

Hinterland Schooling and Branch-Plant Psychology: Educational Psychology in Canada Today

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Cet article traite du rapport qui existe entre l'influence de la politique dans le domaine de l'éducation et de la psychologie et les difficultés que rencontrent les psychologues en éducation au Canada. Les particularités de l'économie politique dans laquelle oeuvrent les psychologues en éducation au Canada sont décrites; et l'influence que ces facteurs ont sur l'éducation et la psychologie est considérée comme un obstacle majeur si l'on veut dissiper la confusion et diminuer le désordre et la faiblesse qui règnent dans le domaine de l'éducation et de la psychologie. Pour surmonter ces difficultés, on suggère de voir le rôle du psychologue selon une toute autre perspective, c'est-à-dire avec une plus grande conscience politique et économique, un sens critique développé et une définition personnelle de la réalité.

Even the casual observer who merely browses through newspapers probably concludes that these are difficult times for educators. Schools and teachers are, as usual, under attack from all sides, including the inside (O'Toole, 1978). Nowadays, moreover, financial and other commitments to schooling are increasingly tentative. And psychology, the once bright and leading light for teachers, has become bogged down in a swamp of confusion while running amuck in the world of commercial hype (Armistead, 1974; Jacoby, 1975; Sears, 1975).

These conditions are burdensome for teachers in the first case and psychologists in the second. However, the difficulties of both are compounded for educational psychologists.

On top of this, educational psychologists in Canada are tried by the disadvantages that Canada's branch-plant economy produces through its excessive dependence on the American metropolis. In the face of all this, one is tempted to withdraw in despair or give expression to the hostility to which Freud (1972, p. 47) referred when he wrote of "psychological truths that are severely proscribed." Such feelings are prompted by a realization that both schooling and psychology are nowadays characterized by confusion, disarray, and impotence (Anderson & Travis, 1979; Andreski, 1974; Armbruster, 1977; Travis, 1975; Trefflinger et al., 1977). While the disorders Canadians suffer are not as dramatically evident as are those enjoyed by the Americans (Mitchell, 1978; O'Toole, 1978), Canada's teachers and educational psychologists nevertheless seem to be unable to order their own domains (Gibson, 1974; Sadava, 1978).

Moreover, hope for future improvement dissolves when one observes that great numbers of Canada's educators and psychologists continue to take their guidance from those who join the lines which maintain the long-running dramas of desperation within American education (Green, 1972; Hofstadter, 1963).

What processes produce and sustain these conditions? Why are our schools the perennial objects of intemperate criticism? Why are our teachers accorded abuse rather than the respect enjoyed by their counterparts in lands beyond this continent? Why is our schooling so frenetically trendy? Are educational psychologists implicated in the creation of this instability and confusion, or is the substance and character of educational psychology so trivial that teachers perceive it as indistinct from or on a par with the chimera, hype, and pap of the commercial culture's hucksters, whose illusion-mongering not infrequently guides teachers' thought and actions? Have educational psychologists, like others who are intent on seeming scientific (Galbraith, 1965, p. 21), failed to inspect, judge, and pronounce upon obvious facts, because they have been too ardently and single-mindedly pursuing the measurement equivalent of the medieval scholastics' silly refinements? Why have foreign (usually American) conceptions of reality and possibility dominated the discourse and conduct of Canadian scholars and educators even as the conditions in which they stand are foreign to all save themselves? Finally, why have educational psychologists tended to live off the employment of conceptions contrived by psychologists (and others) whose activities and concerns are unconnected with things educational?

Clearly, there is no simple answer to these questions. No simple process has created the conditions which give rise to the formulation of them. This caveat notwithstanding, I assume that an analysis of the political economy of Canadian education and psychology should yield some basic sense of and perspective on the sources of the troublesome conditions we find in Canadian schooling and educational psychology.

SENSE AND PERSPECTIVES FROM THE HOME TURF

In the discourse which follows, features of the political economy which influence Canadian schooling and psychology are analyzed. Specifically, the analysis suggests that the branch-plant politics of the Canadian economy in general, and the hinterland politics of Canadian scholarship and education in particular, seem to discourage many Canadian teachers and scholars from forging their own purposes, practices, and ideas in the light of their own history, circumstances, and goals. Moreover, I suggest that the same politics engender the tendency for many of our educators to take their cues from others (both foreign and domestic) who seem to have more power and prestige than themselves—even though such others are not often burdened with the responsibility for being knowledge-

able about and effective within our particular teaching/learning conditions. Such widespread abdication in favor of the direction and example of others is regarded as a major source of shortcomings in our schools and faculties.

Psychology is assessed as sharing that state of confusion and disorder — for similar political and economic reasons. And since a great number of educational psychologists have been in the habit of relying too heavily on so-called “pure” — but demonstrably impure — psychology for ideas, basic research, and direction (Trefflinger et al., 1977, pp. 34-35, 45), educational psychology is represented as a collective endeavor that is seriously disoriented by the political processes which bring grief to both education and psychology. As educational psychology is born between education and psychology, educational psychologists are perceived as having difficulty avoiding the acquisition of a neurotic habit: that of denying or disguising unpleasant realities.

In sum, the following analysis suggests that the vexing condition of contemporary Canadian schooling and psychology is not merely an expression of technical deficiencies, insufficient knowledge, professional rigidities, or an undersupply of talent (though these burdens are familiar enough). For even if such problems were eliminated, we would still face disarray wrought by political processes which, in the absence of radical and massive changes in the economy, will persist. In facing this prospect, I suggest that educational psychologists critically assess their responsibilities and condition. This should entail giving emphasis to more basic distinctions, analyzing ideological dreams, debunking grandiose claims, and doing more of our own basic research and thinking. Finally, I suggest that if Canadian educators do not face our condition more squarely and honestly there is little reason to derive hope or consolation from Max Weber's (Harris, 1971, pp. 21, 52) observation that hinterlands are more likely to produce important innovations than are metropolitan centres of culture.

An examination of political influences on education, then, forms the first part of the analysis.

POLITICAL INFLUENCES ON EDUCATION

Virtually everyone, by now, must acknowledge that education, and more particularly schooling, has a political character (e.g., Anderson, 1968, 1976; Anderson & Travis, 1979; Barzun, 1971; Dale et al., 1974; Gintis, 1972; Hofstadter, 1963). That is, teachers frequently accommodate their ideas and practices to ideas, practices, and demands of others who possess, or seem to possess, greater power and authority than do educators themselves. In other words, educators regularly adjust themselves to numerous forms of political exigencies. For example, few of the changes in education which were implemented in the wake of spreading educational

turmoil (e.g., smorgasbord curricula) were based on research evidence that they would yield educational gains (Travis, 1975). Nor was there a sound basis for supposing that these sops to restlessness would promote the pleasant-sounding non-educational goals that were often used to justify the changes.

Indeed, evidence of educators' adjustments to changes in the political climate are easily found by, for example, an examination of successive editions of textbooks. Thus, De Cecco's (1968, pp. 190-194, 231-232) treatment of class in the first edition of his popular text is representative of the fanciful conception of class which liberal intellectuals espoused during the 1950s and early 1960s (Johnson, 1972, pp. 142-143). During that period, a species of consensus prevailed among North American social theorists with regard to the then alleged decline of the importance of class (e.g., Hodgson, 1976, pp. 48-98). In effect, an "ideology of classlessness" was touted by those who, at a time of apparent prosperity and widespread optimism, spoke of an end of ideology (Blumberg, 1972). Moreover, classes were defined in baroque terms which emphasized subjective content (Johnson, 1972, p. 142). This gave the appearance of a homogeneous population. As one prominent member of the consensus asserted, "...so far as the bulk of Western society is concerned, and especially the United States, the concept of class is obsolete" (Nisbet, 1972, p. 61). De Cecco's (1968) edition incorporated this view. In it, class was defined by emphasizing a subjective factor; and this treatment made his conclusion inevitable. Said De Cecco:

Four conditions must exist in a community before we can affirm the existence of social class. . . . (1) The population must be conscious of classes and agree on the number of classes. (2) Styles of life within the classes must be strikingly uniform and between classes, clearly unique. (3) Social interaction must be sharply patterned on class. (4) Data on each of these factors must indicate the same boundaries between classes. . . . [When] we apply these four conditions . . . to see whether we can establish the existence of . . . class . . . [we conclude that] . . . no convincing evidence proves the existence of social classes in modern American life. . . . We are truly the classless society. (1968, pp. 190, 194)

By the time this material was placed in students' hands, poverty had been rediscovered ("The Other America") and Vietnam had destabilized the liberal consensus. The myth of the classless society was torpedoed "after floating through the sixties on whimsical balance sheets" (Hacker, 1975, p. 9). De Cecco's (1974) second edition reflects this turn of events in the following way. Class is acknowledged; but it is now treated with brevity as a simple nuisance variable which he tucks away in a short and general passage on individual differences (p. 52). This is, indeed, a very nice adjustment to changes in the political climate.

Although we rarely hear people speak plainly about this any more, we are not less inclined to strive to please our social betters than were our

forefathers. Accordingly, our educational ideas and conduct are not infrequently influenced by "powerholders" (Kipnis, 1976) and the means by which they make their existence and influence felt.

POWER AND POLITICS

This latter assertion obliges a digression and clarification of some pivotal concepts. First, let us adopt the political scientist's standard definition of power: "the capacity of some persons to control the conduct of others" (Shermerhorn, 1961, p. v). Consider also the political economist's standard definition of a political act as any attempt to exercise power (Neuman, 1962, pp. 163-164). Given the importance of outcomes of such acts, Kipnis' (1976) account is more to the point:

Power is said to be exercised when changes occur in the target person's behavior that can be attributed to the powerholder's influence, and that serve the powerholder's interests or intentions. . . . Furthermore, these changes would ordinarily not have been carried out by the target person. (p. 9)

Two other factors should be considered here as well. The first of these is the resources of the powerholders or, to use Gramson's term, "influence in repose" (Kipnis, 1976, p. 21). Such resources or influences include: control of important reinforcers and punishers, high prestige, superior knowledge or ability, and the admiration of the target (or others whom the target respects). The second factor is the dependent condition of the target. This dependency is fundamental because the usefulness of the power concept turns on the existence of an uneven distribution of power.

These matters demand attention because educators and psychologists have, surprisingly, paid little attention to power. As Kipnis says, we have been "soft on power" (1976, p. 4). Psychologists, like other behavioral and social scientists (Nicolaus, 1972) have apparently preferred to study the less powerful since the targets of power are almost always the subjects studied by investigators who, of course, are financed by the more powerful and their agents. Although a few (e.g., Domhoff, 1967) have tried to study the powerful, this practice is not encouraged by their would-be subjects. Understandably, the latter are not known for their patronage of those who would scrutinize them and their friends. Says Kipnis:

Persons in positions of power resist being studied . . . [and] since people in positions of power tend to control the funding of research, it is most likely that they will encourage research on topics that are of concern to themselves. (pp. 6, 7)

With our attentions so directed, our chances of acquiring a full understanding of the place, function, and significance of our work are reduced. As a result, we can easily misunderstand the value our work has for those whose resources are used to lure us to the service of their purposes. For

these reasons, we can be perceived as dupes who, in our work, assist the powerful to manage or oppress those we study, treat, or instruct (Armistead, 1974). If our activities are shaped by and serve political realities and we remain oblivious to them, we may be culpable. An analysis of political influences on education and psychology is sharpened when such considerations are kept in mind.

Of course we must recognize that influence is exercised in several ways (Kipnis, 1976). Access to some desired condition, might, for example, be restricted by the powerholder who thereby weakens the target's position. Alternatively, powerholders can extend their power networks by arranging for sources who are rivals to the target as suppliers for the powerholders' wants.

These options, and finally that of demand creation whereby powerholders create wants or needs for their resources, bring forth an appropriate allegorical tale for illustration. Ellis (1961), I trust, will indulge my minor modification of it.

A handsome farm boy was walking along the road with a young woman but was quite occupied in carrying a pail on his back, holding a chicken in one hand, a cane in the other, and leading a goat. When they came to a verdant and secluded lane the girl said, "I'm afraid you might try to make love to me here." Said the boy: "How could I with all these things I'm carrying?" "Well," replied the girl, "you might stick the cane in the ground, tie the goat to it, and put the chicken under the pail." (pp. 79-80)

I have the impression that educators in this country have been enticed down many garden paths and with less heady prospects for rewarded effort than had our favored hero. While our farm boy could lay his burdens down while he pursued the delights of the lane, educators are not so blessed. Although teachers are regularly expected and induced to work for the solution of every social problem, they must simultaneously hold the children of careless and hostile parents, and attempt to teach more than a score of people who are in hot pursuit of their private ambitions. Understandably, teachers' trysts on the trail are repeatedly missed. And though they are abused for not making the grade and losing their retinue to boot, teachers continue to follow the seductive sirens.

Such promiscuous involvement with the ambitions and problems of all comers mocks the association of the teaching-learning enterprise with art and science which one usually finds in the educator's professional literature. While conduct of this sort reflects the fact that teachers, on the whole, are at least as conscientious and decent as any group of professionals (indeed, they seem conscientious to a fault), it stands in contrast to the behavior of artists and scientists. For genuine artists and scientists do not attempt to do and be everything at once; and they do not try to be everything for all. Artists and scientists gain their force, in part, through the setting of limits, through discipline, through the possession of focused

and sustained ambitions. In contrast, educators who try to do and be everything for all prevent themselves from doing much of anything for anybody. This may be philanthropic or charitable in spirit, but it is artless and unscientific in essence. Moreover, it invites trouble from those who have been encouraged to expect more than can be delivered, debilitates and mystifies schooling, and encourages the public to ignore and neglect processes and instruments which are more suitably applied to their socio-economic and political problems (Anderson, 1976; Travis, 1975). Accordingly, the society's defects and difficulties persist and grow. Having contributed, however inadvertently, to the miseducation of the public with regard to what schools can and cannot do, educators reap the wages of their sin of pride: they are charged with failure and treated to abuse, disrespect and reduced support. In these circumstances they may indeed have become less effective in providing a solid or even basic educational service (Armbruster, 1977).

Unfortunately, psychologists have too often joined in the promotion of the belief that socio-economic problems can be remedied through schooling (Sears, 1975). And the success of these efforts may be due to the fact that governmental agencies and business groups, with their own interests in mind, provided further assistance (Green, 1972). Thus, Schrag (1970, p. 68) was able to observe that in the U.S.A. "the school is [the] answer to Karl Marx — and to anything else" even though "the school system has failed." The verdict of failure is, of course, inevitable given such unrealistic ambitions; and so is increased abuse and reduced support for teachers, and greater difficulties and distortions of purpose for scholars and researchers in education.

An ironic consequence of their acquiescence to this abuse of schooling is apparent in that educators have contributed to the exacerbation of conditions which one would think they want to diminish. Thus, distracted by a faith in the dogma that schooling is the hope of the world, the population remains primitive in politics, ignorant of economics, simple-minded in social affairs, infantile in taste, and crass in culture generally.

I have dwelled on this matter only to argue that this trendy behavior that marks educators is more suggestive of the commercial fashion of liberal society's mass culture than indicative of artists or scientists at work. However, the task of explaining this phenomenon remains, since the over-used and mean-minded answer which suggests that educators are a dull lot is too simple and obvious to be adequate. Accordingly, I propose that the fact of educators' dependency is a contributing factor.

THE DEPENDENCY OF EDUCATORS AND THE POWER OF CAPITAL

The fact that most teachers must work for wages is significant for a political analysis. This dependent state makes teachers potential targets for those who have "influence in repose." Thus their employers have a

practical capacity to influence their conduct through the control of employment and purse strings. Such power is recognized and codified in law. However, this legitimized power may not be the most significant influence since terms of contract and other factors attenuate its exercise. I suspect that less formal influences, particularly the powers of business, are more important.

Business power can be important for at least two reasons. First, the business or owning class long ago appropriated and still possesses the means of production and, with them, the power to allocate resources as its members see fit. They control not only the great bulk of resources through private ownership of wealth-producing property and hence dominate the production and distribution of wealth, but also the ordering of the public sector's resources (Hacker, 1975, p. 12; Macpherson, 1965). Financed by the public purse, the educational apparatus (employing teachers) is therefore affected by the conduct and desires of those who control capital and the state (Hacker, 1975, p. 12). This first reason why teachers are subject to the influence of business, then, is structural or economic and coercive. In liberal states like Canada, economic organization is given by the superordinate position of commercial interests and priorities (Macpherson, 1965, 1972). Accordingly, teachers as wage workers must operate within the ambit of possibilities which liberal commerce proscribes. Even the Keynesian modifications on governance have not changed the fact that economic organization is essentially that given by the pursuit of private gain (Hacker, 1975).

The second reason why teachers are influenced by business can be described as superstructural, psychological, and defensive. Just as the relations of production follow from the manner in which resources are allocated and used, and just as social relations are ordered by property relations, so the essential features of property and social relations are incorporated and represented in psychological processes such as identificatory patterns in general and ideation in particular. Accordingly, the ideas of the rulers and harmless or diversionary notions are the ruling ideas (Harris, 1971, p. 48; Fromm, 1962).

Even within the circles of conventional wisdom, Galbraith's (1968) analysis of these matters is recognized. As he and many others have shown, publicly financed activities provide services to business and a major market as well. What Galbraith (1968) calls the private or corporate planning sector (assisted by the state) organizes itself around the operations and financial support of the public sector. Thus, the financial and coercive power of the state subsidizes and augments the power of corporate entities in their ordering of productive and social relations. This arrangement intrudes on the educator in the form of research and development products and services (which bring profit to the owning class) and justificatory ideologies (Krathwohl, 1977; Oettinger & Marks, 1971) whose general character discourages analysis and criticism. The

visibility and financial influence of business people enable them to create demand for the products and ideas which serve their interests (Galbraith, 1968) and threaten or actually restrict educators' access to higher pay, reasonable respect, and other desired objects and conditions. They can even extend their power network by arranging the emplacement of alternative educational systems (e.g., "C.B.I." and educational satellites) (Berry, 1977, p. 5) and represent them in ways which suggest great numbers of teachers are replaceable. Moreover, recent accounts describe how research, ideas, and practices are affected by politically inspired changes in emphasis from grants to contracts based on solicited proposals (R.F.P. or "requests for proposals") and "pork barrel" programs (Berry, 1977, p. 5) which tend to favor the entrepreneur over the academic (Krathwohl, 1977, pp. 9, 14). Perhaps most important of all, they can create demand for their wares (Oettinger & Marks, 1971). According to Krathwohl (1977) "materials . . . currently are the major products of educational development which are being depended upon to bring about change" (p. 13). And such development is increasingly dominated and directed by commercial firms.

Finally, business people, through their control of the character and content of mass mediated culture (Rosenberg & White, 1964, 1971), can harness public support for their points of view and solutions to conditions they not only create but define as "problems" as well. So we see that business "realities" can become the reality of teachers, business solutions can become educational solutions, and business ideology can become the educators' ideology. Indeed, ideological features of business culture are easily found in education.

Examples of the latter sort come easily to mind: individuality, creativity, and self-actualization are obvious cases (Travis, 1975). A plethora of cant has convinced many teachers that these unavoidably exclusive qualities can be mass produced and conferred on everyone. Unfortunately, psychologists have been implicated in the encouragement of this sham.

However, it would be easy to exaggerate the degree of influence psychologists have in this matter. For individuality, creativity, and self-actualization have always been emphasized in the self-serving ideology of national and international business (Laski, 1962). And psychologists, like teachers, are not immune to business influence (Reigel, 1972, 1978). In North America, since business is culture and culture is business, psychologists, like teachers and others, can take business ideology to be "common sense" rather than ideas which serve owning-class interests (Harris, 1971, p. 21; Laxer & Laxer, 1977).

For these reasons, business influences on psychology deserve examination. The Canadian case requires that such analyses include recognition of the branch-plant and hinterland character of our economy (Clement, 1975; Davies, 1972; Davis, 1971). For as Cairns (1974) and Liskeard

(1971) have shown, the operations of commerce know no borders, and intellectual capital follows material and financial capital. Said the poet Mathews: "The ruling class has no country. It has only possessions" (1976, p. 115). And such possessions are well kept in a cloak of protective ideas (Lumsden, 1970a, 1970b). How, then, might psychology in Canada's hinterland economy be influenced by international business?

OF MONEY AND MANNERS IN HINTERLANDS

For generations Canadian officials have promoted the investment of American capital in Canada. Since investment access has been remarkably unconditional, American investment has been heavy and concentrated (Canadian Forum Editor, 1971; Laxer & Martin, 1976; Levitt, 1970). Consequently, American capital dominates our economy and culture, and this has produced a great number of politically and culturally significant effects (only some of which can be mentioned here). First, investment has been concentrated in capital-intensive projects which use American equipment and technology, which are integrated with U.S. production complexes, and hence preclude the necessity for (and reduce the feasibility of) developing Canadian manufacturing and related ventures which would employ, develop, and be controlled by Canadians. Second, industries in which U.S. capital has been invested have usually had their operations integrated with American "parent" corporations. Accordingly, a division of functions (like a division of labour) which entails a dependency of the branch plants on the superordinate parent companies has been created. The branch plant imports trained personnel and the expensive products of U.S. research and development. In return, Canada sends cheaper raw or unfinished materials to the U.S. (when this is convenient for the "parent") along with profits, licence fees, and interest. This structural integration of the two national economies has produced a Canadian dependency on the U.S.A. not only for capital and manufactures but also a wide range of functions and products — including research, ideas, and scholars (Drache, 1970; Laxer, 1973; Laxer & Laxer, 1977; Lumsden, 1970a, 1970b).

Consequently, American-concocted psycho-educational prescriptions for the cure of socio-cultural pains are regularly imported into Canada with American professors, books, and mass media fare (Davies, 1972; Gibson, 1974; Lumsden, 1970; Mathews, 1973). The volume and combination overwhelm the less publicized views of Canadians who, while less well financed, have the unappreciated advantage of knowledge about and concern for their own history, culture, circumstances, and people.

Some additional observations and conjectures about effects produced by our envelopment by American capital and culture are relevant to an analysis of business influences on Canadian psychology and schooling.

Hinterland people seem to be influenced by metropolitan people just as aspiring persons are influenced by successful models, as children are by visible and powerful adults, and workers are by owners. Perhaps it is because of this dependency or relative lack of power, which they share with the aspirant, the child, and the worker, that they are so influenced. In any event, everywhere one looks in the hinterland, one can discern evidence of domestic dependency and metropolitan influence.

Our military groups are "co-ordinated," and Canadians are more likely to look to the Pentagon or Colorado Springs than to Ottawa if they want to take our military pulse. As indicated previously, our investment, production, distribution, and marketing patterns fit in with American plans; and no Canadian who is interested in the wonders of large-scale financial legerdemain believes that the Canadian Stock Exchange influences this country's finances in as great a measure as does the New York Stock Exchange. Just as financial arrangements for Canadian governments and business are frequently made in New York, so are wire service dispatches and television news clips edited there (Warnock, 1970, pp. 122-124). Similarly, Canadian habits of diversion are more frequently organized around the desires of the men who run the U.S. entertainment industry than they are by the fare of Toronto or the goods of Montreal (Lumsden, 1970). Moreover, the American-produced pulps and papers that fill our news racks and book stores are placed there by American-owned distribution companies. Similarly, motion pictures, television programs, and more serious fare are imported in abundance from the same source. Just as the industrial research and development on which we rely is carried out primarily in the U.S.A., so Canadians habitually look to the same country for cues as to psychological and educational theory and practice. Our lack of emphasis on research and advanced studies in many fields, notably in education and the social sciences, betrays a tradition of reliance on the U.S.A. Instructional materials, ideas, and personnel are imported along with assumptions about what is significant, problematical, or remediable. Thus the character of such research and scholarly activity as is undertaken in Canada is predominately American in execution, style, and content. Our resources are risked on the shifts in interest that "grant farmers" at Harvard, Stanford, and M.I.T. show through their principal organs, and sometimes these movements truly are risky shifts. In sum, the operations of virtually all our major economic and cultural institutions force us in this hinterland to attend to (and thereby encourage us to adopt) metropolitan models of reality and conduct.

This matter of following leads that are seldom rooted in our own circumstances — this custom of relying on foreign examples that are not always ordered by intellectual considerations — leads to the final portion of this analysis.

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Like teachers, psychologists' ideas and practices are disordered by political processes. Although this may seem strange to some people, all psychologists (since Freud) should recognize the plausibility of Ingleby's (1974) assertion that "psychologists . . . are talking politics much of the time without knowing it" (p. 324). Ingleby (1974, 1976) argued that psychologists, like other professionals, serve a maintenance function for the existing distribution of power. He said:

We are all industrial psychologists: and our knowledge is molded by our role in precisely the same ways as that of the psychologist whose contract describes him as such. . . . Adaptation of people to the social structure is our yardstick, not the adaptation of social structure to people. . . . The psychologists' . . . job is to service the institutions . . . correspondingly, he will take as his independent variables those that can vary independently of that system, and will hunt around for causal factors which have nothing to do with the actual form of our civilization. (1974, p. 322)

The psychologist who would meddle with the distribution of power forfeits the support of powerholders and invites punishment from them.

As we attempt to bestow benefits on individuals through research, instruction, or therapy, we can lose sight of the basic fact that any given entity is many things at once. When we deny that fact, we can mislead ourselves and others while innocently producing unanticipated epiphenomenal effects.

While Ingleby may be harsh with us, it behooves all psychologists to reflect upon his characterization of the "social" role of psychology. For he has implied that we are able to serve an order of social privilege and the interests of powerholders because we hide from ourselves and others the fact of our doing so:

Psychology can perhaps be understood as having the same role socially as the conscious ego has individually: at both levels, since (as T. S. Eliot put it) "human kind cannot bear very much reality" the symbolizing mechanism will be engaged in constructing defenses against the experience of things as they are. . . . (Ingleby, 1974, p. 323)

Although some psychologists might be offended by the assertion that more than a little of the substance of psychology is politically ordered, certain facts cannot be ignored. Consider the dependency of psychologists. Who will deny Paul Goodman's (1966) observation that "in the end, unless an hypothesis involves big cash, its author cannot afford to pursue it, though he used to love it" (p. 38)? Funding sources have been increasingly inclined to support only research which has utilitarian value as seen by the funder. And virtually immediate pay-off is increasingly demanded (Berry, 1977, p. 3; Krathwohl, 1977; Sears, 1975).

Moreover, Cronbach (1975, p. 124) has observed that publications policies influence psychologists' deeds and thoughts, too. And Sears

(1975) noted that psychologists not infrequently are ardent pursuers of respectability and that "shifts in research interests sometimes seem faddish" (p. 68). In addition, Gergen (1973; 1974) and Riegel (1972) have described how social movements have left their marks on psychology. However, popular demand tends to get captured and transformed in commercial culture (Travis, 1975), and the impact of these transformations is as readily detected in liberal society's psychology as are the durable contributions of social movements. The fact is that the pursuit of money is not foreign to psychologists. Indeed, psychologists sometimes contrive the commercial transformations (Britt, 1970; Ingleby, 1974) as they tend their notable but not unique acquisitive tendency (Green, 1972). This attraction to money may be implicated in the fact that psychologists have, as Sears (1975) said, "certainly . . . encouraged" the acceptance of the belief that society's problems could be cured by psychology (p. 69).

These examples of politically tinged, non-intellectual factors which influence the content of liberal society's psychology and education do not comprise an exhaustive list. They do, however, illustrate how the character of such domains are formed and deformed. I am doubtful, of course, whether the factors I have mentioned by themselves account for the present shape of psychology. However, their undeniable influence is likely to be more hurtful than helpful to the discipline and man's understanding and welfare.

Other observers concur that psychology is quite seriously defective in important respects. For instance, in recent times one finds statements of the following sort in the *Annual Review of Psychology*:

Most research — the vast proportion of research — in personality is inconsequential, trivial and pointless even if it is well done. . . . Personality theory is . . . in sad shape. . . . (Sechrest, 1976, pp. 2-3)

and:

Many feel that social psychology is in a period of crisis. There is no reason to feel things are much different for those who study personality." (Phares & Lamiell, 1977, p. 113)

These are devastating assessments but unexceptional cases (Anderson & Travis, 1979).

Gergen (1973) is one of the many referred to as feeling social psychology is in trouble. He expressed strong doubts that social psychology could overcome its intrinsically self-defeating qualities and become a viable, predictive science. Sears (1975) has made a similar assessment of developmental psychology. He said:

Child development was formed by external pressures. . . . [It is] a product of social needs that had little to do with science qua science. [It is] directed

toward fulfilling social rather than purely intellectual needs. [It is] a product of the demands for social usefulness. (pp. 3, 4)

Sears stated that child development is prone to faddism resulting from the spread of concern about "some practical issue needing a quick solution" (p. 3), and offered the following candid admission:

Neither child psychology nor the other branches of developmental study has produced any awesome breakthroughs that have had sudden beneficial problem-solving effects. . . . This is never likely to happen either, for the problems on which society wants help are ones that represent massive difficulties in . . . the social system. (p. 66)

This eminent psychologist, then, finds both grave deficiencies in the psychology of development — which Schmidt (1973) claims is inseparable from education — and political influences which are connected with these deficiencies.

While the foregoing illustrative material focuses on particular areas of psychology only and is not exhaustive of the entire field, assessments of this sort lend support to the notion that psychology, at least in North America, is politically disordered. Hinterlands can ill afford branch plants which produce such fare, and educational psychologists who would receive and live off such fare risk consignment to homes for unemployed neurotics. These implications notwithstanding, a consideration of the entire picture and alternative explanations for what is seen is in order.

One alternative is obvious. For these statements about the condition of psychology remind one of the sobering assessment of psychology which Koch (e.g., 1969) has been offering repeatedly over the years. He has contended that the durable knowledge within psychology is rather more modest than one is sometimes led to suppose. He has insisted that psychology's "hard knowledge has been uniformly negative" (1969, p. 66), and that it cannot be a coherent and cumulative science because of the open and dynamic nature of the psychologists' domains of investigation (p. 67). The implications of this possibility should also be taken seriously by educational psychologists. Such considerations would help us be more modest, honest, and circumspect about what we aspire to do and lead others to expect of psychology (Campbell, 1975).

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Where does all this leave the educational psychologists who orient themselves to the politically disordered domains of education and psychology? While I share some of my thoughts on this question below, I do not want the reader to assume that my suggestions comprise a comprehensive view of the educational psychologist's role. Since I have been concerned primarily with the political question, I offer only a few ideas in relation to that question.

The prime suggestion is that we reassess our domains of responsibility, and I would mention two areas of concern, the first of which entails a look backward. In 1929, Freud (1972) identified one realm of responsibility which has been too much ignored by educational psychologists:

That the education of young people at the present day conceals from them the part that sexuality will play in their lives is not the only reproach which we are obliged to make against it. Its other sin is that it does not prepare them for the aggressiveness of which they are destined to become the objects. In sending the young out into life with such a false psychological orientation, education is behaving as though one were to equip people starting on a Polar expedition with summer clothing and maps of the Italian Lakes. (p. 71)

In addition to providing sound advice about specific content, this suggests that educational psychologists have a unique function: after reorienting ourselves more toward human reality (and somewhat less to "human potential") we should take seriously our responsibility for keeping educators informed about the state of human psychology and honest in the assumptions they make and the information they use. We must debunk grandiose ideological dreams. Too often, we have been remiss in this regard, and one consequence is that curriculum and instruction people who rely heavily on psychological material commit the errors (about which Freud wrote) on a grand scale. We must caution the unwary about the dangers of replacing content with technique — especially when the latter has no stable foundation. Moreover, we should counsel educators to be modest in their claims, objectives, and expectations — and heed our own advice. This seems especially appropriate given the modest character of our current understanding of human psychological processes. Furthermore, attention to limits is necessary for a realistic assessment of possibilities.

Too frequently, education people have done harm to themselves and others by over-extending themselves (that is, claiming too much) (Travis, 1972; Travis, 1975). We must help education people realize that there are important pedagogical implications entailed in not only the intellectual distinction between "needs" and "wants" but in the psychological, socio-economic, and political distinctions entailed therein as well (Macpherson, 1972). And again, educational psychologists are especially well situated to disabuse people of unwarranted faith in the power of psychology and schooling to cure the world of its pains and deficiencies. An absence of public support is our just dessert if we continue to exaggerate our importance (Rappoport & Kren, 1975, p. 839).

Psychologists, particularly educational psychologists, should be more visibly active in exploring and describing the limits of human educability, and more vocal about the limitations schools and therapy have with respect to the promotion of human welfare. Their scholarship should equip them to do this better than virtually any other group. However, psychologists in North America can, on past performance, be fairly

accused of being more active in obscuring those limitations than illuminating them; they can be charged with encouraging exaggerated claims about what can be accomplished through schooling and therapies. Little credit can be taken for promoting understanding of the minuscule impact schooling and therapies make on the elimination of man's miseries, defects, and deficiencies. Only rarely do we see a psychologist who is knowledgeable and honest enough to assert that the unpleasant features of liberal economies are not to be extinguished through schooling and therapies. The responsibilities that attend the possession of special knowledge about human limitations affecting the welfare of humankind are obvious, but they have not been well handled by psychologists. Educational psychologists could improve this record by promoting the sharing of such knowledge. The occasions and taste for hostile treatment of those persons and processes which exacerbate civilization's discontents would thereby be diminished. People, at least in our own hinterland, would then be less inclined to substitute schooling and therapies *for* politics, and they would be less prone to the error of treating schooling *as* politics pure and simple. We want much more, but we need no less.

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