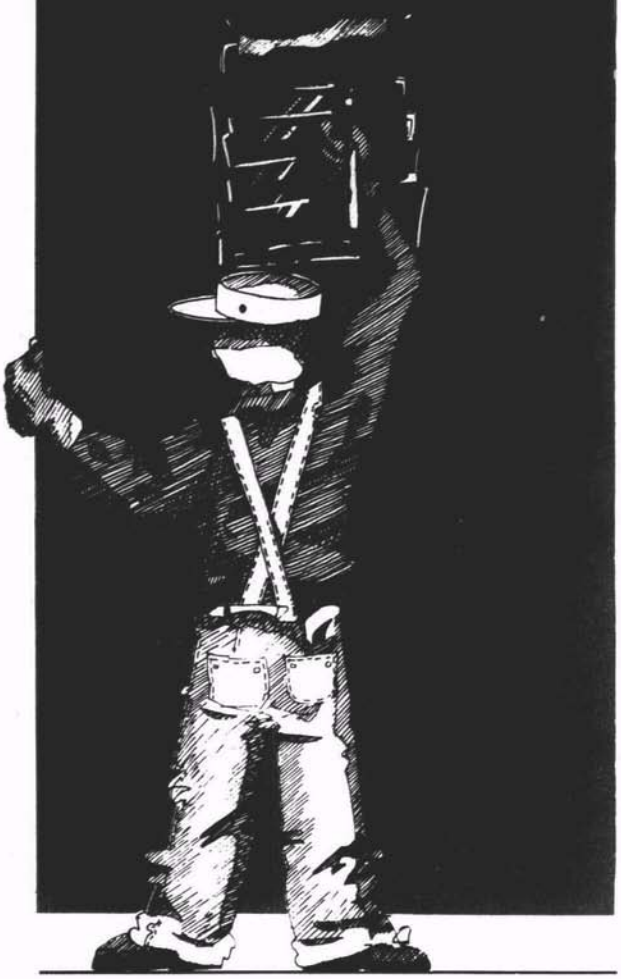
Who Transmits Values? The Public Schools

John K. Burton, Thomas C. Hunt, and Terry M. Wildman



Moral education, which has always existed in our schools, can be justified by any of five common needs.

Public sentiment has been building recently around the presence of affective education in the schools. This widespread concern (what can/should we do?) represents a shift from America's historical view of "affective" education in the public school. Since their inception, the schools have been charged with the responsibility for transmitting morals, values, and attitudes. This was a relatively simple task when communities were religiously homogeneous. However, America has gradually shifted into an era of cultural pluralism, and this phenomenon when combined with the disallowance of both prayer and Bible reading in the public schools has resulted in the teaching of "affect" based on secular grounds rather than on religious grounds.

Increasingly, parents, theologians, and legal scholars are voicing fears of First Amendment violations. In fact, some are contending that this "secular humanism" is assuming the role of a new religion (see, for example, Arons' 1976 discussion of parents' rights where values or beliefs instruction is concerned). Our purpose is not to refute these claims; rather, our intention is to put affective education into a realistic perspective and to focus on the need for affective education in public schools.

It is possible to contend that in light of the research (Lockwood, 1978) that affective curriculums have such little impact on students that the question of whether or not schools should involve themselves is a moot one: namely, since it does not seem to matter, why worry about it? This argument merely buys time, however, since few would seriously argue that morals and attitudes have a genetic basis. If morals are learned it may be assumed that eventually a technology will be developed to teach them systematically. It is critical, then, for the educational community to begin to study the controversy surrounding the issue particularly if that community is to have input into the ultimate policy decisions that are certain to be forthcoming.

Affective Education

Since the publication in 1956 of the now classic *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook I, The Cognitive Domain* (Bloom and others), there has been interest in developing similar taxonomies in the other two domains: the affective and the psychomotor.

The fact that Bloom and others even mentioned the affective domain reflected the beginning of the decline of the domination of the behaviorists in the tradition of John Watson and the rise of what Abraham Maslow has called the "third force" or humanistic movement.

In 1964, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook II: The Affective Domain* (Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia) was published. While most educators do not consider this work as technically complete or as useful as the Bloom and others work in the cognitive area, it did establish a framework for examining affective outcomes. Similar to the hierarchical model for processes proposed by Bloom and others in the cognitive domain, Krathwohl and others describe a system that begins with the establishment of interests and appreciations that later form the basis for attitudes and values that are ultimately incorporated into the character of the student. A recent definition of affective learning offered by Ringness (1975) reflects the current boundaries:

> Affective learning deals with the emotional aspects of one's behavior—the influences on our choice of goals, and the means we choose for attaining them. Those aspects include our emotions themselves; our tastes and preferences, attitudes and values, morals and character; and our philosophies of life, or guiding principles (p. 3).

The growing numbers of publications that address the area of affective learning attests to the popularity of the subject with educators and teacher trainers. A few of the major works include: *Summerhill* (Neill, 1960); *Personalizing Education* (Howe and Howe, 1975); *Values Clarification* (Simon, Howe, and Kirschenbaum, 1972); *Humanistic Education Sourcebook* (Read and Simon, 1975); as well as programs such as Magic Circle (Bessel, 1968) and Man: A Course of Study (Curriculum Development Associates, 1965). There are many other examples. It is appropriate also to note that there have been some critics of the trend (Back, 1972; Coulsen, 1972; Lieberman, Yalom, and Miles, 1973; Schaar, 1975a, 1975b).

Religious Historical Antecedents

To the casual observer, the concern with morality in public education may appear to be a phenomenon of our day. This is not so. As the educational historian Michael B. Katz (1976) has written:

> . . . we should ponder the implication of the fact that public schools always have been more concerned with morals than with minds. In reality, moral and intellectual outcomes can never be severed. Still, it would constitute a minor educational revolution if the emphasis, or primary goal, of public schooling shifted from the development of character to the cultivation of intellect (p. 403).

Religiously homogeneous Puritan Massachusetts provides one apt example of Katz's contention. The schools, as well as the church, were concerned with the moral development of their charges. The students not only studied the catechism as a separate topic in school, they also studied the alphabet heavily laced with moral instruction as illustrated by the following passages from *The New England Primer:* "A: In Adam's Fall, We sinned all; B: Heaven to find, the Bible mind; C: Christ crucify'd, For sinners dy'd" (Ford, 1962). The *Primer,* which sold approximately three million copies between 1700 and 1850 (McCluskey, 1959), was an agent of the schools of Massachusetts to produce moral, as well as (and perhaps superordinate to) literate, citizens.

Morality also was a vital concern to the advocates of the common school movement in the mid-nineteenth century. Horace Mann and other school leaders envisioned moral training as an indispensable function of the common school. Mann, who advocated "common-core" Christianity for the public schools, was indignant when he was subsequently accused of being antireligious by some of his contemporaries. He responded that common schools were indeed religious and concerned with morality. As proof of this position he cited the reading of the King James version of the Bible in schools, in his view the only "authoritative expounder" of Christianity (Mann in Cremin, 1957).

Textbooks provide another example of the moral thrust of public schools. Not only were some of them biased against non-Christians and non-Protestants, particularly Catholics, they also, as in the case of the popular *McGuffey Readers* (of which approximately 122 million were printed between 1836 and 1920), attempted to inculcate a Bible-based, nonsectarian set of values. The *Readers* reflect social as well as individual moral concerns. For instance, a lesson in the *New Fifth*

Reader was titled "Religion, The Only Basis of Society." In it two pages were devoted to the explanation of how the very existence of society depends upon God and supernatural religion (McGuffey, 1866).

Protestants and Catholics alike believed that true education must be based upon morality, which in turn was founded upon religion. As the public schools became more organized and centralized in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, nondenominational Protestantism was replaced by "Americanism" in the public schools, with the exception of schools in the South. Citizenship education replaced "common-core" Christianity. The *Seven Cardinal Principles* in 1918 provide one illustration. One of the seven aims of secondary education, the *Report* declared, was "ethical character" of the students. Schools needed to become more active in this realm, the *Report* announced, given the decreased influence of home and church in the field (National Education Association, 1918).

Teacher education is another area that supports historian Katz's assertion of school's concern with morality. Good character was an important criterion for gaining admission to the normal schools and for obtaining and maintaining a teaching position. However, there are other bases besides historical, on which to argue for affective education.

Social Needs

Justification for moral education today can be made on the basis of any of the five most common types of needs: normative, felt, expressed, comparative, or anticipated (Bradshaw, 1972; Burton and Merrill, 1977). Normative need refers to a situation where what exists is less than some established standard. While there are obviously no established moral standards many people have expressed dismay over incidents such as Watergate, Koreagate, and My Lai as well as the increasing incidence of shoplifting, vandalism, and other phenomena that may reflect a general decline in moral standards relative to those of the past.

Felt need is synonymous with want. It is usual to identify such needs by simply asking people what they want. Recent Gallup Polls reflect the public's "wants" in regard to public schools. For instance, the 1977 poll recorded that 83 percent of those persons who had heard of the "Back to Basics" movement favor it, 11 percent are in opposition (Gallup, 1977). Included in the "basics" were such affective items as "respect for teachers" and "respect for elders." Sixty-seven percent of those responding in 1976 felt the schools should "take on a share" of responsibility for the "moral behavior" of children (Gallup, 1976). Finally, in 1975 a resounding 79 percent favored moral instruction in schools, contrasted with only 11 percent opposed (Gallup, 1975).

Expressed or demanded needs are similar to the economic principle in a capitalistic society that if people want something they will create a demand for it. It is the step beyond felt needs where money is placed on the line. The increasing support for private schools on the part of a sizable percentage of the American public offers evidence of the willingness of citizens to spend money for value-centered or moral education.

A comparative need exists when the characteristics of a population that does receive certain goods or services are similar to the characteristics of a population that does not receive them. It may be argued that if some people have enough money to bypass public education to receive moral education then those who do not have the necessary money are faced with a comparative need.

Anticipated or future needs are related to planning for the future. At a simple level we try to build roads and buildings that will not only serve present needs but also those anticipated in the future. Toffler's (1970) discussion of "future shock" may be interpreted as justification for training our children to meet the moral demands of an uncertain future. This last type of need is closely related to the final justification that is offered: problem solving.

Problem Solving

More and more emphasis is being placed on producing students who can problem solve rather than simply reproduce a body of knowledge. Ringness (1975) calls this the difference between "training" students and "educating" them. Training produces students who react the same all the time (for example, respond in the same way) whereas educating produces students who react differently (problem solve). If public education is to educate students to problem solve in a future we can only speculate about, it does not seem reasonable to teach these cognitive strategies or processes in an affective vacuum. To do so would merely perpetuate the dualism that has been inherent in psychology since its inception as science, a dualism that may be traced through the history of philosophical thought (Needham, 1978). It is this dualism that is reflected when we attempt to divide affect from cognition. While this may be useful for purposes of discussion or perhaps research, problem solving in fact is a holistic process.

A person who has cognition without affect is labeled a psychopath or sociopath. A person with morality who lacks cognition (as reflected by a failure to appreciate facts) is at best a fanatic, at worst a



John K. Burton (left) is Assistant Professor; Thomas C. Hunt (center) is Associate Professor, and Terry M. Wildman is Assistant Professor; all at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg.

psychotic. Imagine trying to educate a generation of students in problem solving without morality. Obviously such an endeavor is patently impossible, but to the extent that it was successful we would foster a truly frightening group of future adults. If public education is to continue to educate the vast majority of our people, do we want the majority of our future adults to decide such issues as test-tube babies, euthanasia, and cloning in the absence of some moral or affective framework?

The point that we make here is that no matter what alternatives are provided, and no matter who decides what the affective curricula should be (although a broad involvement of all concerned groups in the community seems most appropriate), there always has been, and will continue to be, a need for affective education in the public schools. This need has been expressed throughout the history of public schools, is being expressed at this moment in myriad ways, and will continue to be important to future generations. EL

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