Discussion

HERBERT KLIBEBARD

I really don't have any major objections to what Mike has said. I think his comments are most pertinent. The part I have some puzzlement about, and which I've never been able to resolve in my own mind, is the point that Mike made about applied fields. While we can come up with examples of applied fields, say, engineering, I've never been quite able to accept the fact that curriculum is an applied field of philosophy or of any of the traditional foundations areas. The reason for that lies partly in some of the things I said in the early part of my paper. That is, all fields, even the super, high-powered, theoretical fields like physics, had their origins in very ordinary, practical sorts of activities, what we would now call applied activities. Thus, while these fields now present themselves, in a highly theoretical form, as kind of the parents of other fields, it seems to me that there may not be an absolute difference between what is now considered a parent field or a foundation field on the one hand and an applied field on the other. Although I recognize this as a very significant point, it still bothers me. I can't quite accept the notion of curriculum being an applied field. I think it is the kind of field that is evolving. Perhaps it is premature for us to give consideration to theoretical questions at this point. It may well be the case that theoretical questions ought not to be addressed in such a deliberate way. They should perhaps be allowed to emerge from other things that we do. But it seems to me that it would be hard to make a case that, in some ultimate sense, a theory would not be appropriate.

THOMAS HAWKINS

I'm puzzled as to what sense curriculum theory is theoretical. What does it accomplish? What kind of tool is it? Is it theoretical in the sense that physics is? In what sense is curriculum theory, theory?

MICHAEL DIAMONTE

I don't think it is theoretical. I think it is purely applied theory.

RALPH TYLER

There has to be some way to connect different enterprises that people are engaged in. I can see the value of identifying illegitimacy if you are trying to transfer an estate or something. But I don't see the value of doing it in connection with various types of activities that we carry on. The fact that we do have what we call a curriculum in the school raises the problem of design. Now, we can deal with this problem in two ways. We can use trial and error. At times, this may well be the only course of action. I'm certain that when schools first started there was a great deal
of trial and error. But I believe there is a more sound way of approaching the problem. That is, we try to understand and establish some kind of order out of the chaos. This means that we may have to rely on some kind of systematized knowledge, modes of organizing experience, concepts that are useful, that can help to guide the practical enterprise of designing an educational program. Thus, what I'm looking for in theory is a kind of guide that would be helpful in answering the questions that face the curriculum designer.

Take, for example, the case that Dr. Kliebard emphasized so strongly: selecting what is to be taught. When considering this question, we come to realize, say, the limitation of time. We know that makes a difference. We know that some things are going to have a lasting effect. Should that be included? How do we decide? As we approach these questions, we begin to realize the necessity of guiding principles. If you carry on the related view that the application of the principles, whatever their source, will serve to answer more systematically and more soundly the questions you started with, I think you've got some protection against the danger of getting a theory that will not work. Also, I think one needs to understand the conditions under which a theory is made. This is something that may be helpful in determining the adequacy of a theory. I think it is in that fashion that we keep looking for ideas that may come from behavioral psychology or from Dewey's work. We test notions out; these become useful; and, hopefully, we attain order and a way of looking at the next problem that comes along. There is nothing omniscient about it in my opinion.

There is another point I would like to make. It's one thing to talk about the individual philogeny following the ontogeny of the race as a way of approaching curricular problems, as the Herbartians did. But I don't think that view is too helpful now, particularly when we consider our young people today. These young people come to us in school already having seen television, and making bread is not something they see at home. Some of them think that bread comes from the bakery. Through television, most of them have come to acquire a certain notion about the world. I don't believe that a notion like the culture epochs theory is helpful today. I think you've got to draw your theories and check them against the problems you are dealing with at the moment. If I were working as a curriculum consultant, for example, I would find out what I could draw from a variety of sources. This may help in trying to get a more dependable answer to questions than if I were to depend on just trial and error.

BARRY FRANKLIN

I was wondering if Dewey explains anywhere how one is to lead the child from social occupations to organized knowledge. From my readings of Dewey and what is contained in The Dewey School, I have not been able to find an adequate explanation of how we should proceed.
HERBERT KLIBERD

I'm not sure I really can provide an actual course of action by which this could be done. It does seem to me that if one starts with the notion of making clothing, for example, that you could start with the shearing of sheep and proceed to the sorts of ordinary technical knowledge that would be required in making this messy woolly stuff into a garment. And from that technical knowledge you would go into more refined knowledge. But I think that the question of the advance of technology which Dr. Tyler raised is also extremely significant to this question. It is true that we don't bake bread anymore, by and large. Instead of making our own illumination, we just flick a switch. But I think this is precisely the point that Dewey was trying to make: that the educative experiences which were once part of our living no longer exist for most of us in a technological society. In a sense, the more technological we get, the more imperative it becomes to restore those original, basic activities to the school curriculum. Therefore, the process of making illumination or making soap, even though we know we can buy soap in the store, becomes the beginning of a process by which we understand the way things get mixed together and what happens to them when they are put together. It's a very difficult question to say precisely how this would develop. I doubt whether Dewey addressed himself directly to it. Admittedly, it's just one of the things that is a gap in the theory.

UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT

Professor Kliebard: In his 1899 lectures, Dewey addresses the Herbartian notion of correlation. He talks of occupations in terms of expression, communication, and construction. Can these be looked at as points of correlation for the traditional studies?

HERBERT KLIBERD

I doubt if he meant them as points of correlation. I think he meant them as starting points for more abstract and refined ways of thinking. What he says about expression and art is that we have to start at the beginning with a very fundamental impulse of drawing, putting our own natural, creative impulses to some task. As we express these impulses, as they are given free reign in the school, we begin to refine them and refine them until ultimately they get to an advanced point, not necessarily Michaelangelo, but a point beyond the crude impulse of the child.

THOMAS HAWKINS

Doesn't his book, How We Think, address itself to those matters?

HERBERT KLIBERD

To some extent, although there, I think, he was perhaps more enamored than he was at other times with what might be called the scien-
tific mode of thinking. And I think he tried to generalize that and didn't address himself sufficiently to the kinds of things Dr. Greene is talking about, particularly to the idea of an aesthetic mode of experience distinct from the linear thinking that we often suppose characterizes scientific thinking.

NORMAN BAUER

Professor Kliebard, Dewey also addresses himself to that subject in *Experience and Nature* where he developed the notion of coordinative activity. In that book and in *Democracy and Education*, he argued that occupation cannot be thought of in any narrow, traditional common-sense form. That is, to think of an occupation as baking bread is not what Dewey was talking about. What he meant, in fact, was that as man pursues his ends, he can be said to be engaged in an act of occupation. The occupation then becomes something which I'm actively pursuing; it is not some traditional interpretation of occupation.

HERBERT KLIEBARD

Yes, that's the psychological side to the point he was making. I didn't address myself to that.

BARRY FRANKLIN

Do you think we have any other theories that we could build curriculum theory on? It seems to me that Thorndike could easily have addressed himself to the three or four questions that you addressed.

HERBERT KLIEBARD

Yes, I think he would address himself to the question of what should be taught by responding essentially, as I understand him, to what most people use. What most people would use is what should be taught. Let's take the teaching of reading. We all know the Thorndike word list as the basis of so many readers. These are organized in terms of word use. What gets taught first is the word most used, what gets taught next is the next most used word, and so on down the line. So in his answer to the question of what should be taught is an unexpressed criterion of utility or just plain use which dominated his thinking when he addressed himself to the other questions.

UNKNOWN PARTICIPANT

Professor Kliebard, in your discussion here you took as basic the question, what should be taught. In Dewey, however, isn't it more what should happen?
HERBERT KLIEBARD

Well, I think he may have thought that at one time, but he ultimately came to reject it. His principal criticism, for example, of what came to be known as progressive education, as he expressed it in his last book on education, _Experience and Education_ published in 1938, was that there wasn't enough attention given, as he saw it, to where you were going. That is, there was too much of one activity following another. His criticism focused on the kind of thing Mike Diamonti was describing: one hour you do cooking and the next hour you do something else, and so on. For Dewey, what was lacking at that period in his life was the direction that he felt was necessary to activity, a direction that was implied by the notion of progressive organization of subject matter.

NORMAN BAUER

I'm concerned about your choice of exemplar. An exemplar presumably is something that would serve as a model to examine the elements of whatever it is we are dealing with. And my reading of Dewey indicates that he is very difficult at times to grasp, even though in his _Democracy and Education_ you can find the specific elements that would pertain to a theory as an exemplar. I would like to know, then, why you chose Dewey as an exemplar. Was it because you were sensitive to the industrial model reflected in the beginning speaker and you wanted to balance it? Or was it because there were no others available? The reason I ask is that Beauchamp, for example, has created a very keen and clear position which can serve as an exemplar, too.

HERBERT KLIEBARD

Well, I suppose that I'd have to admit that one of the reasons for choosing Dewey is that I got tired of some of the things I was saying at other places, and I just kept boring myself. I tried to come up with something a little different. I think also that the exemplar I wanted to define should be able to exhibit what I think to be a principal feature of what I think curriculum theory would be like. I think the industrial model that you mention probably does as well.

But I wanted to get away from the notion that somehow curriculum theory ought to follow the lines of theory in physics, geology, or any of the other fields. I wanted to exhibit in a sense what I think would be one of the distinctive features. If I were daring, if I had the guts, I think I would have tried to say that there is a metaphor at the heart of every theory, including ones in physics, geology, and all the rest. And I think that, ultimately, someone will be able to make a case for them. But the particular thing I wanted to examine in the case of Dewey was the way in which he took an existing metaphor, found problems with it, things he could not rest easily with, and transformed it into something different. I didn't say this particularly in the paper, but I was following
in this sense a theory of metaphor that is most closely identified with Max Black. It is a kind of lens theory of metaphor by which he means that what you're doing essentially is looking at one phenomenon through a given lens. In the case of Dewey, he is taking the lens of recapitulation, looking at the phenomenon of schooling, and saying that these are the features that become clear to him while using that particular lens. It may also be the case with natural scientists and social scientists. But I didn't feel prepared at this point to make such a pronouncement.