Curriculum Theory: Give Me a "For Instance"

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Introduction

Often, in our attempts to make sense out of social and intellectual movements, we use guideposts to set off the route our subject has taken. The publication of Origin of Species in 1859 is frequently taken as the starting point for a massive intellectual upheaval that went far beyond the realm of scientific inquiry alone. There is, of course, nothing in the curriculum field comparable to Darwin's revolutionary theory. Nevertheless, we do have a few modest guideposts which help us mark our way in the development of curriculum as a field of study. One is the publication in 1918 of Franklin Bobbitt's The Curriculum, which set off curriculum as a field of professional specialization in its own right and not simply, as had been considered earlier, an offshoot of general educational considerations. While the publication of Bobbitt's book cannot be said to have actually initiated the movement toward a distinctive field of study called curriculum, it is reflective of that movement as it developed in the early part of this century, at least insofar as it embodied the particular assumptions and predispositions that were to dominate the thinking of those who were identified with the curriculum field for at least half a century and extending to the present. The publication of The Curriculum may be taken as the starting point of the era of so-called scientific curriculum making with all that implied for how the curriculum was to be conceived, how the development of the curriculum was to take place, and what constituted the criteria of success by which the curriculum was to be judged.

A second milestone in the development of the field was the publication, in 1927, of the Twenty-Sixth Yearbook of the National Society for...
the Study of Education. Both volumes, *Curriculum-making: Past and Present* and *The Foundations of Curriculum-making*, were devoted to a review of the state of the art as it had developed to that point as well as, in the second volume particularly, an attempt to resolve some of the controversies that had evolved in the curriculum field in the previous decade. Under the vigorous leadership of a rising young star in the curriculum field, Harold Rugg, major figures associated specifically with the curriculum field, such as Bobbitt, W. W. Charters, and George S. Counts, as well as those who were identified primarily with other aspects of education, such as William Heard Kilpatrick and Charles H. Judd, were invited to direct their very considerable energies and talents to the problems of curriculum. Specifically in the second volume, an attempt was made to resolve the growing cleavage between those, like Judd, Counts, and William C. Bagley who saw social needs and issues as the principal basis of curriculum making and, on the other hand, those like Frederick Bonser, Kilpatrick, and, in a surprising reversal, Bobbitt who saw the individual needs and interests of children as the primary curriculum focus. While the attempt to resolve the differences between the divergent ideologies left something to be desired, the Yearbook stands as a symbol of the curriculum field having “arrived.” Major academic institutions were represented, viz., Teachers College and the University of Chicago, as were some of the leading superintendents and school administrators of the country, such as Jesse Newlon of Denver and Carleton Washburne of Winnetka. The curriculum had emerged not only as a field of study, but also as an urgent and recognized concern of practical schooling.

A third milestone—in a sense, the one we are celebrating here today—was a conference on curriculum theory held at the University of Chicago in October, 1947. Two and a half years later, in March 1950, a volume comprising the papers delivered at that conference, compiled and edited by Virgil E. Herrick and Ralph W. Tyler, was published as a Supplementary Educational Monograph by the University of Chicago Press. Entitled *Toward Improved Curriculum Theory*, the monograph addressed itself most particularly, as the title implies, to a much neglected aspect of curriculum development: theory building. The preface to the volume went so far as to say that “curriculum development without curriculum theory is tragic and that curriculum theory without curriculum development denies the essential purpose of the theory” (Herrick and Tyler 1950, p. iii). If the development of theory is taken to be the crowning accomplishment within a field of study generally, then certainly, the attention to curriculum theory which was an outgrowth of the 1947 conference marked another significant stage in the evolution of curriculum as a field of study. Like the Twenty-Sixth Yearbook, this volume, although more modest in size, included many of the established and emerging leaders in the curriculum field. B. Othanel Smith opened the volume with a perceptive social analysis, pointing to what he called a “disintegrating culture” and arguing that the curriculum should be oriented toward certain collective social goals, social
reconstruction, and moral commitment. Subsequent papers were devoted to a call for a theory that would indicate how objectives may be derived, an attempt to reconcile the long-standing controversy between individual and social aspects of curriculum, a discussion of the concept of curriculum design by Virgil Herrick, an effort to spell out the organizing elements of the curriculum by Gordon Mackenzie, and an analysis of the principal topics that would be included in a theory of curriculum organization by Ralph Tyler. But beyond the merits or deficiencies of the individual articles contained in the monograph, it no doubt contributed as a whole to the identification and legitimation of an entity called curriculum theory.

**What is Curriculum Theory?**

At least since the publication of the volume, the notion of curriculum theory has occupied a major place in the thinking of those concerned with curriculum generally. Since that time, many articles on curriculum theory have been written by able scholars, doctoral degrees have been awarded, and even a journal established which is dedicated to curriculum theory. In these respects, at least, the organization of the conference and the monograph that emerged from it was a distinct success. And yet, one curious and disturbing fact emerges from the work in the area of curriculum theory that has gone on in the thirty years since that conference. Although much has gone on in the name of curriculum theory, there remains a great deal of confusion as to what a curriculum theory is, and we might even have some difficulty in actually providing a concrete and generally accepted example of what we are talking about when we use the term.

One of the problems here, undoubtedly, is that like the word “philosophy,” “curriculum theory” is used in a variety of commonsensical ways that have been accepted into general usage. Football coaches tell us they have a philosophy of coaching, stockbrokers speak of their philosophy of investment, and people generally speak of having a philosophy of life. But, if challenged to state them, their philosophies would, in all likelihood, turn out to be beliefs about how football players should train, the tricks of buying or selling in the stock market, or practical maxims drawn from something like Poor Richard's Almanac. Likewise, what passes for a curriculum theory may take the form of a list of the “tricks of the trade,” a series of steps for “how to do it,” or a set of bald assertions about what the school is supposed to be doing.

It would seem to me that there are at least three ways that one can address oneself to this state of affairs. First, we might try to be reasonably clear as to what domain a curriculum theory would cover. As the salesman in *The Music Man* says, “You gotta know the territory.” Second, we should have some idea of what form a curriculum theory would take. Theories come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. What kind of theory do we mean when we refer to a curriculum theory? Finally, and for me most
important, we could set forth an exemplar—a "for instance"—however incomplete; we could try to establish whether, in all the years that have been devoted to the central problems of curriculum, anything has emerged that in the light of our previous considerations could stand as an example of a curriculum theory. If there were such a thing, it might provide the most useful guidance of all in unravelling our problem.

In considering the first issue, the question of the domain of curriculum, it may be worthwhile to remind ourselves at the outset that curriculum theory—or any theory—has its origins in human thought, human curiosity, human activity, and human problems. Theories do not spring full blown as rarified abstractions, but evolve as a way of addressing oneself to certain situations. Theories in the natural sciences have their origins in our sense of wonder about our natural environment and, perhaps, the need to have some reliable knowledge about the seasons, the land, and the stars. Aesthetic theory probably springs from the human necessity to make aesthetic choices. Ethical theory addresses itself to issues of right and wrong behavior as they emerge from the very process of living. Theories in social science derive from the common inclination to make sense out of the vagaries of human behavior. One may ask, therefore, what distinctive human activity can we identify or what special problem gives rise to the idea of a curriculum theory? A simple answer is that deliberate teaching requires choice as to what to teach; hence curriculum development, at least, may be regarded as that activity which gives systematic attention to the question of what we should teach.

Such a question may provide a starting point for consideration of curriculum theory because the kind of activity it represents would dictate to some extent the issues to which a curriculum theory would be addressed. There is nothing arcane or mysterious about curriculum development. It does not require a high degree of technical skill, nor is it reserved only for the specially anointed; but it does present us with some enormously complex questions. At the very least, we must decide among competing options, and whether we naively take certain things for granted as a response to that question or whether we treat that question with intelligence and sophistication, we are still faced with a serious choice. People do often innocently assume that the answer to that question lies in certain defined subject areas which are to be taken for granted. Thus, they mask any sensible answer to that question by saying simply, teach history or science, and assuming that such a response satisfies the terms of the question. Even if we were to provide lists of topics under each subject heading, the choices available to one who undertakes deliberate teaching would still be countless. Furthermore, one should not rule out the possibility that the question, at least in the form that it is commonly expressed, cannot be answered. We may not, in other words, be able to answer it in the form of a list of subjects or a series of topics. The value of the question, instead, may lie in the issues it generates rather than as a question to which a straightforward answer may be
given. These issues may serve to define the scope and substance of a curriculum theory.

First, the question of what should we teach invites a justification. No reasonable person, it would seem to me, would be satisfied simply with the bald statement alone. Curriculum theory, then, addresses itself to the question of what should we teach, in part by calling for a rationale for why we should teach one thing rather than another. As the English like to say, "Why poetry rather than push-pin?" Given the fact that we cannot teach everything—a limitation imposed in part by the nature of schooling, of teaching, and of human intellectual capacities—we are obliged to provide some justification for the choices we make. And if a curriculum theory is to be anything more than an intellectual exercise, it should also provide practical guidance as to what to teach.

The second consideration implied by our central question is a byproduct of the ineluctable fact that we never simply teach history or science; we always teach it to someone. The question of who gets taught not only implies some sort of criterion that bears on the choice involved, but also raises the question of who gets taught what. In other words, we are also called upon to give attention to the question of how knowledge gets distributed both by choice and as a consequence of incidental or accidental factors. Historically, for example, a persistent point of controversy in the curriculum field has been the question of curriculum differentiation. The question of who gets what knowledge has been argued to a large extent in terms of the differing capacities or probable destinations of different groups of students and the extent to which these differences imply fundamentally different curriculum decisions for each of the identifiable groups.

A third consideration implied by our central question lies not so much in the domain of the distribution of knowledge as a kind of commodity, but in considering what effects would accrue from the study, particularly the prolonged study, of a given domain of knowledge. Presumably, the effect of studying mathematics for a long time would not be limited to the ability to perform certain specific mathematical operations, and the study of foreign languages would not be limited to the ability to read, write, and speak a particular language, but might also affect our characteristic habits of thought, frames of reference, dispositions, and ways available to us for addressing certain kinds of problems. In other words, we not only learn facts, skills, and generalizations, but our very way of thinking becomes affected by the way in which we address ourselves to what is studied. Therefore, in developing a curriculum, we do not simply name the things to be taught and provide good reasons, but we try to enunciate rules for how those things should be taught. We have every right to assume that the way in which something is taught is of utmost importance in considering the question of what we should teach because it is, in fact, a determining factor in what we do teach.
Finally, there is the complex question of how the various components of the curriculum are interrelated. Even if we were to consider answering the question of what should we teach in terms of a list of subjects or topics, we would need some justification not only for each component as a separate entity but for the curriculum as a whole. The terms balance and integration are frequently used to express this persistent concern for the interrelationship among the component parts of the curriculum.

Out of the central question of curriculum, what should we teach, we are confronted, then, with a series of problems which arise almost inevitably when we address ourselves to it: (1) Why should we teach this rather than that? (2) Who should have access to what knowledge? (3) What rules should govern the teaching of what has been selected? and (4) How should the various parts of the curriculum be interrelated in order to create a coherent whole?

The Forms of Theory

We turn now to the question of theory itself and particularly what sense of the word theory can reasonably be applied to the central concerns of curriculum as we have identified them. Time permits only a brief examination of this enormously complex question, and I shall restrict myself to the four senses of theory that Ernest Nagel has identified. Nagel (1969) first refers to what he calls the "positive sciences"—physics, chemistry, biology—where the term "theory" is usually meant to designate a system of universal statements. Generally speaking, these statements are removed from actual phenomena but are nevertheless appropriate to things that happen in the real world. Nagel has in mind such theories as Newtonian mechanics involving gravitational theory, Maxwell's electromagnetic theory, and evolutionary theory. One feature of this type of theory is that it relates, to some extent at least, to empirical findings. The basic questions that control curriculum development, however, do not seem to lend themselves to anything as grand or as all-encompassing as this first sense of theory that Nagel identifies.

The second sense of theory is somewhat more restrictive than the first but is generally of the same order and, like the first sense of theory, depends to a large extent on empirical verification for acceptability. This type of theory may be more restricted in the sense that it covers a smaller domain (in the way that Boyle's law does) or it may be dependent to some extent on statistical or quasi-statistical evidence (as is the law of effect in psychology or Grimm's law in linguistics). While offshoots of certain psychological theories may find their way into educational theory generally, there is very little reason to believe that the normative questions that characterize curriculum lend themselves to empirically based, law-like generalizations such as those described. The reasons for why we should teach this rather than that, for example, depend only to a limited extent on empirical findings.
The third sense of theory that Nagel distinguishes is neither a systematically organized set of statements nor a single explicit generalization. Rather, it is an attempt to identify the factors or variables which "constitute the major determinants of the phenomena that are investigated in some given discipline" (p. 9). Here, Nagel's principal example is Keynesian economic theory, which is, more or less, a set of variables on which the economy (presumably) depends—national income, total consumption expenditure, total investment—and which does not state exactly what the relationship among these variables is. This theory gives us certain things to look for but essentially says nothing about the relationships among the things that are named. In the field of curriculum, we do have examples of the attempt to identify such major components of curriculum theory as society, the individual, and the disciplines of knowledge. We are sometimes told that a relationship exists between these factors and curriculum development, but the nature of this relationship has not, to my knowledge, been adequately explicated. Unlike Keynesian economic theory, we have been unable to posit and verify even the most tenuous relationships among the identified variables.

The final sense of theory to which Nagel refers is "any more or less systematic analysis of a set of related concepts" (p. 10). It is essentially an attempt to clarify what may be initially vague concepts, and thereby, unpack the nature of the problems under consideration. Here, empirical considerations play a relatively minor role. It is this last and most vague of Nagel's senses of theory that we may find most appropriate to a consideration of the central problems of curriculum. Since the central questions of curriculum are normative ones, in the sense that they involve choices among competing value options, the question of empirical verification comes into play only in a peripheral sense. What is critically important is conceptual clarification.

Our question now is whether there exists a "more or less systematic . . . set of related concepts" in which the concepts considered are those that are central to the problems in the curriculum field. It seems to me that a rather fully articulated theory in this sense is the one enunciated by John Dewey, and it is this theory that I believe may stand as our exemplar. Unfortunately, as in the case of his theory of value, Dewey did not treat the central concepts involved in one place and at one time. Therefore, if one were to establish Dewey's curriculum theory, it would be necessary to draw from several sources and a full explication of that theory would require a far more extended treatment than is possible here. Nevertheless, there may be some benefit derived from even a cursory sketch of his theory.

The central core of Dewey's curriculum theory is neither an empirically verifiable generalization nor an experimental finding but a metaphor. It is through the lens of this metaphor that Dewey is able to scrutinize the central issues that define curriculum and so to clarify the concepts that arise from these problems. The metaphor itself was not
invented by Dewey, but he characteristically gave it a special meaning and significance that was only partly evident in earlier versions.

One of the early versions of this metaphor as applied to curriculum issues was expressed by an Italian Enlightenment philosopher, Giambattista Vico, who though somewhat obscure in his own time, is now enjoying a well-deserved resurgence of interest and acclaim. Only one of Vico's works, a very early one published in 1709, deals directly with education. The series of lectures which was published under the title *On the Study Methods of Our Time* is distinguished, however, from other pedagogical treatises of that period in that its argument (at least the part of it that deals with curriculum matters) rests on a fundamental principle and was not, as was much more common, a series of practical maxims on when such and such a subject should be introduced, nor helpful hints on how one should approach the teaching of a given subject. The "law"—in effect, the metaphor—that Vico enunciated embodies the idea that the analogy between the development of the individual and the development of the human race may be pertinent to the question of what we should teach. The analogy asserts that just as the individual traverses through a series of stages from infancy to adulthood, so also has civilization reached its present state through a series of identifiable stages. What is more, this parallelism is dictated by *nature*—not nature in the sense of an uncultivated or primitive state, but nature in the sense of a natural law. The question of what to teach is presumably an outgrowth of this natural law. Vico added that each stage, both in an individual's development and in the historical development of mankind, is discernible through a characteristic use of language in that stage.

The metaphor recurs in an educational context in *Emile*. Rousseau had earlier identified five distinct stages in the history of Western civilization (see Lovejoy 1955), and, in *Emile's* individual development, we find those same stages represented at least in rough outline (Rousseau 1938). We are guided as to the question of what we should teach *Emile*, not simply by his own stages of psychological development, but by the historic stages that run parallel to them. The "natural law" to which Rousseau appeals, in trying to answer the question, is really one of correspondence between two sets of stages.

*John Dewey's Curriculum Theory*

We turn now to a direct examination of Dewey's curriculum theory. Although time permits only a broad sketch of the development of Dewey's theory of curriculum, any consideration of the evolution of Dewey's theory must begin with his own reaction to and criticism of the prevailing curriculum ideas of the day: the late nineteenth century controversy between, on the one hand, the old education—represented in part by William Torrey Harris, the powerful and articulate Commissioner of Education—and, on the other, the American disciples of Johann Frederich Herbart, a zealous group of educational reformers. The conflict
between the Herbartians and Commissioner Harris reached a furious high point at the Department of Superintendence meeting held in Cleveland 1895, when Harris, speaking for the Committee of Fifteen, used the term "correlation" in a manner unacceptable to the Herbartians. Although the Herbartians themselves were by no means agreed on how correlation should be defined, the term in general referred to the coordination of the various component parts of the curriculum, the fourth of the major considerations identified earlier as integral to systematic curriculum development. Correlation provides one example of a concept arising out of the central curriculum question which, presumably, a coherent theory of curriculum would serve to clarify. Dewey's own notion of the coordination of school subjects was forged out of the criticisms he directed both at Harris's notion of correlation and at the Herbartians (with whom he was nominally identified), as well as in reconstructing the fundamental metaphor of recapitulation as it evolved at least since the period of the Enlightenment.

Dewey by no means rejected the importance of the general notion of correlation—only the particular versions that had been expressed in turn by Harris and the Herbartians. In effect, Dewey thought that there were simply too many different subjects being taught in school and that new subjects were being incorporated into the curriculum constantly and old subjects splitting up. There appeared to be what he called a "congestion in the curriculum" (Dewey 1966, p. 185). How, he asked, can all these subjects be integrated and made to reinforce one another? "The child starts," Dewey said, "before he goes to school at least, with a unity of experience, not with a number of different subjects or studies. The fundamental problem then is how this unity of experience has come to be broken up into this number of isolated school studies" (p. 185). What bothered Dewey was that the notion of correlating arithmetic, science, and geography, for example, already assumed that there were different things to be correlated. Dewey tried to raise the more fundamental question: "Where do these . . . subjects come from if they have been introduced bodily from without, already cut and dried and distinct?" (p. 185). Dewey insisted that these studies, abstract and remote as they may appear, actually were arrived at through a gradual differentiation out of and within the unity of the child's own experience. This led Dewey to ask, "What has been the course, the procedure of that gradual differentiation?" (p. 186). He was at this point more interested in the basis for breaking up the unity of experience into a collection of school studies than he was in enunciating a principle around which the various components may be interrelated.

Specifically, Dewey criticized Harris's concept of correlation as expressed partly in the report of the Committee of Fifteen (1895) as well as in Harris's (1898) Psychologic Foundations of Education. Harris identified five coordinated groups of study each representing a distinctive and necessary phase of experience. Harris believed that out of the five groups of study one could evolve a comprehensive definition of the whole of
experience. Language studies, for example, represented in outward form the thought or intellect of mankind generally. Dewey complained, however, that there was no real principle of unity involved. Although one may posit a relationship between each of the studies or groups of study and a phase of experience, there was no principle integrating the various phases of experience. A field like mathematics, Dewey argued, "sprang up, not out of the ground, not out of nature, but out of human life and human needs. . . . [The branches of mathematics] were necessary tools for doing things that had to be done, just as much as plows and harrows were. . . ." (1966, p. 191). Even if we were to agree that a subject like mathematics now has an independence and self-existence, it is simply the result of a process of development from mathematics as a basic tool.

When Dewey turned his attention to the Herbartian version of correlation, he was faced with another sort of problem. Unlike Harris's notion of correlation, the Herbartians did have an integrating principle—a theory, you might say—out of which their concept of correlation arose. The principle involved the aforementioned metaphor of recapitulation, but they expressed it in a much more literal form than had Vico or Rousseau. The culture-epoch theory, as it was called by the Herbartians, was recognized by Dewey as the theoretical basis for the selection and organization of the components of the curriculum. Correlation rested actually, as Dewey pointed out, on two fundamental assumptions. The first was the familiar parallelism between the stages in the development of the human race generally and the stages through which the individual passes on the way to maturity. The second assumption was that the material representative of each of the historic stages was the appropriate basis on which instruction of a child should be carried forward. The appealing feature of this general notion to Dewey was that it took into account both the psychological and social aspects of experience. The culture-epoch theory, however, was for Dewey a far too literal interpretation of the general notion of recapitulation. Is it worthwhile, for example, to retain a child's education at a given stage, simply because the human race has tarried a long time in the parallel stage of historical evolution (Dewey 1966, p. 203)? Another facet of the theory to which Dewey objected in particular was the fact that, in practice, literary works were used to represent to the children the stages of historical development and thereby coordinate the various elements of the curriculum. Thus, in the early stages of a child's education, emphasis would be placed on the "savage" stage of human development through the myths and legends that may have evolved during those periods. Any attempt to correlate instruction around the literary residue of any given stage in history was bound to be artificial and unrewarding for the child. With all that, the Herbartian theory of culture-epochs did provide a rationale for what should be taught and one of the concepts to arise from that basic theory, correlation, addressed itself to the issue of how the things were to be taught as well as how interrelated.
To Dewey, the theory was full of deficiencies but, perhaps, not worth abandoning altogether. What Dewey did essentially was to shift the basis on which the central metaphor rested. Instead of resting the case, so to speak, on the concurrence between historical and individual stages of development, Dewey made his case on epistemological as well as psychological grounds. The historical parallelism enunciated by the Herbartians, in effect, was immaterial. Even if there were some validity to the notion, there would be no reason to believe that appropriate materials for study would be found in each of the historical stages. What was important was the epistemological question of how knowledge came to reach its present abstract and refined form. What would be reconstructed in the curriculum, therefore, would not be the historical stages in the development of modern civilization, but the progressive evolution of human knowledge from its origins in practical basic activity (what Dewey called "occupations" in the Dewey School). Through this reconstruction, we would be restoring knowledge which appears at first to be so remote and obscure back to its origins in human experience. Through the concept of experience, Dewey hoped to tie together the two elements that constitute the heart of any curriculum theory: the child, on the one hand, with its crude, unsystematized, concrete forms of experience; and, on the other, the abstract, highly refined, and systematically organized experience of the human race. Out of the range of activity and experience of the child, we would select those elements that offer some promise of leading on to an ever more refined and logical grasp of experience as embodied in the disciplines of knowledge. The metaphor was thus transformed from one where we view the child's educational development through certain defined stages of human history, to one where the child in its individual development follows the same course as civilization generally in achieving knowledge.3

Unfortunately, time has permitted only a sketchy outline of Dewey's evolving curriculum theory. It is worthy of years of study. But even in such a gross outline form, some features of an entity we can call curriculum theory may become clear. It may, at least, help us to understand what a curriculum theory is not. It does not provide us with an immediate print-out of a new and foolproof curriculum. It is not a powerful drug that will cure the ills that plague modern programs of study. It does not relieve us of the necessity to make ad hoc decisions based on practical experience. It does provide us with a central principle. That principle addresses itself to the question of what we ought to do when we teach children and youth. As one example, Dewey's theory provides us with a justification for engaging children initially in the same basic occupations—cooking, growing, building—that our early ancestors did as a way of leading them in the direction of our present state of knowledge. This is particularly important in a technological society where the relationship between knowledge and human affairs has been obscured. Specialists, not the population generally, now perform the tasks of provid-
ing heat and illumination, constructing shelter, and getting food to the table. Knowledge and the appreciation for knowledge as instrumental to human affairs can be restored, however, when activities such as these become the starting points of a deliberate reconstruction of the evolution of knowledge in the curriculum. Knowledge, for Dewey, was a social inheritance to which all of us are heirs and not something reserved for an elite few.

As a normative theory, a curriculum theory is not, essentially, verifiable through empirical evidence, particularly the sort of empirical evidence that uses the criterion of efficiency to test how quickly certain means accomplish presumably desirable ends. Dewey's curriculum theory tells us, for example, something about desirable means and ends at the same time. Certain forms of empirical research may have a bearing on the theory—such as what is teachable, particularly what is teachable at given stages of maturity—but that evidence, though pertinent, may not be regarded as definitive. Ultimately, a curriculum theory provides us with a lens through which we can view the problems we must face in curriculum development. If it is a poor lens, it will obscure more than it clarifies; or, it may magnify and thereby exaggerate certain features of our problem and throw others out of focus. But if it is a good theory, it will disclose to us much more of what is vital to curriculum than is visible to the naked eye.

NOTES

1. For a perceptive analysis of the Yearbook, its accomplishments and weaknesses, see Walker (1975a; 1975b).
2. For Harris's report and the discussion that followed, see Harris (1895).
3. See, for example, Dewey (1972a), (1972b), and (1972c); also Dewey (1902), and Mayhew and Edwards (1966).

REFERENCES


Yes, We Have No Curriculum Theory: Response to Herbert Kliebard

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It was with great interest that I read Professor Kliebard’s paper because its appearance happened to coincide with a professional identity crisis that has occurred for me periodically since I entered the curriculum field. This crisis stems, in part, from being caught in the familiar dilemma that develops from the dichotomy between theory and practice. One finds oneself choosing to be either a theorist or a practitioner. The consequence of this decision is that one can often feel a certain sense of incompleteness in what one is about. Within the context of most traditional disciplines, this is an easily understood state of affairs. Curriculum, on the other hand, is not a traditional discipline. While it is quite obviously a practical endeavor involving the construction of something called a curriculum, that part corresponding to theory in a traditional discipline is lacking in curriculum. Instead, much of what is entailed in curriculum rests on other (foundation) disciplines. That is, curriculum development is involved with questions based on ideas and assumptions...