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Subscription Notes:

All issues of *Insights* since
 Volume 34, Number 1
 (July 2001) are now available
 to JDS members and friends
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Beginning with Volume 38,
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This represents a change
 in the number of issues
 per year from three to two,
 and conforms to a Board of
 Directors decision taken at the
 2005 Annual General Meeting.

Editorial – *Drudgery*

Jon G. Bradley

According to Webster, 'drudge' is used as a noun and refers to "someone who has to work hard at uninteresting tasks, esp. domestic work". 'Drudgery' is defined as "uninteresting work or any time-consuming work one has no wish to do".

In a volume written a century ago, John Dewey sets out in *The School and Society* a view of elementary education that still resonates and challenges classroom practitioners to search for more pedagogically sound measures. While a cynic might scoff at the notion of students learning how to weave, sew and garden, one wonders how contemporary attempts to deal with keyboarding skills and driver education, might be characterized. Reading beyond these clear contemporary structures, the underlying messages that permeate *The School and Society* remain solid and relevant to this day.

A serious review of the book as well as first-hand investigations of the "Dewey School" appeared in two lengthy Chicago newspaper accounts. The extensive reports in *The Sunday Chronicle* (April 11, 1900) and *The Sunday Times-Herald* (June 3, 1900) not only painted a positive picture of the Dewey School, its teachers and pupils along with Dewey himself; but also grounded the school in the philosophy as illustrated by Dewey in *The School and Society*.

Near the end of the report in *The Sunday Chronicle*, the anonymous reporter notes that "the most striking feature of the school, aside from its unusual methods and the very good quality of work done, would appear to be the absence of drudgery and the abounding happiness of the children." Responding to the general query that character development will suffer if the children are only allowed to engage in work that they find

pleasing, Miss. Bacon, the school principal, responded by noting:

"For the work done here is only not drudgery because the interest felt in it redeems it from drudgery to pleasure, and this is the way in which the problems of later work in life are settled. The thing we do not like, and consequently feel no interest in, is drudgery, drudgery of the dreariest and most unpleasant kind ... Give us an interest in work, transform it, consequently, into something which we really like doing, and it is no longer drudgery, although we work twice as hard at it as we did before. And it is the work which is performed with pleasure and a sense of keen interest which is worth most to us and to humanity at large."

Olive Hyde Foster's report in *The Sunday Times-Herald*, on the other hand, is a more measured piece. Material from *The School and Society* is interspersed with comments from Dewey along with a rather detailed account of the comings and goings of the various classes in the school. Nonetheless, even though Foster appears to be a tad more reserved, the admiration for the enterprise is established in the first paragraph when it is noted that as the school has created "so much attention in fact that it has been found necessary to specify Monday, Wednesday and Friday as visiting days."

The notions that an elementary school should be a pleasant place to be and where the teachers and students work at integrated knowledge (without drudgery) does not seem fanciful – even a hundred years later at the commencement of another century.

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The life of an academic

Ling Shi

In his thirties, he did
his graduate studies
working on odd jobs
to keep his body and soul
together.

He thought he had made it
at the his PhD congregation
but got lost when the supervisor said
farewell.

He was on his own
to publish and
to hunt for a job.

In his forties,
after a couple of contract jobs,
he finally got
a tenure-tracked position
in a prestigious university.
He thought he could relax a little now
but was tightened up after the first meeting.
He heard stories of those
who perished
because they could not publish.
So he followed the track predesigned, hoping
he was luckier than others.

He worked hard every year
to fill the spaces in his resumé
adding lines under publications
and checking boxes for research grants.
A letter of an acceptance would
send him to Heaven
and a rejection letter would
dump him to hell.
When the final judgment came, he was
almost paralyzed.
Had the announcement of his tenure
made a day later,
he could have had a nerve breakdown.

In his fifties,
he could finally enjoy the academic life.
Working with several graduate students each year
he was able to publish and
became known.
The annual conferences
were meeting places for friends in the same boat.
“Success breeds success” was his advice
to those who had just arrived.

In his sixties,
he slowed down to wind up the career.
Occasionally he would fall asleep in class
but once a while
produce a witty comment
sharp enough to wake up a dead soul.
He would let his white hair grow
to fit the image of a dinosaur and
to get ready
for the retirement ceremony.

In his seventies,
he came back for parties
to say “Hi” to those young dinosaurs
and perhaps to keep his image fresh
so nobody would wonder who he was
when they found a funeral notice
in the mailbox.

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Using Dewey's Concept of Inquiry for Place-Making

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The following thoughts and reflections originate from reading Talisse's article, *Two Concepts of Inquiry* (2002), on a flight to London Stansted, UK. He argued that Pierce and Dewey had very different views of inquiry and developed his argumentation in a very interesting way. His claim is that in Pierce inquiry is a structured search for pre-existing truths, while in Dewey it is an organic process of life. I had then the idea of using the two views to make sense of my place-making at Stansted Airport.

A question came to my mind after reading that article: *Can I use the concept of inquiry to understand the way I create a sense of place?* For me the distinction between place and space is essential as I am strongly influenced by philosophers/humanistic geographers/architects (for example, Bachelard, 1969; Relph, 1976; Seamon, 1982), who build on phenomenology and emphasize the emotional relationships that people establish with places.

The importance of emotions and meanings which can develop around places relates well to the call for a return to the everyday lifeworld of lived experience (Dovey, 2002). If I want to explore the lived experience of "feeling at home" – which is unnoticed and taken-for-granted most of the time – which concept of inquiry can be more useful?

What follows is a position paper in which I present my arguable opinion about Dewey's view of inquiry as best suited to place-making. After a brief presentation of the difference between space and place, I describe a short story of my experience of getting comfortable in Stansted airport and develop my argumentation¹.

¹ In Ireland, the Science Foundation funded "Shared Worlds", a project which is investigating the development and use of interactive technologies in public spaces, including airports. At Shannon airports, researchers asked travelers their experience of the airport.

A brief conceptualization of place and space

Concepts of space and place have been used and discussed since classical philosophy but only in the 20th century a refined conceptual distinction between the two was developed. Merleau-Ponty (1945), Heidegger (1962, 1971), and Bachelard (1958) tried to analyze the constituent elements of human experience, with *space* as a fundamental dimension of our being-in-the-world. They overcame the vision of space as pure structure, and started to see it as a dimension for interaction and experience that is dynamically shaped by them. The notion of being-in-the-world provided a useful understanding of people's dynamic relationship to places, as it encompassed a diversity of places and experiences, contexts and meanings.

Phenomenology and existentialism influenced humanistic geographers such as Relph (1976) and Tuan (1977), who were the first to explore the concept of place not only theoretically, but from a pragmatic perspective (Ley and Samuels, 1978). They no longer thought of space as a "container" or location, but as a setting for action, experiences, and communication. In this way, place bears on values, meanings, memories and feelings.

Story: Experience of five-hour stopover at Stansted Airport: Make sense of the airport affordances to pass the time and do something enjoyable

I was on my way to Limerick, Ireland, and I had so many hours to wait before the check-in counter opened. What was I going to do? Usually, as soon I get out of the passport control, my main concerns are: What can I eat that is possible better than what I ate last time? And especially this: Where

can I find a seat where I can be left in peace, while jotting down ideas for my work, without being surrounded by screaming kids?

I spent my first half-an hour browsing the shelves of a bunch of shops selling meals and snacks. I was not convinced, so I moved back and forth between Garfunkels and Costa Coffee, trying to see which one was more inspiring and then I ended up buying a chicken fajita wrap at Boots. But, isn't it a pharmacy? Yes, but they also serve snacks and drinks. Now, that I had finally solved the food issue, I needed to solve the other – and for me far more crucial issue, from whose solution the quality of the next four hours depended: Where could I seat?

The airport was crowded. Most seats were already taken. I spotted some empty seats here and there in the middle of busy rows. It was foolish to think that I could find a quiet seat, without people around, possibly next to a seat table, where I could comfortably lay my staff, instead of putting it on the floor. But, you know, I am often foolish in my life and that time was no exception. I started to move around the check-in area, dragging my trolley. My itinerating was not long, fortunately, that day: there was my perfect spot! Actually it was a three-seat-row. Totally empty! There was also the table. I took possession of the seat next to it. I took off my coat and I hung it at the telescopic pulling handle of my trolley. I had an immediate feeling of contentment. I ate my wrap slowly and I liked it. I occupied the seat next to me with a big book, so that to discourage people – at least the shyest ones – from sitting next to me. I did not care about the third and last seat of the row. It was far enough from the "personal space" that I had managed to create. The back of that row of seats was against a wall and not against another row of seats so

nobody could seat behind me. I was in a sort of periphery of the check-in area and not in the middle of those clusters of seats which I always try to avoid. To make the situation perfect, a cleaning lady came and left her cleaning cart right next to my table, this way creating a sort of little barrier between the rest of the world and myself. Then I noticed that she left it because right there was the door to a crew room where they store their equipment. Ok, I said to myself: time to start to work.

Using Pierce's concept of inquiry to make sense of a place in space

Pierce would treat place as space, as an object independent of our opinions and feelings. A reality which we experience in the sense that it affects our senses. We perceive it sensorially and react *to* it. In his perspective of inquiry, as it emerges from the article, we try to attain a state of belief to overcome our doubts about a space. For example, inquiry may arise from our not knowing what to do in a new location (an airport, for example, in which a low cost airline that only connects point-to-point forces you to a five-hour stopover). Your doubts about how to spend so many hours can be many and diverse, such as Where can I find something decent to eat, or Do they have an Internet service?, and especially the following Where can I find a reasonably quiet seat and do some work?.

Then, I start to engage in inquiry to solve my doubts and reach a stable solution that frees myself of my doubts and helps me create "my little niche".

Pierce's positivistic epistemology

How can I discover this solution, in the sense of something relatively stable? For Pierce, this discovery occurs through a process that emulates scientific inquiry. The object of my inquiry needs to be value-free (I wonder whether I can perceive Stansted airport in a value-free way...). As it

were only an Euclidean space. Space does not carry values for us, it is meant to be neutral, it exists *per se*. I do not interact with it, I do not act upon it. I only experience it as an object.

I think that this epistemological position must be quite common in software design. They must assume that we use the objects (they also called them that way) we see in the interface, and we engage in inquiry (searching the manual) when we do not know how to use them (doubts), in order to find solutions (beliefs) that end the struggle.

I think that probably the same epistemological stance might be behind the design of the clusters of seats, with all those back-to-back seats. The designers of the check-in area might have thought that people *just* want to seat, when they are tired or when they no longer want to stand, and that they seat as soon as they find one seat available. And if all the seats are taken, they simply wait for one to be free or look around until they find one.

I see the same kind of assumptions behind the two situations: that we are supposed to react to the setting. The way we perceive the affordances in the setting – be they digital objects or physical seats – or the lack of them, it is merely a form of reaction, not an active form of construction of a situation. In Pierce I see a very reductionist form of experience, which excludes meanings and feelings. I think that I need another concept of experience to support my understanding of how I make sense of a space and transform it into place.

Using Dewey's concept of inquiry to make sense of a place in space

I see the notion of experience in Dewey as very consistent with what Chastain (1999) said about place-making. In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey said that "when we experience something, we act upon it, we do something with it" (MW9:146, cited in Talisse, 2002).

Chastain, an architect and urban planner, described three forms of knowledge that contribute to create a shared territory:

Sensation: we become acquainted with a place by interacting with the phenomena of the place: what we can see, touch, and sense.

Use: we come to know a place by becoming familiar with the ways in which people inhabit it and carry out activities in it.

Articulation: we articulating our knowledge of a place by sharing it with others. This sharing is the means by which we build a collective discourse about a place.

When Dewey (1925) said that things are what are experienced, his statement truly reflects my feelings about place, and it reminds me of what Harrison and Dourish (1996) said about place as our understood reality, while space is an opportunity. Dewey's assertion implies the importance of the relations between where we are and who we are. We interact causally with the enviroing things to produce experience, and in so doing we produce our places. In Dewey there is this clear shift from a self as mainly sentient being to being an active participant, who is absorbed in what is participated through a continuous process of adjustment to and within the environment. In the process of transformation of a space (opportunity) into a place, the self becomes part of the place s/he is making. In the process of experiencing, the space is transformed and moulded to fulfil our purposes (we transform a run-down farm into a congress centre, we convert a harbour facility into a university, etc.).

Talisse pointed out that inquiry in Dewey is a particular way of experiencing. In particular, inquiry is a way to respond to a problematic situation or something unexpected. For Dewey,

a situation is not a single episode, or a specific object, but refers to the entire and unique character of the conditions under which we act. Following this reasoning, I could say that, when something happens, something that makes us feel uneasy and asks for a return to a balance, we act to adapt to the situation and, at the same time, we change it and reinvent it for our purposes. Or maybe not: we do not change it, because we do not know what it is. When the situation is problematic or new, we are in a sort of unknown territory, and we might not act upon it straight away, because we do not know how. So, instead of starting Pierce's inquiry mode to solve my doubts, my adaptation can consist in giving up using the problematic something (leaving Stansted and taking a train to London, in my case for example).

Using Dewey's more than Pierce's notion of inquiry and making sense of my experience

The spiral path of inquiry based on Dewey well represents the processes though which not only we come to know something but also we construct experiences. Just as we assume that knowledge is not "out there", we can say that experience is not ready-made. The processes of sense-making of and in an experience are reflexive and recursive (Wright and McCarthy, and Meekison, 2003), as the spiral shows.

They are reflexive because we always see an experience through recounting it to ourselves and/or others. And this is exactly what I am doing by writing my place-making episode: I am interacting reflexively with myself and with you (although only imaginatively, at the moment). They are recursive because we cannot avoid being engaged in sense-making. My recounting the experience of place-making is another experience in itself. As part of this recounting, I try to identify the processes involved in my inquiry for a place.

When I was at Stansted without

knowing how to spend my five hours before the check-in counter would open, I was in a problematic situation. It was not just me being doubtful, but the situation as a whole. Inquiry then was the process of my place-making at Stansted through re-construction of existing conditions. Inquiry started with the search for a place, that is a comfort zone. Such a place was not ready-made: the cluster of seats in the waiting area was ready-made, but it did not meet my needs. I had the opportunity to seat but I did not take it, as I understood that seating space as a noisy and unpleasant setting. Thus I had to introduce certain alterations in the situation to solve my problem.

The focal point in my place-making were not the features of the airport, but the activities I undertook to find my "place": going around, searching for a spot, thinking about what was best for me, etc. These activities can be connoted as a process of information-gathering, of which I was fully in charge. Although those activities had to be afforded by the system (I could have not sat where I did, were it not been available), I was in charge of the process of transformation of space into a place, and I simply did not take things as they were. Stansted airport is real and exists independently of me, but I can create my existential conditions in it – such as place – through my personal actions.

The activities undertaken in the search stage involved interpretation of a number of aspects of the experience with the airport hall – those that Wright, McCarthy and Meekison (2003) defined as compositional, sensual and emotional: for example, what was happening around me, the way I felt about seating options, my perceptions of what could happen if I decided to take just the first available seat, my sense of distaste for some seating arrangements and some people sat there, etc. Investigation and attribution of meanings to both people and things, based on what I sensed and felt, occurred at once.

During the create stage, I created in

my mind the representation of my ideal spot and then I occupied a space whose characteristics fitted my goals. Even then, the space as it were was not totally adequate and I had to construct it to turn it into that I needed.

The reflection phase takes place as I am writing. It has the form of both an inner dialogue with myself and with the potential readers of this paper. The experience I am recounting is very ordinary and I can't say that it has changed my self or that I have discovered something that I did not know before. However, reflecting on this experience makes me take inventory of the complexity of even such a banal episode and that even very ordinary things – such as an anonymous chair at an airport – have for us unsuspected meanings which others might find difficult to understand, if they keep the perceptions of such things isolated from the rest of the interaction and from the totality of the experience.

Conclusions

My recounting of this experience tells me that aesthetics (in the sense of sensory and emotional, aspects) was a key factor to create my place. It demonstrates that my behaviour was not dominated by the need to fulfil a task (finding a seat and work), but was also regulated by other factors – less apparent and more imprecise, but equally important and, in the end, decisive. I find this aspect one of the most important lessons for me from pragmatism so far: this call for attention to experience in its wholeness.

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Call for Manuscripts *Education and Culture*

The Journal of the John Dewey Society for the Study of Education and Culture

*E*ducation and Culture, published twice yearly in hard copy and online by Purdue University Press in collaboration with the Berkeley Electronic Press, takes an integrated view of philosophical, historical, and sociological issues in education. Submissions of Dewey scholarship, as well as work inspired by Dewey's many interests, are welcome. John Dewey Society members receive the journal as part of their membership in the society.

The journal publishes critical essays, research studies, essay and book reviews, and "rejoinder" essays. Recommended lengths vary for critical essays, research studies, or essay reviews (7500 words); book reviews (1000-2000 words); and commentaries or rejoinders to published pieces (800 words). Alternative or imaginative submissions, such as poetry, creative nonfiction, and narrative, will be considered; please consult the editor prior to submission.

Send submissions electronically to:

A. G. Rud, Editor
Education and Culture
Purdue University
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Manuscripts should conform to APA or Chicago style. Please include complete contact information separate from the manuscript. There should be no author identifiers in the manuscript file, as the review process is anonymous. Most editorial decisions will be rendered within 4 months. Prospective authors are encouraged to contact the editor by e-mail at rud@purdue.edu with any questions.

Insights – Call for Submissions

The Editor welcomes submissions at any time!

All submissions must be made electronically. If possible, do not overly format the submission and follow, wherever possible, APA style. Charts and other kinds of inserts must be sent as a separate attachment with their place clearly noted in the body of the submission. Due to cost as well as technical factors, *Insights* will only accept very special photographs for inclusion.

In keeping with the traditions of *Insights* as well as honouring the directives of the Board of the John Dewey Society, a wide range of genres, interviews, narrative explorations, think-pieces, poetry, point and counter-point, research investigations along with thoughtful musings are all acceptable; as are book reviews, works-in-progress and position papers.

Members and friends of the John Dewey Society are encouraged to actively support *Insights* and a very tangible way to do this is via submissions.

Submissions and inquiries can be directed to the Editor, Jon Bradley, at jon.bradley@mcgill.ca.

A Teacher's Philosopher

There is Philosophy Underlying Every Thought and Action

Hillel A. Schiller

Introduction

Process is both a teacher's and this philosopher's major concern.

Most teachers' active attention is paid to how the learning process is taking place among their students. Concomitantly, they also have the necessary interest in the effectiveness of their teaching processes.

This philosopher, the Scottish physicist, historian and philosopher of science, Lancelot Law Whyte, contended that the universal nature of our evolving realities – the physical world and our consciousness of it – are dynamic, developmental processes. But more than that. He stated that all processes develop universally into either invisible or visible forms. Thus there are "formative processes." The forms are the structured patterns organized as systems and hierarchies whose levels of reality become forms of knowledge – become recognizable, describable, and namable by the sciences and the humanities by means experiment and by the agency of the human imagination.

Form is never trivial. Think, for example, of the importance to comprehension of word order in the English sentence. Image the shapes of whirlpools and spiral galaxies. Think of the new biological science of proteomics that investigates the molecular shapes and foldings of protein.

I believe Whyte's ideas relevant to educators are at least twofold:

The first relevant conception is expressed by his Unitary principle. He offered it as an axiom. He declared that there are formative processes at every level of nature which are creative and out of which develop all materiality and mental activity. By means of this formative principle he was able to displace what he identified as static and dualistic thinking with more heuristic definitive con-

cepts of Unitary thinking.

As a physicist-philosopher he offered empirical evidence in his observation that as the asymmetries of random conditions decrease through time symmetries in recognizable forms develop and grow. These symmetries are clearly evident in the inorganic world as the distinctive limited forms of crystals, and in the specific dynamic shape not only of whirlpools but also of the solar system; and in the organic world as the evolved characteristic shapes of flora and fauna. Think also of the beauties of form revealed by fractal geometry.

Whyte hypothesized that we live in a *morphologically* understandable universe about which much is yet to be discovered. His evidence and reasoning leading to this unique yet authoritative, and I believe, conclusive hypothesis will be presented briefly in the following reviews of his two major works, *The Next Development in Man*, published in America in 1948, and reissued in paperback in 2003 under the title *The Next Development in Mankind*, and *The Universe of Experience*, published posthumously in 1972, and reissued in paperback in 2003.

The relevance of recognizing the significance of form reflects on how curricula may be redesigned to avoid the fragmentation of knowledge. Whyte suggested two causes for this condition. First, historically an intellectual fallacy occurred – a misleading condition – was foisted upon philosophical effort by the evolution of symbolic language. The linguistic invention of the common noun created a capacity to isolate and reify aspects of thought and reality. In addition, Whyte contended, the development of science came to depend solely upon quantification to prove its validities. We shall see below where Whyte believed these two conditions led to historically.

The second matter of relevance to the teacher is Whyte's belief in the importance of the unique mental process that is the golden door to effective teaching. In his own words:

Why then is an understanding of forms and their genesis one of our greatest social needs? Because it should provide so compelling a biological image of the esthetic imagination that the world must willy-nilly take notice and improve its education, the stifling of a young imagination being then seen to be every wit as wicked as choking a baby. (Whyte, 1970-71, 620).

Once we accept this psycho-social fact, we can move on to another broad area of enormous interest to teachers at every level – vocabulary building. To teach effectively teachers should comprehend intimately the developmental and contextual natures of subject matters they expect to master. This implies the importance of showing how the nomenclatures of the disciplines connect to each other rather than exist as separate disciplines.

And here is the broadest prescription of the need derived from this philosopher's thinking relative to the teaching of the English language: ...civilization can only be saved by the development of a universal way of thinking which can provide the basis for a unified humane science and a stable world order. We need a *language of process*, supported by the authority of science, which can show man how to think if he is to understand nature and himself. Until man finds that true philosophy of process, human society will continue to be threatened by dogmas (Whyte, 1948).

What about this language of process? Does it exist? What is the nature of its vocabulary? How can teachers use it to improve the effectiveness of their teaching, and in

particular curricula design? My sense of the need is for the teacher to foster “contextual perception” – to show students how to search out the connections among processes, things, and ideas, and to encourage them to do so.

We must acknowledge that at the base of all curricula categories, it is not only the logical structure of a subject matter that shows its internal connections, but also the actual specifying vocabulary that denotes its factual nature and the characteristic systems it may be related to. Can the vocabulary of a process philosophy offer a new understanding and fuel the re-forming of an integrative rather than fragmented curricula? To answer this question one could very well come to a rational more verifiable conclusion once having absorbed Whyte’s perspective as he presents his case in these two volumes.

1. The Next Development in Mankind, Transaction Publishers, 2003.

The first sentence of this book startled me back in 1949. It provoked a curiosity that motivated a long-standing pursuit of Whyte’s reasons for his statement.

“Thought is born of failure,” he wrote.

This was either a profound thought or some form of sophistry. But Whyte explained, “Only when action fails to satisfy human needs is there ground for thought. To devote attention to any problem is to confess a lack of adjustment, which we must stop to consider. And the greater the failure the more searching is the kind of thought which is necessary.” This convinced me to finish reading his book and others he had written and edited.

During my teaching career, I found enormous support from Whyte’s philosophy for many of my own intuitions and ultimately my teaching as a teacher trainer in language arts at the Bernard Baruch College of CUNY. In this book Whyte reveals a deeper method of thinking about reality, life, history, personality, and education. His clearly expressed views rise above

traditional conceptions, stereotypic thinking, and the influence of unexamined habits.

Whyte’s deepest interest was to characterize the nature and the universality of “development,” which is the title of his second chapter. Here he gives a detailed outline of his Unitary method of thought by means of a series of “process” concepts in which his integrative vocabulary is delineated. This idea of unitary thought, he stated, offers a “re-orientation that eliminates the prejudice that has hitherto obscured our vision of the facts.”

In order to achieve this he focused first on making clear the nature of change. Change is not arbitrary. All change links similarities. This, for example, is what heredity accomplishes via growth and transformation. The meaningful order that emerges from the past into the present and proceeds into an unfolding future is realized as *continuity*, in the sequence of change. “In so far as change reveals this continuity, and is not arbitrary, it is called *process*,” (NDM, p. 9).

Thus he set the scene that illuminates the rest of the volume. He uses his unitary ideas to contrast static and dualistic thinking with the new need to deal with process in a more empirical and synthesizing way. Perhaps even more important than understanding his positing the universality of “development,” he originates a brilliant, integrative definition of form. Whyte defines form as “recognizable continuity.” Thereby he unites the capacities of human perception and language with the obvious material continuities displayed temporally by the tangibility of every 3D entity. This review cannot offer further his definitions of unitary process concepts. But Whyte conveniently defines his process “vocabulary” succinctly in an Appendix titled a “Glossary of Unitary Thought.”

His next chapter presents his analysis of “The Characteristics of Man,” Using his unitary perspective, he points to man as being a natural

species having an organic harmony that must be maintained for survival. Yet man in his long historical development exhibited a disintegration or dissociation which undermined this harmony. There developed ultimately in Western man an intellectual dissociation which was a clash between deliberate and spontaneous behavior. “Because the immature intellect has a static prejudice, and is therefore partially divorced from the processes of the organism it cannot itself provide a general co-ordination capable of uniting deliberate and spontaneous behavior.” The use of language engendered a belief in the permanence of certain ideas. This ultimately devolved into a metaphysical dualism that created a tradition of conflicting incompatibles. Whyte characterized this tradition as the *European dissociation*.

There follows a detailed analysis of the static, dualistic thinking cultivated by this dissociation which traces the loss of organic integration through the next two chapters “European Man” and “The European Tradition.” He outlines four major stages as definitive types in the development of the species leading to Western man. The first is the stage of primitive man until about 8000 BC; then the stage of ancient man from the discovery of agriculture through the Neolithic communities to the first centuries of the millennium before Christ. The third stage he calls the period of European man extending up to the foundation of exact science at about AD 1600. The fourth period precedes to the present day and is that of Western man.

It would not be useful to try to describe all the transformations he attributes to these stages. He offers evidence reflecting the advance of formative processes that had both positive and negative influences upon intellectual developments and societal behaviors underlying the dissociation he posited.

Pointing out the philosophical and scientific aspects fueling the dissociation

tion, he credits the quantitative scientific paradigm with raising measurement to the highest level of achievement to understand how things and processes work. The centuries since 1600 he regards as the age of quantity. "The symbols of number and quantity are appropriate to the enumeration, analysis, standardization, and accumulation of magnitude and they tend to neglect order, development, structure, and quality."

He states that though a highly successful heuristic process, the quantitative method went out of control and reached the limitation of not being able to account for form and the order of things. So he posited the development of a new unitary process paradigm for science to provide a morphic emphasis. Its more universal conceptions are to complete a new understanding of the co-ordination of finite systems that would be able to restore human endeavor to a more balanced way of life. Certainly this is a goal that also is integral to an educator's role.

In a tour de force of historical psycho-social analysis he describes an evolution from static-dualistic thought to a re-emerging process perspective by means of biographical sketches of nine thinkers: Heraclitus, Plato, Paul, Kepler, Descartes, Spinoza, Goethe, Marx, and Freud. Here is psycho-history at its best.

His penultimate chapter is devoted to describing the characteristics of "Unitary Man" based on his conviction that there is truth to his belief in the existence of a formative process pervading nature. But what is the mark of the Unitary man who in the following book to be reviewed he calls "a harmonious individual?" He describes him there as one who exhibits "precisely passionate convictions guided by clear ideas into effective action." There are surprises in this chapter that I urge you to face.

His final chapter "The World Trend" (written in 1948) contains predictions that you can subject to your own evaluation in terms of how the events of the 60 years since his hypotheses

were offered have affected global human experience and our current American way of life, which, by the way, much of which he admired.

2. The Universe of Experience, Transaction Publishers, 2003

This is a blockbuster of a book. By this I mean it will shock anyone with traditional and conventional ideas or beliefs. Whyte presents another conviction that emanates not only from his deepest intuition, but also from his scientific search for evidence to prove that what people of faith believe to be true is not always so. No, Virginia, there is no Santa Claus.

What much of humanity believes to be fact and "real" is only so in its collective mind. What knowledge has been absorbed via faith has never been provided by evidence. Angels cannot be proven to be out there. We may not be able to disprove this belief, but neither can we prove it. What can be believed without proof, can also be disbelieved without proof.

How can this radical even revolutionary viewpoint be significant to the English teacher? This is a leading question because English teachers, particularly those interested in the processes that created the English language; and as well, those who focus on the order of its structuring and its many uses, must be made aware of its fundamental and crucial nature. This fact makes it a powerful and versatile descriptive process. There is a telling lesson to be learned that emphasizes the basic foundation of language – its major characteristic being the *symbolic* nature of the *word*. This is the universal linguistic fact.

Spoken and written words are records of putative knowledge. But such expressed knowledge is based on the contextual foundation of its source – whatever domain of knowledge the user considers to be its context. This could be science, religion, or just the "universal" knowledge of so-called "common sense." The word can be made to stand for an "entity" or belief its user wishes it to represent, whether it is

empirically true or not. The word creates a designation that can be perverted to stand for a conceived reality that may not be so. The necessary use of language to express subjective thought and feelings often leads to self-deception as well as to truths established by the facts of reasoned experience.

The fact of the plasticity of the linguistic symbol permits language to be used for whatever sort of information its user has learned and been taught to communicate about to others – whether it be a truth (a fact), organized thought (an idea), or a figment of the imagination (a fantasy). The enormous scope of language's unrestrained, and still immature intellectual usage, having evolved from limited, historical social scenes, permitted Whyte to describe the characteristics of what he called the "European dissociation." This condition he believed to have resulted from the creation of "antiman" – filled with destructive impulses and exemplified by Whyte in his description of "Western Man," who was corrupted by his loss of organic harmony and who became victim of dualistic philosophies and religions. He characterized this perspective in the sub-title of this slim but powerful volume "A Worldview Beyond Science and Religion."

The major fact Whyte, as physicist and historian of science, sought to emphasize in this book was to unseat the belief that entropy was the sole major universal rule pervading reality. He placed in contrast to its presumed dominance of progressive disorder the rules of "order" and "hierarchy." We cannot go too deeply into his reasoning other than to report that the asymmetries of formative processes always decrease leading to the terminal symmetries as evidence in the physical universe. These symmetries are represented in all the systematic, hierarchical structures found in the developed inorganic and organic realms. His formula (3D, S) represents this successive ordering process as as does his formula based on the theory

of relations in which he posits that in the growth of morphic open systems – which all organic systems are – the later state of entropy is always less than its prior state. At At (A = some 3D asymmetry).

He states unequivocally:

There seems to be one very general type of ordering nearly everywhere in the universe.... The existence of systems marked by order, symmetry, or form is from one point of view the "first" fact about the universe, its most general property.... The universe is highly structured, both in the whole and in each organism, in a series of levels, each of which is marked by a unit of characteristic form which must have been generated by a morphic process at some time in the past.

From this perspective we come to the next matter relevant to all teaching – that of the role and nature of the imagination. *To understand the power of the imagination for learning is the most important pedagogical fact that a teacher can absorb.* Because of Whyte's emphasis in this regard, I do not shy away from saying that that this volume could be one of the most profound books you will ever read. Whyte proved himself to be an extraordinary social scientist by means of his often uncomfortable analyses of how the imagination has affected human history.

Whyte regarded the imagination as the "primary capacity of the human mind of which all other mental capacities should be understood as special cases or applications."

To explain his sense of the working of the imagination, he created the neologism the – *perconscious* – a conception that characterizes how imagination utilizes both conscious and unconscious mental activities in its operation as a formative process. Note the meaning of the prefix "per-." It means "thoroughly, completely, intensely." It implies containing an element in the highest degree. This element or rather process being that of *synthesizing*.

Whyte defined imagination as partaking in the interplay of at least two levels in the human mind, one more

conscious, one less. "The perconscious pervades human life," he wrote, "It would take a polymath of unique range to trace its role in the creation and maintenance of culture.... Many of the psychological and literary critics of this century do not seem to have understood the facts for which the term 'perconscious' stands: the omnipresent interplay – except in dissociated natures – of several levels of the mind. Consequently a story or poem is said to be allegoric of one particular aspect of experience, a human action to reveal one motive, and so on. In fact, nearly all human motives, actions, creations, and symbols are perconscious, expressing many levels at once. For example, Herman Melville had read widely, and much of his writing contains obvious allegories. But this does not mean that he deliberately constructed a story or episode to illustrate only one universal aspect of experience. At his most creative many levels were at work."

Whyte goes on to contend that an awareness of the perconscious involving several levels of morphic processes can radically affect social attitudes. This he believed occurred by means of an "unconscious tradition" which inherently seeks organic unity and coordination. He espoused the possibility of an all-embracing world view, evolving from 1914, in which this unconscious tradition would provide mankind with an organic synthesis of heart, mind, and will, of emotion, thought, and action. He believed that it would dissipate the European dissociation. Noting the lack of an adequate theory of social change, however, that could deflect the "present disastrous slide toward lethal violence." (Ed. This written in 1972!) he suggested that a new universal consensus of what the good life entails is needed. He expressed the hope that this new consensus must arise universally over time in the unconscious of individuals helped by means of "therapeutic scientific discoveries." He wished for a dynamic change in the human psyche that

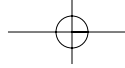
would that would signal the arrival of unitary man. "It would be marked by its emphasis on the *hierarchies of morphic processes* in the inorganic and organic realms, on *man as a coordinated organism*, when not *sick perpetually creating new unities*, new unions of contrasts, and, above all endowed with the capacity for *joy*."

He believed the human context could be altered, and presented a view that refutes those who place their faith in "intelligent design." In his own words, "The structure of the universe at all levels will be known to be less arbitrary than had been previously imagined. A major pattern will be seen to exist in the universe, a hierarchy of morphic processers, a natural plan needing no planner, for at the root it expresses a logical necessity. The human mind will understand its status in the biological realm and in the cosmos, and it will recognize the human imagination as the supreme formative agent in the known universe."

It is clear that Whyte was an optimist in his vision for the possibility for humanity's future. Yet he was realistic enough in his time to "to consider that it would be important if, during a decade or so, those interests which benefit from the promotion of violence could be identified, publicly exposed, and be brought to trial by a World Court empowered for this task. The elderly and weary will smile at such a suggestion, but the young in spirit might achieve it. In them alone lies the world's hope, and history has not exhausted its supply of surprises. The next step is for man to surprise himself."

Unfortunately, since his time many of the young, under the "evil" influence of extremist elders, have surprised the world with actions not as sanguine as Whyte had hoped for. But still he presented his "case," as Wittgenstein would say, in as clear language as anyone could.

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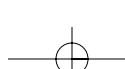
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