

EDITORIAL

It would be surprising if members of the editorial committee — any more than the *Journal's* writers and readers — were to be in complete accord on all educational matters. A case in point is Robert Lawson's editorial in our April 1970 issue, and what will be presented here.

With much (perhaps most) of Lawson's statement I am in agreement. With him, I fear that all too often the effect of schooling is "the preparation of children through a long process of mental intimidation and subjugation to endure boredom, to work *without* intellectual motivation or honesty, and to accept superficially an authority they do not accept in their hearts." If it were not proposed as the sole function, I would enthusiastically agree that "the proper function of education is the establishment of a psychological, intellectual and moral base which undergirds present social life." I do, however, want to question the assertion that "the school's *exclusive* [italics mine] task is intellectual" — whether or not in a "narrow" sense.

It may be that the phrase "but not in a narrow sense" is intended to convey a broader kind of qualification than I have been able to read into it. In any case I would propose that any attempt to single out exclusively "intellectual" components for school programs is impossible as well as undesirable. All education — even the learning of reading and writing — goes on in some sort of setting, of context. Although it is frightfully easy to ridicule some of the educational slogans of our century, the "whole child" does, in fact, come to school. The work of educators and social scientists the world over attests the interdependence of learning, and the importance of physical and emotional, as well as intellectual, social and moral factors in academic learning.

While I do not intend to turn this editorial into a plea for the fine arts in schools, I do think that it would be sad — after decades of slow progress — if art, music and drama were to be cut back or crowded out of the program because of a view that they are somehow irrelevant to education and the work of the schools. One can argue about the degree to which they are or are not "intellectual." The fact is that they have provided, for millennia, an index of the cultural level of civilizations. And it can be argued, as with Franz Cizek, that they indeed constitute one of the basic starting points for education.

It is something of a coincidence that Stuart Langton, our initial contributor to this issue, addresses himself in one part of his article to an aspect of this question. "The revolution of meaning," he writes, "is essentially a new posture toward experience. It consists of a diverse number of forms and activities that aim at expanding the quality of

human experience. It rejects the excessive rationality of technological man and asserts the value of emotive and physical dimensions of existence. Spontaneity, physical affection, basic communication, aesthetic sensitivity, and bodily awareness and excitement are all features of this revolution." Some of its emphasis may in practice be misguided: I for one believe that smoking pot and even listening to rock music will in historical perspective turn out to be among its least significant manifestations. But I believe equally that education may well fail even in its "intellectual" objectives if it excludes the broad kind of experience to which Langton refers.

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