands of little theaters, independent broadcasters, and local newspapers, that we need to countervail the mass-media; and rural rehabilitation and conservation. For educational value for a majority of the young, I would match that curriculum against any four-year high school.11

---

[10] Compulsory Mis-education, pp. 152-153.

[11] Ibid., p. 150.

11. Vocational Training in Industry

Vocational training, including much laboratory scientific training, ought to be carried on as technical apprenticeships within the relevant industries. Certainly the big corporations have a direct responsibility for the future of their young, rather than simply skimming off the cream of those schooled, tested, and graded at the public expense.12

12. Sex Education

Again, one has to be blind not to see that, from the onset of puberty, the dissidence from school is importantly sexual. Theoretically, the junior high school was introduced to fit this change of life; yet astoundingly, it is sexless. My own view, for what it's worth, is that sexuality is lovely, there cannot be too much of it, it is self-limiting it is satisfactory, and satisfaction diminishes tension and clears the mind for attention and learning. Therefore, sexual expression should be approved in and out of season, also in school, and where necessary made the subject of instruction. But whether or not this view is correct, it certainly is more practical than the apparent attempt of the schools to operate as if sexual drives simply did not exist. When, on so crucial an issue, the schools act a hundred years out of date, they are crucially irrelevant.13

13. Use Community Adults in Classrooms

Along the same lines, but both outside and inside the school building, use the adults of the community who know something or have some other attractive virtue to be the proper educators of the young into the grown-up world; the druggist, the storekeeper, the mechanic, so as to overcome the separation of the young from the grown-up world in our urban life, and to diminish the omnivorous authority of school teachers and school buildings. This experience would be useful and animating for the whole community.14

---

[12] Ibid., p. 151.

[13] Ibid., p. 27.

[14] The Society I Live In Is Mine, p. 24.

14. GI Bill for High School Students

Also, it is reasonable to extend the idea of the GI Bill to the high schools: to give the school money directly to the student to pursue any course he chooses that is plausibly educational. This would have the advantage of multiplying experimental schools, sorely needed in our present monolithic system.15

15. Two Years of Some Maturing Activity After High School Before Being Admitted to College

First, suppose that half a dozen of the most prestigious liberal arts colleges--say Amherst, Swarthmore, Connecticut, Weslyan, Carleton, etc.--would announce that, beginning in 1966, they required for admission a two-year period, after high school, spent in some maturing activity. These colleges are at present five times oversubscribed; they would not want for applicants on any conditions that they set; and they are explicitly committed to limiting their expansion.

By "maturing activity" could be meant: working for a living, especially if the jobs are gotten without too heavy reliance on connections; community service, such as the Northern Student Movement, volunteer service in hospital or settlement house, domestic Peace Corps; the army--though I am a pacifist and would urge a youngster to keep out of the army; a course of purposeful travel that met required standards; independent enterprise in art, business, or science, away from home, with something to show for the time spent.

The purpose of this proposal is twofold; to get students with enough life-experience to be educable on the college level, expecially in the social sciences and humanities; and to break the lockstep of twelve years of doing assigned lessons for grades, so that the student may approach his college studies with some intrinsic motivation, and therefore perhaps assimilate something that might change him. Many teachers remember with nostalgia the maturer students who came under the GI-bill, though to be sure a large number of them were pretty shell-shocked.

A subsidiary advantage of the plan would be to relieve the colleges of the doomed, and hypocritical, effort to serve in loco parentis on matters of morality.

---

[15] People or Personnel, p. 162.

If young persons have been out working for a living, or have traveled in foreign parts, or have been in the army, a college can assume that they can take care of themselves.16

16. Support of Travel, Apprenticeships, etc. as Educational

Most of the money now spent for high schools and colleges should be devoted to the support of apprenticeships; travel subsidized browsing in libraries and self-directed study and research; programs such as VISTA, the Peace Corp, Students for a Democratic Society, to the Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee; rural reconstruction; and work camps for projects in conservation and urban renewal. It is a vast sum of money--but costs almost $1,500 a year to keep a youth in a blackboard jungle in New York; the schools have become one of our major industries. Consider one kind of opportunity. Since it is important for the very existence of the republic to countervail the now overwhelming national corporate style of information, entertainment, and research, we need scores of thousands of small independent television stations, community radio stations, local newspapers that are more than gossip notes and ads, community theaters, highbrow or dissenting magazines, small design offices for neighborhood renewal that is not bureaucratized, small laboratories for science and invention that are not centrally directed. Such enterprises could present admirable opportunities for bright but unacademic young people to serve as apprentices.

Ideally, the polis itself is the educational environment; a good community consists of worthwhile, attractive, and fulfilling callings and things to do, to grow up into. The policy I am proposing tends in this direction rather than fitted into an institutional system. I don't know if this tailor-made approach would be harder or easier to administer than standardization that in fact fits nobody and results in an increasing number of recalcitrants. On the other hand, as the Civilian Conservation Corps showed in the Thirties, the products of willing youth labor can be valuable even economically, whereas accumulating Regents blue-books is worth nothing except to the school itself.

(By and large, it is not in the adolescent years but in later years that, in all walks of life, there is need for academic withdrawal, periods of study and reflection, synoptic review of the texts. The Greeks

---

16 Compulsory Mis-Education, pp. 124-125.

understood this and regarded most of our present college curricula as appropriate for only those over the age of thirty or thirty-five. To some extent, the churches used to provide a studious environment. We do these things miserably in hurried conferences.)17

17. Reversing the Goal in Vocational Guidance

Right proportion requires reversing the goal in vocational guidance, from fitting the man to the machine and chopping him down to fit, to finding the opportunity in the economy that brings out the man, and if you can't find such an opportunity, make it. This involves encouraging new small enterprises and unblocking and perhaps underwriting invention. Again, if at present production is inhuman and stupid, it is that too few minds are put to it: this can be remedied by giving the workmen more voice in production and the kind of training to make that voice wise.18

---

[17] Saturday Review, May 18, 1968, pp. 74-75.

[18] Growing Up Absurd, p. 232.

APPENDIX B

JOSEPH FEATHERSTONE'S REPORTS ON ENGLISH EXPERIMENTAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

APPENDIX B

Schools for Children: What's Happening in British Classrooms*

by Joseph Featherstone

My wife and I have just spent a month in England visiting classes in primary schools, talking to children and teachers. Friends told us about good things happening in British classrooms, but we were scarcely prepared for what we found; in recent decades there has been a profound and sweeping revolution in English primary education, involving new ways of thinking about how young children learn, classroom organization, the curriculum and the role of the teacher. We saw schools in some good local educational authorities: Bristol, Nottingham, Leicestershire, Oxfordshire and a few serving immigrant areas in cities like London.

. . . . . .

Primary schools divide into "infant" and "junior" schools. Much of this report will focus on the infant schools, which take children from the age of five to seven, and in some authorities eight. (As in Israel, children begin compulsory schooling at the early age of five in England.) It is in the infant schools that people learn to read and write and to work with numbers. Junior schools take children from seven or eight to 11, when they go on to secondary school. Infant and junior schools sometimes occupy the same building, and some authorities--Oxfordshire, for example--have a policy of putting them together in one unit, like an American elementary school.

It is important to understand that what goes on in the good infant schools is much the same. The approach is similar, though the quality of teaching and children's work varies greatly.

Westfield Infant School is a one-story structure, like any of a thousand American buildings, on a working-class housing estate in Leicestershire. If you arrive

---

*New Republic, August 19, 1967.

early, you find a number of children already inside, reading, writing, painting, playing music, tending to pets. Teachers sift in slowly, and begin working with students. Apart from a religious assembly (required by English law) it's hard to say just when school actually begins, because there is very little organized activity for a whole class to do together. The puzzled visitor sees some small group work in mathematics ("maths") or reading, but mostly children are on their own, moving about and talking quite freely. The teacher sometimes sits at her desk, and the children flock to her for consultations, but more often she moves about the room, advising on projects, listening to children read, asking questions, giving words, talking, sometimes prodding.

The hallways, which are about the size of those in our schools, are filled with busy children, displays of paintings and graphs, a play grocery store where children use play money and learn to count, easels, tables for collections of shells and plants, workbenches on which to pound and hammer nails and boards, big wooden boxes full of building blocks.

Classrooms open out onto the playground, which is also much in use. A contingent of children is kneeling on the grass, clocking the speed of a tortoise, which they want to graph against the speeds of other pets and people. Nearby are five-year-olds, finishing an intricate, tall tower of blocks, triumphantly counting as they add the last one, "23, 24." A solitary boy is mixing powders for paint; on a large piece of paper attached to an easel, with very big strokes, he makes an ominous, stylized building that seems largely to consist of black shutters framing deep red windows. "It's the hospital where my brother is," he explains, and pulls the visitor over to the class-library corner, where a picture book discusses hospitals. He can't read it yet (he's five), but says he is trying. And he is; he can make out a number of words, some pretty hard, on different pages, and it is clear that he has been <u>studying</u> the book, because he wants badly to know about hospitals. At another end of the hall there is a quieter library nook for the whole school. Here two small boys are reading aloud; the better reader is, with indifferent grace, correcting the grateful slower boy as he stumbles over words.

The rooms are fairly noisy--more noisy than many American teachers or principals would allow--because children can talk freely. Sometimes the teacher has to ask for quiet. With as many as 40 in some classes, rooms are crowded and accidents happen. Paint spills, a tub overflows, there are recriminations. Usually the children mop up and work resumes.

The visitor is dazed by the amount and variety and fluency of the free writing produced: stories, free-verse poems, with intricate images, precise accounts of experiments in "maths" and, finally, looking over a tiny little girl's shoulder, he finds: "Today we had visitors from America. . . ."

After a time, you overcome your confusion at the sheer variety of it all, and you begin making more definite observations. The physical layout of the classrooms is markedly different from ours. American teachers are coming to appreciate the importance of a flexible room, but even in good elementary schools this usually means having movable, rather than fixed, desks. In these classes there are no individual desks, and assigned places. Around the room (which is about the size of one of ours) there are different tables for different kinds of activities: art, water and sand play, number work. (The number tables have all kinds of number lines--strips of paper with numbers marked on them in sequence on which children learn to count and reason mathematically--beads, buttons and odd things to count; weights and balances; dry and liquid measures; and a rich variety of apparatus for learning basic mathematical concepts, some of it home-made, some ready-made. The best of the commercial materials were familiar: Cuisenaire rods, the Dienes multibase material, Stern rods and attribute or logical blocks. This sort of thing is stressed much more than formal arithmetic.)

. . . . . .

Gradually it becomes clear how the day proceeds in one of these rooms. In many infant and some junior schools the choice of the day's routine is left completely up to the teacher, and the teacher, in turn, leaves options open to the children. Classes for young children, the visitor learns, are reaching a point in many schools where there is no real difference between one subject in the curriculum and another, or even between work and play. A school day run on these lines is called, variously, the "free day," the "integrated curriculum," or the "integrated day." The term scarcely matters.

In a school that operates with a free day, the teacher usually starts in the morning by listing the different activities available. A lot of rich material is needed, according to the teachers, but the best stuff is often homemade; and, in any case, it isn't necessary to have 30 or 40 sets of everything, because most activities are for a limited number of people. "Six children can play in the Wendy House," says a sign in one classroom. The ground rules are that they must clean up when they finish, and they mustn't bother others.

A child might spend the day on his first choice, or he might not. Many teachers confess they get nervous if everybody doesn't do some reading and writing every day; others are committed in principle to letting children choose freely. In practice, a lot of teachers give work when they think its needed. In this, as in any other way of doing things, teachers tailor their styles to their own temperament and the kind of children they have. But the extent to which children really have a choice and really work purposefully is astonishing.

How they learn reading offers a clear example of the kind of individual learning and teaching going on in these classrooms, even in quite large ones. (The mathematics work shows this even better, but I'll talk of math in another context.) Reading is not particularly emphasized, and my purpose in singling it out is purely illustrative, though the contrast between English classes and most American ones, where reading is a formidable matter, is vivid and depressing.

At first it is hard to say just how they do learn reading, since there are no separate subjects. A part of the answer slowly becomes clear, and it surprises American visitors used to thinking of the teacher as the generating force of education: children learn from each other. They hang around the library corners long before they can read, handling the books, looking at pictures, trying to find words they do know, listening and watching as the teacher hears other children's reading. It is common to see nonreaders studying people as they read, and they imitating them, monkey doing what monkey sees. Nobody makes fun of their grave parodies; and for good reasons.

A very small number of schools in two or three authorities have adopted what they call "family," or "vertical," grouping, which further promotes the idea of children teaching children. In these schools, each class is a cross-section of the whole school's population, all ages mixed together. This seems particularly successful in the early school years, when newcomers are easily absorbed, and older children help teach the young ones to clean up and take first steps in reading. Family grouping needs smaller classes, teachers say, because it requires close supervision to make sure small children don't get overshadowed and big ones are still challenged. Teachers using it swear by the flexibility it provides.

Teachers use a range of reading schemes, sight reading, phonics, and so forth, whatever seems to work with a child. (Only about five percent of English schools use the Initial Teaching Alphabet, an improved alphabet, not a method of reading, that has proved successful with poor readers and adults both in England and in this country; heads of good schools we visited thought that ITA

was unnecessary with a truly flexible reading program, but that in a rigid scheme, it gave the slow reader another chance, and thus a break.) . . .

Increasingly, in the good infant schools, there are no textbooks and no class readers. There are just books, in profusion. Instead of spending their scanty book money on 40 sets of everything, wise schools have purchased different sets of reading series, as well as a great many single books, at all levels of difficulty. Teachers arrange their classroom libraries so they can direct students of different abilities to appropriate books, but in most classes a child can tackle anything he wants. As a check, cautious teachers ask them to go on their own through a graded reading series--which one doesn't matter.

. . . . . .

As a rule, teachers don't pay much attention to accuracy or neatness until a child is well on in his writing. They introduce grammar and spelling after a time, but not as separate subjects or ends in themselves: they are simply ways to say what you want better and more efficiently. Under these methods, where the children choose the content of their writing, there seems in fact to be more attention paid to content than externals, such as punctuation, spelling and grammar. In the good schools, these are presented as what they are, living ways to get a meaning across, to be understood. Even some unimaginative teachers, who quibble with children about other work, can respect the content of the free writing books and take it seriously. This emphasis on self-chosen content has produced a flowering of young children's literature in schools working with many kinds of teachers and children. There is growing recognition that different people flourish on different kinds of writing; storytellers and poets are not necessarily the same as those who can do elegant and graceful writing about matehmatics. Impressive examples of free writing and poetry similar to what we saw are contained in the West Riding Education Committee's anthology, The Excitement of Writing. Samples of "maths" writing are included in the Schools Council's Mathematics in the Primary Schools, a wonderfully instructive book on many accounts. Books made and illustrated by the children are coming to be a regular part of the curriculum in some schools.

. . . . . .

But my purpose was to show not reading, but the changed role of the classroom teacher. Formal classroom teaching--the instructor standing up front, talking to the group, or even the first-grade room divided up into reading groups which the teacher listens to separately as she tries desperately to keep order--has disappeared

from many infant and a number of junior schools. It has disappeared because it is inflexible, because it imposes a single pattern of learning on a whole group of children--thus forcing the schools to "track," or to group classes by ability--because it ignores the extent to which children teach each other, and because in many workaday schools other methods are working better. Ordinary teachers, trained formally, take to the new role when they can see with their own eyes that the result is not chaos. . . .

These methods mean more work for the teacher, not less. In informal conditions, it is essential for the teacher to keep detailed and accurate accounts of what a child is learning, even though at any given moment she might not know what he's up to. Children help by keeping their own records: in some schools, they have private shelves where they store writing books, accounts of experiments and work in "maths," lists of the books they've read, and dates when they checked in with the teacher to read aloud. If American parents could ever see some of the detailed histories kept of each child's separate path, including his art work, they would feel, quite rightly, that a report card is a swindle.

When the class seldom meets as a unit, when children work independently, discipline is less of a problem. It does not disappear as a problem, but it becomes less paramount. The purposeful self-discipline of these children is, we were told, just as surprising to middle-aged Englishmen as it is to Americans. It is a recent development, and by no means the product of luck: much hard work and thought go into the arrangement of these classrooms and their rich materials. When they work at it, teachers find they can make time during the day for children who need it. "I can give all my attention to a child for five minutes, and that's worth more to him than being part of a sea of faces all day," said a teacher in an East London School overlooking the docks. Other teachers say they can watch children as they work and ask them questions; there is a better chance of finding out what children really understand.

What we saw is no statistical sample. The practices of the good schools we visited in different kinds of communities are not universal; but there are reasons for thinking that they are no longer strikingly exceptional. The schools we saw are, for the most part, staffed by ordinary teachers; they are not isolated experiments, run by cranks and geniuses. A government advisory body--the Plowden Committee--published a massive, and to American eyes, a radical report early this year, in which it indicated that about a third of England's 23,000 primary schools have been deeply influenced by the new ideas and methods, that another third are stirring under

their impact, and that the remaining third are still teaching along the formal lines of British schools in the thirties, and of American schools now.

. . . . . .

How Children Learn*

by Joseph Featherstone

There is no doubt that this remarkable report celebrates a fairly recent change. Until not long ago, heads of many schools could point to a chart in their office showing what each class was doing every minute of the week, and the number of minutes spent on each subject. (English, for example, being divided up into periods for spelling, grammar, exercises, composition, recitation, reading, handwriting, and so on.) It is obvious, as the Plowden Report tartly points out, "that this arrangement was not suited to what was known of the nature of children,of the classification of subject matter, or of the art of teaching."

. . . . . .

The characteristic innovations of the primary school revolution were first worked out by a number of infant schools much influenced by practices in progressive nursery schools, whose teachers, in turn, had been absorbing the ideas of thinkers like Montessori, Susan Isaacs, Dewey and Piaget.

Another element in the reform was a different emphasis in the work of the HMI's (government inspectors). As long as the inspectors acted as educational policemen, making the schools toe the mark, their effect over the years was to dampen innovation. But as their role took on more and more of an advisory character, they became important agents for disseminating new ideas. There is a clear moral here: external rules enforced from without not only have little positive effect on schools, but they tend to make their practices rigidify through fear. Where government and local inspectors have ceased inspecting and taken up advising, the results have been excellent. Some of the lively authorities, such as Leicestershire, set up distinct advisory offices, with no administrative responsibilities except to spread ideas and train teachers in new methods.

. . . . . .

---

*New Republic, September 2, 1967.

Some of the most important assumptions are that a great majority of primary school children can't just be told things, that they learn basic mathematical concepts much more slowly than adults realize, and that the patterns of abstract thought used in mathematics must be built up from layer after layer of direct experience--seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling.

. . . . . .

And yet there is a growing respect for Piaget's general outline of the stages of a child's development, based on experience in teaching mathematics. Whether or not his theories are ultimately accepted as true, it is clear that he and other developmental theorists have pushed British schools in directions that are pedagogically sound, toward an understanding that abstract concepts and words are hard for children, that children learn best from their own activity, and that they need time in which to grow.

Hence the belief of the good infant schools that what adults call play is a principal means of learning in childhood, a belief that seems more plausible when you consider how much children learn without formal instruction in the years before they come to school. Hence the sand and water tables, the rich variety of number apparatus, the clay, the wood, the geometric shapes to play with, the weights and balances, the Wendy Houses, and the dress-up clothes (to explore adult roles, as well as the materials that make up the world); hence, too, the conviction that a classroom should offer myriads of rich activities to choose from, that allowing children to repeat activities is often good, and that language and experience should link together in conversations among children and with the teacher.

. . . . . .

The approach is mathematical--stressing learning to think--rather than arithmetical, stressing mechanical computation. Rote learning and memorizing have been abandoned by good British primary schools, partly because they are dull, but more because they are poor ways to learn. It is assumed as a matter of course that children will proceed each at a different pace, doing different things. The idea of readiness is seldom used as a justification for holding a child back--a sure sign that Piaget's influence has been creative, rather than restrictive, since his theories could be used that way. The results of these practices--in perfectly measurable or in less tangible terms--are striking. By giving children an opportunity to explore and experiment--play if you will--and by putting teachers in a position where they can watch children and talk to them about what puzzles or intrigues them, good British primary schools are producing

classes where mathematics is a pleasure, and where, each year, there are fewer and fewer mathematical illiterates.

. . . . . .

Teaching Children to Think*

by Joseph Featherstone

As samples of the kind of learning that goes on, I've described how children learn to read and write, and the careful way in which they are introduced to mathematics. These methods, I've indicated, are successful in fairly measurable, as well as other, terms. They are not guaranteed to make bad teachers, or people who dislike children, into good teachers. But they are more suited than formal methods to the nature of small children and to the kinds of subjects that should be taught in primary school; and they encourage many ordinary teachers, who find that they are happier using them and less likely to spend all their time worrying about keeping order. Such methods assume that children can respond to courteous treatment by adults, and that to a great extent they can be trained to take the initiative in learning, if choices are real, and if a rich variety of material is offered them. As the Plowden Report concedes, these assumptions are not true for all children (some will probably always benefit more from formal teaching) or for every child all of the time. But the Plowden Report is itself testimony to a growing conviction in Britain that they can be a workable basis for an entire nation's schools.

. . . . . .

Some American teachers who have seen the spectacle of children in British classes working diligently on their own have raised another question: they have wondered whether British children are fundamentally different from American children. Certainly British grown-ups are different from Americans, and there may well be important differences in national character. Yet middle-aged English visitors to the informal schools often react with the same disbelief as Americans: they find it hard to credit British children with so much initiative and so much responsibility. Also, formal schools in Britain suffer from discipline problems, so it is hard to know how to speculate intelligently on the question. American teachers working on their own--and how lonely they seem--

---

*New Republic, September 9, 1967.

have often succeeded with methods similar to those of the good British primary schools: a forthcoming book by Herbert Kohl describes a sixth-grade class in Harlem run along fairly free lines--he includes some extraordinarily powerful samples of the children's free writing. A British teacher from one of the good local authorities recently came over to a large American city to teach a demonstration class of 8 to 11-year-olds in a slum school. Before he went, he was assured--by Americans--he would find American children as different from British as day is from night. Yet, he reported, the children reacted exactly as English children to a classroom thoughtfully laid out to permit choices. At first, the American children couldn't believe he meant what he said. After a timid start, they began rushing around the room, trying to sample everything fast, as though time were going to run out on them. Then they "settled remarkably quickly to study in more depth and to explore their environment with interest and enthusiasm." The teacher noticed that for the first two weeks no one did any written English or math, and when he asked them why, they said they hated those subjects. Eventually he got more and more of the class interested in free writing, but he never could get them interested in mathematics.

. . . . . .

Thus in American public schools, with a few notable exceptions, what we call progressive education was never tried. Progressive education in practice meant secondary education for all, and, perhaps, more educational opportunity; more courses, especially in high school, of the life-adjustment variety; more emphasis on extracurricular activities; more grouping by ability and emphasis on testing; some "project work" that was no doubt a welcome relief from the textbooks; some more or less important changes in the textbooks themselves; reform in the management of the schools, often based on the inappropriate models from the world of business.

. . . . . .

This is the point: we lack convincing alternatives, actual classrooms that people could go and see, that teachers could work in, functioning schools that would demonstrate to the public and to educators the kind of learning I've described in this series. They must be institutions that can develop and grow over time, not just demonstration classes. (New York City has tried out every good idea in educational history: once.) To make any impact, these schools will have to be very different from private experiments of the 20's and the 30's, with their ideological confusions and their indifference to public education. The temptation is to say we need

many such schools, and we probably do. But a tiny number of infant schools pioneered the changes in the British schools, and it is probable that careful work on a small scale is the way to start a reform worth having, whatever our grandiose educational reformers might say. In the end, you always return to a teacher in a classroom full of children. That is the proper locus of a revolution in the primary schools.