

PERSONAL AUTONOMY THROUGH EDUCATION

by

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## ABSTRACT

The concept of personal autonomy as an educational ideal is analysed from its etymological roots of autos and nomos. The autos is shown to be most closely associated with authenticity and this concept is explored from existentialist roots. Authenticity's points of contact with reason are examined and the authentic individual is shown to be a deep, reflective evaluator of his own motives but existentialist radical choice of self is shown to be essentially incoherent. The nomos is linked to reason and the criteria it picks out. The limits upon reason are considered but its significance to personal autonomy is shown to be considerable; reason is argued to embrace feeling and a dimension of practical reason. The adjective, personal, is not redundant within personal autonomy as an educational ideal and is held to have significant moral implications for autonomy. A Millian analysis of the 'endowment' of a person is considered and perspectives from both developmental psychology and an ancient tradition embracing persons and virtues are shown to relate to autonomy.

The second part of the thesis considers the relationship of personal autonomy to three related concepts in education: authority, freedom and paternalism and points of contact are clarified. The final part examines a place for personal autonomy within educational activities in schools. It is argued that personal autonomy should be exercised in school-based education as its exercise is the only sure way to develop it. Therefore a perspective of education as a series of practices in which the learner should be enabled to engage exercising a measure of personal autonomy is the theme of the final part. However, the purpose of the thesis is a clarification of

fundamentals; it does not purport to present a curriculum for personal autonomy.



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PART 1THE CONCEPT OF PERSONAL AUTONOMY

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CHAPTER 1      AUTHENTICITY

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## Introduction

It seems generally agreed among those who have written about personal autonomy that authenticity is an integral part of that autonomy<sup>1</sup> and it is my central aim in this chapter to analyse and determine the place of authenticity within personal autonomy. The etymological roots of the term, authenticity, are in the Greek, authentēs, and, therefore, direct attention to the nature and implications of the autos and the personhood within the individual's personal autonomy, rather than to the nature of the nomos which informs, in part, its autos. (Consideration is given to the autos and the concept of a person in Chapter 3.) An object thought to be authentic is regarded as fundamentally genuine and in no way counterfeit or spurious; it is the object in its original, first-hand state - thus an authentic portrait by Leonardo is one painted by that artist from life and properly ascribed to him. The object is truly what it pertains to be, therefore, good faith, sincerity and truth are implicit attributes in authenticity.

When used in connection with individual persons, authenticity applies to the autos or self and expresses itself in individual subjectivity and awareness: "... we must regard a person as the unique ground of thought ... in the sense that he has a circumspective understanding of his situation infused by his present concerns."<sup>2</sup> The individual is taken to be not only an institutional role-player but also a self-constituted in his own right and shaped in accordance with his own thought and action in practices in which he engages. His authenticity may be identified within the three criteria of autonomy presented by Dearden: "(1) that he forms his

own judgements on what to think or do; (2) that he is disposed critically to reflect on his own first-order judgements; and (3) that he is disposed to integrate his actual belief and conduct round these first-order and reflective judgements."<sup>3</sup>

Authenticity, then, should express what the individual really thinks, feels and is; it should express the nature of the "real" self; the individual pursues authenticity by seeking to know himself in order to remove himself from inauthentic being. An individual may occupy many institutionally defined roles, but he remains only one true or real self which is wholly genuine and reliable as the expression of what he is; at root, he has, as Polonius advises his son, but one self to which he must be true.

Nevertheless, all persons live, in some measure, within a social world and in defining their relationships with other individuals, groups or society at large, they may deceive themselves about the situations in which they operate. Sartre's description of bad faith illustrates self-deception: the woman who cannot admit to herself the implications of a man's advances and the waiter who loses himself in his role are two Sartrean examples. Even personal sincerity does not escape the threat of bad faith, in Sartre's view, because, "Total, constant sincerity as a constant effort to adhere to oneself, is by nature a constant effort to dissociate oneself from oneself."<sup>4</sup> Thus a teacher making an exposition to a class may convince himself that their quiet, apparently attentive manner shows they are learning what he intends. Only time will tell whether his construction of the situation is only self-deception.

In Section 1 of this chapter, authenticity is first outlined within existentialism with particular reference to Heidegger and Sartre; existentialist thought has been a major influence upon psychiatric medicine and holds considerable implications for the individual. Some criticisms of existentialist authenticity are examined in Section 2, but authenticity has implications for education and social life in general, therefore its connection of the individual to the world of others is explored and maintained. Section 3 describes the relation of authenticity and reason and points to some limits of reason. Authentic choice is the subject of Section 4; the incoherence of existentialist radical choice is described and the concept of evaluation by the individual is held to be more meaningful in relation to choice. Section 5 draws some tentative implications for education from authenticity as a preliminary to Part 3 which argues for opportunity for individual authenticity within autonomy as part of educational practices.

(1) Existentialist authenticity

Dearden accepts that the preoccupations of existentialists are important in clarifying the concept of personal autonomy: "Such preoccupations include resistance to unthinking acceptance of social norms, the search for a kind of personal salvation from absorption in collectives, and the important role of choice and decision, in defining one as an individual."<sup>5</sup> He considers that Heidegger's perspective of authenticity is that of personal autonomy but lacking a nomos such as reason in Dearden's own analysis. However, authenticity is linked with the autos and the etymological origins of the concept reveal connection with authentēs and the self. The concept of authenticity is not, itself, expressive of a nomos, the absence of which from their concept of authenticity Dearden arraigns Heidegger (and Sartre). Indeed, where these existentialists lay claim to a nomos subsumed within their description of authenticity, they must, because of the difference in meaning between the terms authenticity and autonomy, be overstating the case. But Dearden, in turn, by equating personal autonomy and authenticity diminishes the significance of the latter because it lacks a nomos rooted in rational criteria. And although a nomos grounded in reason should not be undervalued, individual authenticity may not only be a reflection of that rationality; an investigation of existentialist authenticity may give substance to this contention.

Heidegger in his unfinished work, Being and Time, and Sartre in Being and Nothingness are presenting ontologies; they are concerned to elucidate the nature of Being. Heidegger, preceding Sartre, writes out of an ancient philosophic tradition from the Greeks and mediaeval philosophy and sees himself, perhaps, as a phenomenologist

in this old tradition of philosophic enquiry. There seems also to be Nietzschean influence in the emphasis upon authenticity in Being and Time. Heidegger writes to explore Being as the "most universal" concept which he describes as Dasein, Being - there or perhaps most simply translated as human being:

"Thus to work out the question of Being adequately, we must make an entity - the inquirer - transparent in his own Being. The very asking of the question is an entity's mode of Being; and as such it gets its essential character from what is inquired about - namely, Being. This entity which each of us is himself and which includes inquiry as one of the possibilities of its Being, we shall denote by the term 'Dasein'." 6

Dasein is the whole of the person; it expresses the unity and centrality of man in connection to the nature of Being. Thus man is not to be analysed into separate elements - cognitive, affective, psycho-motor functions etc. - man or Dasein 'is' and is to be regarded as a whole. But there are many aspects of Being: history, nature, space, life, Dasein, language ... are some examples - all are combined in Being. Therefore in whatever way Being operates, it remains wholly the Being itself. Studies based upon an analysis of human knowledge - history, mathematics etc. - are considered incoherent in themselves; only by a process of hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry can Being be identified within such material. Thus Being, or Dasein, seeks understanding of itself and lives through itself in attempting an existential analysis of itself so that it may express an understanding of itself; the world, things about us, may only be understood through Dasein and the expression of things which Dasein makes in language.

Man is, then, a Being in the world. When he meets things in that world there must be some difference and distance between them;



Dasein, as the expression of Being—there (in the world) only exists in the sense in which it reaches and is aware of those things.

Heidegger's analogy of the tree contrasts the peasant whose care and association with the tree will, perhaps, centre on the harvest it may yield; the artist cares for the colour, tones and lines which the object presents to his perspective; the boy's care is for the tree as an adventure in climbing or as excitement at the prospect of surreptitious scrumping. The reality of what the tree is would be something apart from the subjective illumination which different perspectives provide; it would be akin, as a concept, to a Platonic Form. The tree as an object present-at-hand in the world is retained by Heidegger as significant because of the care and concern it generates for the individual and the same feeling may be attributed to living creatures and, indeed, to persons; for example, Billy's care for his hawk, Kes, irradiates his existence.

Much of Dasein's existence is "fallen". Being falls into the world of the everyday and this condition of "everydayness" Heidegger associates with inauthenticity akin to a state of heteronomy. It is a condition in which Dasein can lose itself in apparent safety in the world of others and its individuality is immersed in that of mankind as a whole. In Sartre's Being and Nothingness, a person who escapes into bad faith wishes not to realise the freedom of Being-for-itself, hence there follows the hiding of oneself in roles and the deceiving of oneself as to others' intentions.<sup>7</sup> Being-with-others enhances the power of those others:

"One belongs to the Others oneself and enhances their power. 'The Others' whom one thus designates in order to cover up the fact of one's belonging to them essentially oneself, are those who proximally and for the most part 'are there' in everyday Being-with-one-another. The "who"

is not this one, not that one, not oneself, not some people and not the sum of them all. The "who" is the neuter, the "they." 8

Being-with-one-another dissolves the individual's Dasein into the Being which is that of 'The Others'. These disappear as meaningful, individual and distinct and become "they"; we, as individuals, are submerged in what "they" do, think, say ... "We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as they take pleasure; we read, see and judge about literature and art as they see and judge; likewise we shrink back from the 'great mass' as they shrink back; we find 'shocking' what they find shocking."<sup>9</sup> "They" are the ones always responsible - never me. And many, particularly school pupils, offer as an intended justification for thoughtless acts the statement that others did it too. Being is "levelled down" to the average - "an existential characteristic of the 'They'", so that; "Everyone is the other, and no one is himself."<sup>10</sup> And so ... " ... one's way of Being is that of inauthenticity and failure to stand by one's Self."<sup>11</sup> Everydayness makes inauthenticity the normal mode of existence. Words and language are just talk; truth and originality are submerged in inauthenticity. Activity, filling every minute of every day is just escape, or "falling" into an inauthentic mode of Being and is a result of what Being has allowed itself to do in choosing a mode of existence.

The attainment of authenticity involves Dasein "brought before itself", escaping the reassuring inauthenticity of mindless conformity:

"If Dasein discovers the world in its own way and brings it close, if it discloses to itself its own authentic Being, then this discovery of the 'world' and this disclosure of Dasein are always accomplished as a

clearing-away of concealments and obscurities, as a breaking up of the disguises with which Dasein bars its own way." 12

Dasein is brought before itself by a mood of 'angst', anxiety - perhaps better translated as dread or uneasiness. It is to escape from this painful experience that Dasein retreats into inauthentic Being, but when able to face anxiety Dasein faces a lack of foundation to human existence. It is eventually conscience which recalls man from inauthenticity to authenticity. Flight into inauthenticity is to escape thoughts of the limited time left to his temporal existence; the growing imminence of his death which is the only time that man establishes completeness of his identity with himself stimulates conscience. To reach authenticity is not simply that the individual attains facility with rational criteria with which to judge his position in the world. To possess himself authentically is more an expression of mood, feeling and awareness which the individual applies and in attaining authenticity it is tacitly acknowledged that persons act and think on grounds which are largely not based on rational criteria - choosing friends, liking or disliking people etc. Dasein is "thrown" into authenticity, in Heidegger's analysis, to attain a "moment of vision" in the realisation of the nature of itself by leaving behind the usual, that which is taken for granted in the world. In reflection, the individual escapes the everydayness of the largely meaningless hustle and bustle of the day to day to attain that lucid vision of the authentic nature of his Being; at that point he is himself. "Authentic existence can begin only when we have realised and thoroughly understood what we are."<sup>13</sup> Each person is fulfilled as himself and holds onto his own priorities and purposes and so, as his own

authentic self, can then realise his potential in the world. The authentic individual should never conform unthinkingly to the second hand. He gains a realisation of the passage of time in an historical perception of past, present, future. Time passes in instants and each instant could be the moment of authentic realisation which characterises Dasein. The individual realises himself by choice of the authentic in himself, in the sense of a radical choice of self to which Sartre refers and which is discussed in Section 4 below.

Heidegger and Sartre's concept of the authentic individual is one which vests that individual with the power to change his life and the nature of his Being. The future is his to realise as he chooses within the limits of his "facticity", the factual circumstances in which he is. If he is born a slave, for example, he has the authentic capability to change that aspect of his life by winning his freedom, by escaping, even by death - if escape is an imperative to his authentic realisation of himself. Both Heidegger and Sartre place great weight upon the responsibility of the individual in his relation to the world, which is a relationship in which, "... it is no longer possible to draw a distinction between cognition, emotion and will."<sup>14</sup> An affective core exists within the personality which influences the direction of an individual's cognition, it seems.

Sartre imposes a major responsibility upon the individual to control his own situation in the world and goes so far as to deny implications of the "givenness" of the world: "... everything which happens to me is mine ... the situation is mine because it is the image of my free choice of myself, and everything it presents to me is mine in that this represents me and symbolizes me. Is it not I who decide the coefficient of adversity in things and even their unpredictability by deciding myself."<sup>15</sup> Thus a war in which

I am mobilized is my war because I do not get out of it and for failing to do this, I am to be considered as having chosen it. Human reality has no excuses, in Sartre's view; it carries this most heavy burden of responsibility.

## (2) Authenticity and others

If authenticity is to be a meaningful concept illuminating the autos of autonomy, it must hold meaning in terms of the individual's relationship to the world of others. Heidegger's reference to the realisation of authenticity in a "moment of vision" which does not necessarily last for more than a moment and Sartre's emphasis upon the individual's capacity to create the world as his own and reject the objective givenness of it seem to leave the person separated from the world of others. He seems to be placed in a situation of withdrawal from the world of others in order to experience that sense of his own being which Heidegger calls authenticity; the implication seems to be akin to that of a mystical-religious experience in which there is no god. Indeed, if this were to be the nature of existential authenticity it would carry little weight with regard to implications for education, for example.

Inauthentic existence is devaluing because the individual is just lost in the crowd; he loses himself in conformity and is unable to express himself authentically. But existentialism emphasises care and concern as the individual's link to the world. The example of the tree cited above and the reactions it might arouse link that object to persons. If nothing matters to the individual and his response is merely automatic and stereotyped, he will always sink into an unthinking conformity. He will 'go through the motions' but he will not see the point of things for himself. He will just

not care. No school pupil will work to the best (norm referenced) standard of which he is capable, in, for example, intellectual learning unless he cares enough about it and it matters to him; it may, however, be more appropriate for him to seek to express his authenticity in work related to a criterion referenced target. Such things matter to pupils who care for themselves for without self-concern there may be little chance of concern for things, achievements, or, indeed, other persons.

Authenticity involves the caring for things to which values are attributed from the individual's cognitive and affective self. Dearden describes two values, "implicit in Being and Time": "...the courage which is needed to face the truth about our situation, and the freedom from illusion which the knowledge of that truth brings."<sup>16</sup> Such values articulate both our care for the world and for ourselves and Heidegger sees them as expressions of whole persons - not only as rational expression but as mood produced from emotion as well as reason. The authenticity of a mode of existence in its relatedness to the world is described in literary examples by Trilling<sup>17</sup> using Wordsworth's poem: Resolution and Independence. For no reason the poet's joyful mood changes -

"But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might  
Of joy in minds that can no further go,  
As high as we have mounted in delight  
In our dejection do we sink as low;" 18

and he encounters an aged leech-gatherer scraping a bare living in a rough, hazardous natural environment. In this loneliness, the stark authenticity of the old man's existence seizes the poet's mind and imagination. Similarly in Michael, the old shepherd losing his only, much beloved son, Luke, to the "dissolute city", went

many a day to the sheepfold to which Luke had laid the corner-stone as a covenant between them, "And never lifted up a single stone."<sup>19</sup> Michael's grief is so intense that it is authentically part of his being in his relationship with his son through the symbolism of the unfinished sheepfold.

Such care does not preclude reason and care is expressed in valuable human activities through the intrinsic value which such activities express: "Every valuable form of human activity depends on the exercise of a certain degree and kind of carefulness, whether it be courage as distinct from foolhardiness, love as distinct from casual sexuality, science, art, literature ..."<sup>20</sup> Such activities attach an "intrinsic" carefulness to themselves and to gain rational understanding to care for them may well involve some conscious limits placed upon some more spontaneous reaction. But, eventually, a learner, having been careful of his reasoning in an intellectual activity, for example, should reach a point of authentically orienting himself to his subject. Dearden<sup>21</sup> instances the student who learns what views have been expressed on a topic and who sets these out effectively and logically in an essay but the question still remains as to what he may think about the topic himself. That final crucial step towards an authentic understanding of rational knowledge should involve more than rationality in the individual in order for him to draw that authentic conclusion.

Existentialism has its critics concerning its implications for a world containing other persons, however; Dearden sees little purpose in attaining an "authentic condition" partly because the individual remains, "detached from any form of social life ..."<sup>22</sup> Buber writes, scornfully, of Heidegger as, "... the man who knows

real life only in communication with himself... Heidegger isolates from the wholeness of life the realm in which man is related to himself, since he absolutizes the temporally conditioned situation of the radically solitary man, ..."<sup>23</sup> Waterhouse also offers strong criticism of Heidegger and Sartre's version of authenticity in its omission of a social dimension: "My history is a history of action and interaction with others; I could not be as I am now without this formative interaction with other people."<sup>24</sup>

This argument is persuasive; the language we use is socially derived; we are not just isolated self-concepts. We are social animals and acquire our culture and attitudes from others. The individual whose authenticity is submerged in 'bad faith' may only be judged to be in 'bad faith' in terms of the nature of relationships with other persons. Hence a person authentic in himself, in Sartre's analysis, could only be so in terms of his social relationships. Inauthenticity is defined by the person losing himself in a socially defined role. Thus, Heidegger's "moment of vision" in which the individual realises his authenticity is, in Waterhouse's view, some kind of withdrawn, self-indulgence because the social world is, "... the only possible forum for the realization of meaningful authenticity, that it is only in terms of our relationships with others that we can be either authentic or inauthentic, and that the attempt to realize authenticity as purely a mode of self-relatedness is vacuous."<sup>25</sup>

However, we are not only that which others would have us be any more than we are only what we eat. And although Waterhouse makes the valid point that an individual's authenticity is to be defined within the lived world alongside others, this point does not appear to be disputed by Heidegger. The essential, basic structure



of existence he refers to as Being-in; the world surrounds this Being and it cannot exist except within a scale of life encompassing time and death which express a key sense of the world for Being. And a concern for other persons is acknowledged to be different from the world of things. Relationships, being-together, are significant in Heidegger:

"Resoluteness, as authentic - Being one's-self does not detach Dasein from its world, nor does it isolate it so that it becomes a free-floating 'I'. And how should it when resoluteness as authentic disclosedness, is authentically nothing else than Being-in-the World? Resoluteness brings the Self right into its current concernful Being-alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes it into solicitous Being-with-Others." 26

The self does not withdraw from the world of other persons but lives within it having thought, reflected, sought for an authentic identity in that world alongside others. Undoubtedly there is self-concern involved, but without it, there seems little likelihood of any other concern. The everyday world is not extinguished by authenticity, for: "In the moment of vision, indeed, and often just 'for that moment', existence can even gain the mastery over the "everyday"; but it can never extinguish it."<sup>27</sup> But as such instants of authenticity are not sustained, Waterhouse dismisses them as mystical and meaningless. It is certainly the case that Heidegger does not present a neat set of criteria by which to ensure that a person's authenticity may be judged. But Heidegger is not concerned to provide models of action; he is concerned with the exploration of ontology alone. And it would seem an aspect of a thoughtful, deep self-evaluator that he reflects to gain insight into what he really feels or thinks. Buber also accepts that the "strong man" will retire into solitude to gather his forces for the

community existence which is to come.<sup>28</sup> The Bible is replete with such examples. But Heidegger does not concede that man can ever "extinguish" the world.

Waterhouse criticises Sartre as he does Heidegger on the grounds that authenticity is not a sustainable state and that it is isolating: "There is no way that Sartre can show that an authentic relationship to myself produces authentic relations to others."<sup>29</sup> This may well be so, but we do construct the reference points of our world differently. Persons may well view the same set of circumstances in a different light. Kelly's theory of personal constructs seems to go some way to explain the differences which individuals develop and use to structure the nature of things. Now, without some basis of self identity there can be no reference points from which relationship to others may proceed and without authenticity in the individual, no other person can possibly reach that individual. And Sartrean authenticity does assert, as a necessity, the projection of the self into social concerns.

A person unable to realise authenticity because he isolates himself from the world of others (as distinct from the world of everyday habitual conformity) is one needing help in re-establishing him and his place in the world and the skilled psychoanalyst should be the means of that individual's reorientation of himself to enable him to find himself, authentically. Laing's patient, Peter, describes the effect of isolation:

"I've been sort of dead in a way. I cut myself off from other people and became shut up in myself. And I can see that you become dead in a way when you do this. You have to live in the world with other people. If you don't something dies inside..." 30

The possibility of realising authenticity "dies" in a person isolating himself from others. Indeed, some are so removed from their authentic selves that only confirmation and endorsement of their total presence gives them the strength to cope with the everyday, however, inauthentically: "In order to exist she needs someone else to believe in her existence."<sup>31</sup> Thus writes R. D. Laing of a patient of psycho-analysis suffering from a "lack of ontological autonomy"; she is reduced to panic if she is not in the presence of someone who knows her or if she is unable to evoke the person's presence in his absence. Indeed, all human interaction, "... probably implies some measure of confirmation, at any rate of the physical beings, of the bodies of the participants."<sup>32</sup>

Confirmation may be just by a smile, eye contact, a handshake, gesture or verbal acknowledgement: "The crux seems to be that it is a response by the other that is relevant to the evocative action ..."<sup>33</sup>

The existentialist search for authenticity seems to have influenced psychologists who may recognise the existence of an individual's "real" self when treatment of schizophrenia, autism or withdrawal is undertaken:

"To be 'authentic' is to be true to oneself, to be what one is, to be 'genuine'. To be 'inauthentic' is to not be oneself, to be false to oneself; to be not what one appears to be, to be counterfeit. We tend to link the categories of truth and reality by saying that a genuine act is real, but that a person who habitually uses action as a masquerade is not real any more." <sup>34</sup>

The psychologist who tries to perceive a person's authentic self is beset with the virtually complete absence of reliable criteria in trying to establish the extent to which a person's activities are truly authentic and his own. And, as Laing points out, a psychologist

may accept that schizophrenia exists in the individual, but the nature of schizophrenia denies him criteria upon which to judge it. Frenzied, hyper-activity in the individual may do no more than conceal from himself his own inauthenticity and authentic action may only be realised subjectively by the actual individual:

"The act that is genuine, revealing, and potentiating, is felt by me as fulfilling. This is the genuine fulfilment of which I can properly speak. It is an act that is me: in this action I am myself. I put myself 'in' it. In so far as I put myself 'into' what I do, I become myself through this doing." 35

However, for all of us, and certainly for the psychologist, it is vitally important that an authentic manifestation of a person's authentic self is recognised by other persons and, indeed, confirmed by them - or the individual may well lapse further into inauthenticity; such a state in its extreme form may leave the person quite disoriented having apparently lost his sense of a place in the world. His sense of his past may be lost in a dimming historical perspective which is so significant to Heidegger and those who share his view.

The psychologist will employ professional skill and experience to judge the authenticity of the individual, but lack of material criteria leave him to "feel" (in Laing's word) that a person is not "putting on" inauthenticity. And where there must always be doubt of authenticity, the individual in question ought always to have the benefit of that doubt. Therefore an asthmatic fifteen year old who maintains that his choice of career is that of professional footballer may be strongly counselled by his headteacher to aim for something else (but the former pupil I have in mind did play professional football for the national team).

However, confirmation of another person may be confirmation of a person's inauthentic self. Teachers and parents may confirm a child's inauthentic identity because they may believe some course of action is right for that child. In practice, this may well happen with young persons when they acquire those necessary dispositions to life and to others - considered specifically in Chapter 4. However, if a person's false, inauthentic self is confirmed when he reaches the age at which he can realise more intensely his own authenticity, he may either reject the relationships confirming inauthenticity or he is likely indefinitely to remain inauthentic. Thus a pupil 'guided' into a career aim which is not authentic to his own self, may not succeed if the intrinsic motivation is lacking; it may be the case that parents and teachers seek out suitable niches in life for children and pupils and these recipients suffer the consequences in an inauthentic mode of being as a result.

Neither Sartre nor Heidegger presents any idea of development of persons, but clearly children grow and do so in a social world, learning a social code in the language by which to express their thoughts and feelings. They should receive confirmation, acceptance and love as they develop into authentic individuals. The self of each, as he moves towards adulthood, should express its own sense of being in evaluating the kind of decisions which it regards as significant in attaining authenticity. It is not the task of significant adults to disconfirm the groping towards authenticity because, ultimately ...

"The capacity to experience oneself as autonomous means that one has really come to realise that one is a separate person from everyone else. No matter how deeply

I am committed in joy or suffering to someone else, he is not me, and I am not him ... The fact that the other person in his actuality is not me, is set against the equally real fact that my attachment to him is a part of me. If he dies or goes away, he has gone, but my attachment to him persists. But in the last resort I cannot die another person's death for him, nor can he die my death. For that matter, as Sartre comments on this thought of Heidegger's, he cannot love for me or make my decisions, and I likewise cannot do this for him. In short, he cannot be me, and I cannot be him." 36

### (3) Reason and authenticity

Although the individual lives and interacts with others, his self concern contains an element of spontaneity which Peters acknowledges to be akin to Socrates's 'care of the soul': "This asserts positively that there must be some feature of a course of conduct, which the individual regards as important, which constitutes a non-artificial reason for pursuing it..."<sup>37</sup> However, beyond this statement Peters seems reluctant to move because he makes reason and rational reflection the determinants of the actions of the autonomous person. The possibilities of spontaneity through authenticity he mentions only in passing, for example as Lawrence's "dark god within" (sex) or whatever possibilities there are of existentialist, criterionless choice.

It seems that authenticity is linked to motivation which fires the individual but a difficulty this presents is that a person may not know when his motives are his own or when they are gained second-hand. Feinberg contrasts the relative ease with which a person can know what his own intentions are with knowledge of his own motives.<sup>38</sup> It seems unlikely that a person can altogether transcend the culture and tradition about him in seeking authenticity; but dramatic changes of life-style or religion, for example, may

not necessarily express the authentic self and it is more likely, perhaps, that the individual will operate within cultural bounds that are largely given. Feinberg's American colleague chose Methodism as his faith when he experienced religious conviction rather than Buddhism or Roman Catholicism since that person's family and traditions were in Methodism; Feinberg (after reflection) grants that his friend's decision was probably authentic. Peters stresses the "givenness of social life"<sup>39</sup> in the context of the two elements of: the givenness of the world with respect to human response and that of time. But perhaps the greatest significant 'given' in an individual's world is that other persons are also there and that they are not for manipulation into standardized packages and a reciprocity of respect for individual authenticity should be allowed to flow.

However, the difficulty of knowing, even one's own motives quite aside from achieving understanding of others' motives may have led to undue emphasis upon the importance of rationality and rational reflection at the expense of other considerations; when spontaneity is held to be pre-eminently significant, criteria for judgement appear to be lost apart from spontaneity itself. The Dadaist movement in art rejected all previous standards and judgements; rules were rejected; spontaneity became all important. No artist's work was taken to be a model of a genre; each artist's work was taken to stand solely in its own right. But when a rationally argued model is established, the implication seems to be that it should be followed. For example, in the wake of the Secretary of State's document, 'The School Curriculum' and DES Circular 6/81, local education authorities, reminded of their statutory duties with regard to content and quality of education in their schools produced

written statements for their schools.<sup>40</sup> Such statements are models and it may be that a rationally justified model may too easily become the model for all schools irrespective of the differences between them. Such a situation may lead to a loss of both rationality and spontaneity.

Reason is undeniably a major informant of the nomos of the individual's autonomy. To the extent that knowledge is of a public nature, the expansion of an individual's knowledge will inform the nomos making the autos, the self, a more rational self. Arguments presented to restrict "... extreme forms of individualism"<sup>41</sup> are, therefore, intended to establish rationality within individual thought and reflection as the determinants of a person's activities and choices.

The autos, itself, is integral to reasoning; that self is not separate and distinct from the reasons of the nomos because the concept of autonomy involves an interlocking of both autos and nomos applied to a person. And when a person thinks, reflects, evaluates rationally he does so as a self holding the conviction that this is the appropriate thing to do. Now such a conviction may have been arrived at rationally but the great diversity of the circumstances of the human condition imposes a bewildering variety of situations and circumstances upon the individual who may find rationality alone inadequate as a basis from which to act. Reasons will hold greater or lesser weight for different persons and although different sets of reasons may in the end be rationally defensible, different perspectives, choices and actions resulting from the same reasons indicate the presence and significance of the autos within autonomy. In psychological terms these differences between persons may be stated through the personal constructs which they hold.<sup>42</sup>



However, reason ought not to be devalued in that it may be some defence against inauthenticity. Individuals may conform to the expectations others hold for them and lose themselves in inauthenticity. Reason is abused when a person allows himself to sink into a comfortable conformity, rationalizing away his authenticity. The ranks of both 'them' and 'us' express a measure of conformity even when 'we' are the non-conformists. It seems easy to conform by identification with our nation, our peer group, our social class etc.; we may lose our identity as persons to become consumers conforming to the manipulation of those who seek to ensure we learn the right responses to the economic, political or social stimuli thrust at us.

Now reason may be some defence in enabling the individual to evaluate the signals intended to make him fall, inauthentically, into line. But a case for conformity may well be made out on a basis of reason and the person who tries to maintain his authenticity in his judgements by reason alone is likely to encounter severe limits on his time, intellect, energy and logic. The information or evidence he seeks may not be available and he will be obliged to take on trust what others tell him. And what may come to count as a good reason, "... seems so much a function of upbringing, fashion, social conditions and trends which can and do vary in other times and climes."<sup>43</sup>

Rational knowledge obtained through a liberal or intellectual education may have limits to the ways in which it can inform the individual. But I do not want to devalue the significance of knowledge nor to maintain a relativist position on knowledge. Reason is a major consideration and not just the province of the academic or intellectual. There is difference between truth and

falsehood, but if the relativist is correct there is little point in teaching anyone anything since all versions express a version of the truth no better or worse than any other version.

Nevertheless, authenticity engages more than cognitive rationality. Authenticity involves the autos, the whole self and not only the intellect; the affective dimension, for example, is also of significance. Peters<sup>44</sup> argues that education of the emotions is a matter of cognition as emotions differ in cognitive content and belief; cognitive rationality informs the appraisals generating the emotions. (Discussion of this issue is presented in Chapter 2.) If Peters is correct in his case concerning education of the emotions, he may still not have the complete answer. Individuals are, throughout their lives, exposed to situations and lived experiences within the human condition and only when they are exposed to a range of experience at first hand may it be possible for them to invest something more than intellectual awareness in their developing understanding of the range of human circumstances.

In education, it may only be when the learner personally engages the process of the educational practice in question that he gains authentically from the experience. The practices may be very different in some respects from a wholly rational, intellectual education. (Consideration of the nature of a practice in the sense intended here and the implications of a practical education are explored in Part 3.) But neither should practices of an intellectual education be excluded from a learner's experience. The imperative is that the learner experiences, authentically, the nature of the practice with which he engages. A learner cannot authentically experience the practice of history unless he practises as an historian; the experience of engaging in a physical game or sport

is authentically different from a solely intellectual acquisition of rules or tactics. The enthusiasm for team games such as rugger, soccer, hockey or netball has endured in some schools partly because such activities require more than intellect from players although some of the supposed benefits of such games may be apocryphal. Clearly many experiences are injurious to persons and education is not merely the release of the individual to any first-hand experience as long as it is authentic. The task of teachers and schools is partly to ensure that worthwhile practices neither physically nor mentally injurious to the learner are the educational provision available. Authenticity as part of autonomy should co-exist with paternalism as argued in Chapter 6.

The engagement of an individual in a practical education need not exclude a liberal education altogether and some aspects of such an education, for example the humanities, may have much to offer the individual enlarging his experience. Reason and emotion may together inform the person in living the practice with which he engages himself. But the accumulation of rational knowledge does not necessarily lead to authentic depth of understanding about a person's place in the world; expertise may have little connection with authenticity.

Experts may not have proper understanding of issues affecting the human condition. Cooper<sup>45</sup> points out the limitations upon Peters's view that understanding of death is acquired by the acquisition of rational knowledge, "... integration ... in which different types of understanding interpenetrate in the spheres of knowledge which are relevant";<sup>46</sup> Cooper makes the point that doctors are no better placed, despite their expertise, to judge whether their main task is to save lives than are other persons. The person

with the greatest initiation into relevant, rational knowledge does not, necessarily, then have the greatest understanding of death. Knowledge may provide insights and explanations of others, but the mere acquisition of such knowledge cannot tell the individual how to experience things. Persons adopt attitudes, form values and live out situations throughout their lives; these situations express the experience of our human condition rather than a world viewed from a perspective of balanced rational knowledge. The individual is left to orient himself to the circumstances and situations in which he is. He must make his choices and decisions; he must form attitudes and opinions. He will experience disappointment; he may fail to realise worthy ambitions; he will feel loyalties, sympathies, affections and hold to convictions. He will die. Life is experienced within that condition of humanity in which the authentic self should orient itself to gain understanding of the motives, thoughts and actions of itself and of others.

It is through such lived experience and, in education, through the actual experience of the practices within that education, that a person comes to a realisation of himself in forming his perspectives on life and his scale of values. He comes to discriminate between the primary and secondary considerations in his life. Cognitive rationality may well inform and, therefore, initiation into rational knowledge has some value for the individual. But in formal education, teaching and learning may become stylised in procedures which lack opportunity for direct, active, authentic experience of the educational practice which is ostensibly the purpose in hand. Thus the scientific approach to the practice of history of Ranke becomes far removed from the Idealist,

hermeneutic tradition of Collingwood and this tradition again gives way ... School based learning may reflect accepted ways of thought buttressed by a public examination system and teachers may, in transmitting beliefs and values to their pupils, reflect only the stale and second-hand with closed minds themselves.

(4) Authentic choice

(a) Radical choice

Choice is an issue of considerable importance in connection with authenticity, personal autonomy and existentialism and within the latter it is considered to be radical, or 'criterionless' choice of oneself, a choice without reasons. Dearden presents three conditions which are required for a choice to exist for an individual at all: there should be alternative courses of action open to the individual; the acceptance of one alternative involves the rejection of the others; the decision must be voluntary in selection of the alternative adopted.<sup>47</sup> The actual choice is made on the basis of an individual being aware of the situation within which he must choose and having reasons for his ultimate decision: "Deliberate choice, then, involves a preference for one of the alternatives. This in turn implies the having of reasons, and good reasons imply criteria for choice. The various 'ends' furnish such practical criteria."<sup>48</sup> Dearden's account presents a neat and tidy arrangement for the making of choices, determined, it seems, on the basis of the application of reason to weighing ends evidently open to the chooser; a rational appraisal of ends establishes the criteria on which the choice rests. This description making reason central to the choice may describe some choice situations and I certainly

acknowledge that reason has a place in choice. However, the description above may well not describe all situations involving choice.

Bornett<sup>49</sup> gives the example of a soldier who is trapped behind enemy lines and considers that a course of action on his part may save an attack on hard-pressed comrades. This soldier has little information upon which to base his decision which is to attack the enemy as a result of which he is killed; however he actually loses his life unnecessarily since reinforcements are to hand and his comrades are saved. Dearden's conditions for choice given above are satisfied in this example with respect to: alternative courses are open; one is accepted, others rejected; the decision is voluntary. But the individual lacks sufficient information from which reasons may be established as the criteria for choice. Now it could well be argued that had that soldier set aside his sense of loyalty, his assessment of the tactical circumstances (on the limited information available to him) and all other motives which led to his decision to attack the enemy and had he waited for more information on which to make a more rational informed decision, his life would not have been lost.

There is, however, marked authenticity in the soldier's choice of alternatives. Time is short; an instant decision seems necessary; death is a major consideration in his decision-making; he cares about his regiment; his conscience strengthens his choice to decide, authentically, what he must do. He does not neglect consideration of rational criteria, but these are just insufficient to describe the whole situation. His posthumous V.C. may be little consolation for the loss of his life; but he acts authentically, standing out from the crowd - showing initiative in a crisis. Now,

fortunately, not all decisions are, in themselves, matters of life and death, but many are taken in situations in which force of circumstances deny access to Dearden's criteria of choice based on reason. The soldier's decision is based on rational criteria to the extent available; these are weighted according to the circumstances of that situation and an authentic decision reached. The man has settled dispositions and values including loyalty to his comrades and professionalism; his reasoning along with his 'gut feeling' lead him to act as he does and take the consequences. Many choices, if not most, may well be taken in situations which do not meet Dearden's criteria of reason because time and circumstance require choice when rational criteria, even if they could be known, are simply not available. A person's motives, in so far as he may know them and the values implicit in his dispositions should not be ruled out in a choice situation.

Sartre's concept of choice is that of a radical, original and criterionless choice of self. But before putting Bonnett's soldier into Sartrean colours, some outline of radical choice is necessary. Sartre's account of radical choice given in Being and Nothingness is an ontological one, but ethical implications are inescapable. Choice, in Sartre, is essentially a choice of the self as a whole:

"And as our being is precisely our original choice, the consciousness of the choice is identical with the self-consciousness which we have. One must be conscious in order to choose, and one must choose in order to be conscious. Choice and consciousness are one and the same thing." 50

Thus choice is the choice of the being which I am; hence had Adam not taken the apple this would imply that another Adam was possible -

"... this real Adam is surrounded by an infinity of possible Adams."<sup>51</sup> Self-consciousness of being the person I am is the choice which I make of myself; choice is in no way separate from myself. Empirical choices day by day are simply expressions of the choice of self that I have made: "Indeed the distinguishing characteristic of the intelligible choice ... is that it can exist only as the transcendent meaning of each concrete, empirical choice."<sup>52</sup> Hence, if I row a boat on a river, I am just that - myself engaged in the project of rowing and by means of engaging in such an activity..."We make it exist by means of our very engagement, and therefore we shall be able to apprehend it only by living it."<sup>53</sup>

However, Sartre is clear that in maintaining that a person's whole life is his choice rather than that an act of choosing is somehow objectively removed from the person, he is maintaining that a person holds full responsibility for his choice of the self he is. This original, radical choice of self has values intrinsically linked to it and these values are determined by the individual's choice of self: "Value derives its being from its exigency and not its exigency from its being."<sup>54</sup> Therefore, Sartre's alarm clock summons him because it is he who confers exigency on that object's significance. And if he is involved in a situation it is his responsibility; he is not an innocent victim of circumstances - he has chosen the world as his and the multitude of situations within it are also his:

"We are taking the word 'responsibility' in its ordinary sense as 'consciousness (of) being the incontestable author of an event or of an object'. In this sense the responsibility of the for-itself is overwhelming since he is the one by whom it happens that there is a world; since he is also the one who makes himself be, then whatever may be the situation in which he finds himself, the for-itself must wholly assume this situation ... with the proud consciousness of being the author of it ..." <sup>55</sup>



Therefore, if a person is mobilized in a war, it is his war since escape, if only by death or desertion, can still be effected. But if he does not get out of it, he chooses it until it is finished. Thus responsibility for the Nazi killing of Jews was a responsibility upon all who did not actively strive to prevent it.

How then might Bonnett's soldier fare in a situation of radical choice? Let us assume that this man faces the choice of either acting at risk of his own life out of dispositions, duties, values etc. in order to gain a military objective, or of remaining hidden, preserving his life because to lose it will be a major loss to his family in which his wife is dying of cancer and soon only he may live to care for their children. The radical chooser must simply decide to follow one course because that course is an expression of what he is and of the moral vision that he has of others and the world. He just chooses one and in so doing creates the value implicit in that choice. His choice is one which still leaves him within Dearden's three conditions of choice: that there are alternatives; acceptance of one alternative involves a rejection of the other/s; the decision is, to some extent, voluntary. But the existentialist radical chooser cannot have reasons in his determination of what to choose because his original choice of self determines values by his choices. However, if the soldier already has commitments both to his family and to his comrades, he is drawn to both in the choice he must make. The outcome of his choice will express which commitment he holds to be the stronger, but as Sartre states that the individual will experience anguish in his dilemma, his commitments must exist prior to the occasion of the choice which he makes and these commitments cannot then be created by the choice itself. If the soldier is drawn in both directions, these

commitments and the values associated with them must be separate from the chooser. The values exist in the commitments rather than in the original, radical choice of self which the individual made: "How can I evaluate causes and motives on which I myself confer their value before all deliberation and by the very choice which I make of myself?"<sup>56</sup> Sartre presents a similar dilemma in

L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme of a young man faced with either staying to care for his ailing mother who otherwise will die alone and in sorrow or of leaving to fight for the Resistance against Nazi tyranny with all the implications the latter holds for France, for Europe and for the world. The fact that Sartre acknowledges this as a dilemma indicates that the moral claims involved are not created by a radical choice of self alone.

If the soldier's choice is not to act out of loyalty and military professionalism but to remain in hiding so as not to risk his life since he only joined the army because the pay is higher than social security benefit and the beer and cigarettes are cheaper, his choice to remain hidden, 'selfishly', will (if expressing radical choice) confer value on that option. The point is that radical choice lacks coherence because it does not acknowledge any point of reference external to the individual chooser and if no value exists for the radical chooser outside himself, alternatives which present him with dilemmas are impossible. In fact, the chooser cannot divorce himself from rational criteria altogether because to ignore such considerations makes choice incomprehensible. Choice entirely without reasons would be to engage in impulsive acts without regard to evaluation or preference; or perhaps, a person would simply choose the opposite of what it seemed sensible to choose. But a choice unrelated to what seems most advantageous or desirable is not intelligible.

Therefore a radical choice of self out of which value is created purely on the basis of that choice is to devalue rational criteria to the extent that radical choice is left claiming the right to determine values which already exist prior to the choice and so place the so-called radical chooser in a cruel dilemma. Reason ought not to be removed from choice any more than it should be taken to be the sole determiner of choice. Sartre's version of choice emphasises the variety of moral perspectives upon the world and the only way to decide which perspective to adopt may be to decide, radically, like the man who is faced with the dilemma of remaining with his ailing mother or joining the Resistance. He cannot make a radical choice of these considerations because they are already expressive of pre-determined values; however he can choose between them, but only by evaluation of his strength of commitment to the alternatives.

(b) Evaluation of self

A significant difficulty referred to earlier in this chapter is the extent to which a person can understand his own motivation. To reach such understanding ought not to involve neglect of rational considerations and criteria but it should require an individual to weigh these considerations in an attempt to evaluate his own motives. And it may be the depth of an evaluation of motives and the responsibility to act on these which may eventually make a person what he is. Taylor<sup>57</sup> draws a distinction between 'weak' and 'strong' evaluation; a 'weak' evaluation may be involved in a person choosing to have a lazy holiday on a sunny beach or a more energetic one. The choice between the two will require reasoning and a basis of rational criteria to inform the individual of what he really wants after a

period of reflection on the alternatives. But a 'strong' evaluation will be concerned more directly with quality of motivation and in appraising what is worthwhile in those motives. Therefore a 'strong' or 'deep' evaluation is one expressive of the kind of person an individual is because it describes the individual's adherence to certain values extracted from his deepest, almost inchoate, evaluations. If a person gives way to selfish and debasing activities and impulses, he influences and determines the sort of person he is, but a strong evaluation will be defined in a language of worth in which motivations or desires will be given values as higher or lower, worthy or debasing etc.: "To characterize one desire or inclination as worthier, or nobler, or more integrated, etc. than others is to speak of it in terms of the kind of quality of life which it expresses and sustains."<sup>58</sup>

To reach such evaluation requires reflection on motives and evaluation of their quality. The individual must reflect on the situation, consider consequences and get the 'feel' of the alternatives. Eventually he may be able to articulate his appraisals in a language of contrasts; just as it is impossible to know what the concept red is unless other colours are contrasted with it, so values may be similarly contrasted. Reflection of this kind seems to have its origins in rhetoric and hermeneutics (deriving from the Greeks) and language seems to be the key medium in the expression of an evaluation of our motives in depth in its capacity to bring about a conscious awareness of ourselves: "... there is no societal reality, with all its concrete forces, that does not bring itself to representation in a consciousness that is linguistically articulated. Reality does not happen 'behind the back' of language; it happens rather behind the backs of those who live in the subjective

opinion that they have understood 'the world' (or can no longer understand it); that is, reality happens precisely within language."<sup>59</sup>

Reflection enables the individual to evaluate his motives in a language of worth and to re-evaluate, constantly, what he thinks. Such a process is radical in the sense that it is never-ending and, in the evaluations arrived at, fundamentally defines and re-defines the kind of person involved. It is a process not lacking in criteria and one which will relate to reason but it will also be coupled with what the whole authentic self of the person is. In reflection, in addition to rational criteria and involving such criteria, "... is my deepest unstructured sense of what is important, which is as yet inchoate and which I am trying to bring to definition. I am trying to see reality afresh and form more adequate categories to describe it. To do this I am trying to open myself, use all my deepest unstructured sense of things in order to come to a new clarity."<sup>60</sup> Such thinking involves rational considerations, logic, standards of thinking and a resulting affective influence upon the person.

A person capable of this deep re-evaluation and re-consideration of his motives defines his identity in an expression of authenticity which is his whole person in cognitive and affective dimensions. Thus when authenticity is achieved by reflection and re-evaluation of self and the self more nearly understands its own motivations and deep purposes, responsibility of the individual for his actions should follow.

### (c) Evaluation and obligation

The authenticity of the strong, reflective evaluator of his own motives holds implications not only for the individual, but in some situations, for others too. The Sartrean individual chooser is

claimed to generate his own values by his original, radical awareness or choice of his own self and were this situation feasible, the individual would generate his own moral values with regard to no criteria linking him to standards outside himself. However, this hypothesis has been shown above to be incoherent since the individual in a moral dilemma only feels the dilemma because he approaches the crisis with pre-existing values attaching to commitments outside himself. Nevertheless, the reflective, deep evaluator is also faced with the nature of that society in which he makes evaluations of his own motives and he owes obligations to others within that society. He is part of a reciprocal relationship.

The language in which he comes to an authentic articulation of his evaluations is a language of what is worthwhile and meaning is given to activities in the world by such a language. Thus if one individual is described as a 'great criminal', he is thus defined in the language of his society; hence a great criminal living under a Nazi government may be one seeking to help 'non-aryans' escape from brutality and inhumanity. Ronald Biggs may be cited as a great criminal in Britain in the 1960s but by the 1980s, time and circumstance may even change that judgement. Existentialism may have been stimulated in societies where accepted moral rules were put in question unlike our society today in which such rules are generally accepted within what is a relatively stable, social environment.

However, a society which values authenticity is unlikely to be a uniform one. Indeed, the reverse is likely to be the case. Inauthenticity involves being-with-others in a kind of uniform existence in which the individual's authenticity is submerged in the crowd and persons are lost in the language of uniform labels -

the 'blacks', the 'coloureds', the 'gifted', the 'handicapped', 'men', 'women' etc. Escape from the labels of the mass-media and from the submerging of the capacity for individual authenticity in an inauthentic mode of existence is to be encouraged. A realisation of authenticity should lead to a rejection of unthinking conformity, but not necessarily to the rejection of the standards expressed by the moral code in a particular society. Each individual being exists in the world of others and, as indicated earlier, care relates being to the world of things and to other persons; deep, reflective evaluation of one's motives does not occur in a vacuum, but in that world of others and of oneself. Indeed, as Aristotle points out, the only fully, non-social being is either a beast or a God! Living in society and valuing authenticity implies acknowledgement of authenticity in others as well as in ourselves. We are all beings in the world and we can achieve little without others because those others are an integral part of our world and exist as ones evaluating themselves as 'ends' in their own right.

Children may find difficulty in gaining a perspective of themselves in reciprocal relationships with others but in making choices and decisions on behalf of the young, we should be conscious of their potential for authenticity: "After all, all of us are children before we are adults and any one of us may become mentally incapacitated, so we do have a stake in seeing to it that such persons are treated as having, within the limits of possibility and prudence, the same rights and duties as they would have if they could speak for themselves, since in choosing for them we may well be choosing for ourselves."<sup>61</sup> Thus a teacher who chooses to inculcate a disposition in his pupils to mug old women has direct responsibility for such anti-social behaviour and anti-social attitudes; and,

reciprocally, as some teachers may be old women (especially the male ones) they may, themselves, be choosing to be mugged.

The strong, reflective evaluator finds his authentic sense of being in knowing his own motives and is able to characterise these in a language of worth. He then holds the capacity to choose and he can exercise this both with regard to himself and also in a much wider context in his relationships with family and friends and, indeed, with a wider society - his nation, his world. Sartre, in his later writing, comes to accept the wider reciprocal implications of individual choice as is shown in acknowledgement of everyone's responsibility for the plight of the Jews in the 1940s, "... perhaps we shall begin to understand that we must fight for the Jew, no more and no less than for ourselves."<sup>62</sup> And he makes clear the reciprocal obligation expected: "What must be done is to point out to each one that the fate of the Jews is his fate. Not one Frenchman will be free so long as the Jews do not enjoy the fulness of their rights. Not one Frenchman will be secure as long as a single Jew - in France or in the world at large - can fear for his life."<sup>63</sup> An individual's evaluation of his own motives in the choices he makes is linked to his obligations to others and in Chapter 3 an analysis of personhood should add weight to the implications of obligation to others implicit in authentic evaluation and choice.

##### (5) Authenticity within education

In this chapter I have argued that the concept of authenticity ought not to be subsumed within a conceptual framework marked out for personal autonomy in which authenticity simply accepts the dictates of a reason-informed nomos within that autonomy. I have



laid claim to a place for authenticity (as part of autonomy) in its own right and, as such, it may be by individual evaluation of motives in apposition to the claims of cognitive rationality, particularly when reasons are insufficient, that authentic choice may operate. Authentic choice including self-evaluation of motives co-exists with the nomos of cognitive reason; each borrows from the other in situations of choice.

In educational practice, the acquisition of rational knowledge, with its accompanying understanding and experience, is acknowledged to be significant. But if the learner is to get on the inside of such knowledge to make it his own, he must want to do so. And if he lacks in motivation, a required conformity aimed at making a person learn something may simply alienate the individual from such knowledge. Advancing age and maturity coupled with a growing capacity for self-evaluation of one's own authentic motives should be recognised and the individual allowed, for example, curricular choice as far as is justifiable within the confines of a curriculum.

#### (i) Guidance

The young person should be encouraged to evaluate his purposes and reflect upon them to clarify their worth to him in connection with his life as a whole to the extent that he can imaginatively project. He may digest parental advice; he may be influenced by sibling precedent etc. But his teachers should guide him not by direction but by helping him with the evaluation of what he wants by considering alternatives and by encouraging his reflection and deep evaluation of himself. The authentic person should have concern for himself and he should act out of this concern. This is not to assert selfish individualism or a subjective bloody-mindedness which

asserts the right to do it his way - come what may. It is more the concern to appraise oneself in the context of situations in which one will be found in life, in society, in institutional roles. It requires the individual to, "... reflect upon one's personality, to assess the situations in which one is placed, to examine the language one speaks, to reflect on the goals to pursue in one's life, to consider the value to be put on one's activities, to examine how one came to one's beliefs, to assess one's emotional responses, to think how to widen the projects and possibilities open to one."<sup>64</sup> Essentially the individual should realise his motives, get on the inside of his learning and live life to the full richness which personal authenticity should afford.

#### (ii) Educational practices

In learning, a student may be most likely to be authentic in that learning when he is directly engaged in the nature of the educational practice in question. Involvement with process and the procedural aspects of, for example, an intellectual subject by pursuit of a problem-solving activity and utilising skills in that pursuit may enable the individual most directly to realise the experience. He may then be able to appraise the experience of learning in determining his authentic reaction to that experience. Clearly not all learning in school can be voluntarily undertaken, at least not in its initial stages, but authenticity seems at odds with the case for a largely compulsory curriculum envisaged by White.<sup>65</sup> A case for authenticity in the curriculum is put by Bonnett.<sup>66</sup> It is not my aim in this thesis to debate the issue of a compulsory curriculum, but what seems in practical terms unclear about the case for compulsion is the extent to which it should go for persons with very different

aptitudes and abilities. Should every 'normal' person be able and expected to perform quadratic equations for example, and if so, why? The onus is upon those who argue for compulsion to provide justifiable benchmarks in the areas which they claim should be compulsory so that consideration of the case for compulsion can be grounded upon specifics.

Practices involving the humanities within an intellectual education may particularly provide opportunity for the development of authenticity in pupils because the humanities are concerned with 'whole persons' in their subject matter, in situations reflecting the human condition. The Schools Council Humanities Curriculum Project<sup>67</sup> laid great importance upon discussion enabling young adults to orient themselves towards matters of controversy in modern society so that growth in self-knowledge could occur. Young persons could reflect on issues of direct significance to their lives, evaluate their own motives and orient themselves to an authentic awareness of their lives in relation to the controversial issues considered. Nevertheless, if a person's evaluation of his own motives leads him to realise his authentic self as a scientist, there may be a dilemma to be resolved involving considerations of balance in a curriculum if the role of a scientist is defined too narrowly.

### (iii) Relationships and obligations

The school social environment gives scope for that reciprocity in relationships referred to above. Teachers should care for their students' development towards authenticity and, in particular, provide confirmation to the individual who needs adult attention and recognition. However, further discussion of this issue is reserved for Chapter 3 which explores the relationships of persons more directly.

### References to Chapter 1

- 1 See, for example: Peters, R. S. (1973) Freedom and the Development of the Free Man, in: (ed., Doyle, J. F.) (1973) Educational Judgements (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).
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CHAPTER 2      REASON

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## Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore the nature of reason which is held to be a central component of personal autonomy. An autonomous person may be thought to be ruled by a nomos informed by criteria picked out by reason. Authenticity and the autos may be considered to come to terms with the nomos informed by rational criteria so that autos and nomos attain a modus vivendi together.

The chapter is presented in two parts, A and B. The two sections of Part A consider the objective nature of reason as a function of intelligence and objective standards attaching to reason. Peters, Dearden and others have placed great emphasis upon the objective nature of reason in that: "The child who learns to think independently in mathematics, science or history does not just make up or invent good reasons of the right sort: the criteria implicit here are valid independently of his wishes and have to be learned, as does how to apply them."<sup>1</sup> However, the "independently valid" rational criteria are, in Dearden's view, betrayed by human lapses into irrationality, "... our many inconsistencies, muddles and mistakes, for these are explained precisely by our trying to determine our minds by reference to appropriate criteria but with very varying degrees of success."<sup>2</sup>

Part B of this chapter departs somewhat from the Peters - Dearden perspective on reason in order to show reason's relation to feeling which is argued to be a part of reason. The second section of Part B considers the implications of a practical dimension within reason and emphasises its significance in choices and decisions in the practical life of the autonomous person.

The chapter concludes with considerations of some educational implications of reason, practical reason and autonomy in connection

with Dearden's view concerning the merits of an intellectual education as a means to develop autonomy.

## PART A

### (1) The nature of reason: a Peters perspective

Reason is a function of intelligence and as such may be regarded as on a continuum from the highly rational to the non-rational.<sup>3</sup> As a function of intelligence, reason enables a person when presented with a situation unlike any previously encountered to interpret that situation by transferring relevant knowledge and experience to it. Some animals may be considered intelligent in that they reveal a capacity to adapt previous learning to new purposes; Jane Goodall's research into chimpanzees' behaviour makes claims for these animals to be regarded as intelligent and able to reason. Piaget's concepts of assimilation and accommodation apply to reason in that an individual is considered to assimilate new concepts by integrating them into his existing organisation of concepts. But if the difference between his existing patterns of thought and new concepts is too great for assimilation, the individual accommodates by adjusting his own thought structure and anticipations.

Intelligent behaviour involves rules which mark out criteria distinct from simply regular behaviour. This distinction between regular and rule-guided behaviour is explored by Bennett<sup>4</sup> in his analysis of rationality in connection with apian activity. The capacity to generalize and make rules in forming beliefs and in determining actions so that a person's behaviour reflects and adheres to the planning and rule-making with which he involves himself is a feature of reason and intelligence: "Rational behaviour and belief spring from the recognition implicit or explicit, that certain general considerations are grounds for action or belief."<sup>5</sup> Reason,

on this account, is not then tied to the particular; it relates to circumstances and conditions which reflect the variations in human experience over the passage of time. Indeed, Peters argues that reason relates to truth, thus the pursuit and maintenance of truth through reason is crucial to education and to life in general. (The public nature of reason and the objective standards associated with it will be explored in Section 2 below.)

Intelligent rule-guided behaviour is part of reason and its associated rational criteria, therefore, and its presence in varying degrees determines the nature of the following continuum of rational to non-rational. Non-rational is the greatest contrast with rational and expresses the absence of the capacity to reason to even a minimum standard. Animals, lacking intelligence in general, and unable to apply intelligence to different situations as humans normally can, are, therefore, non-rational. Bennett's honey-bees may reveal co-ordinated behaviour but lack the capacity of human language which is usually mankind's method of communicating rational thought.

Irrationality is to move away from non-rationality on reason's continuum. It implies some awareness of rational thinking and associated action in a sense in which non-rational cannot do. But the individual whose thoughts and actions are irrational is still considered unable to attain a higher mark of rationality than this, "... low grade type of experience."<sup>6</sup> Peters sees irrationality infused by an affective dimension expressing a state dominated by feelings rather than intellect so that the individual's capacity to reason is seriously impaired. Irrationality is lacking in consistency of thought and logic so that thought and action are disrupted and out of step with the stimuli which generates them; an extreme

example would be that of a person suffering from paranoia. Very young children's thinking may also reveal irrationality in their inability to perceive reality in different situations.

A higher level of reasoning than that of the irrational may be termed unreasonable. The implication of this then is that an unreasonable person has understanding of the importance attaching to particular reasons but is unwilling to accept the implications which should be drawn from those reasons. Whereas the irrational individual is in a state of mental disorder which he can do little to change for himself, the unreasonable individual is just unwilling to be more reasonable. He could be more reasonable were he differently disposed so to be. Therefore the irrational individual cannot be described as unreasonable; the unreasonable individual is one who fails to be as reasonable as he could be. The unreasonable individual's thought and action must then be under his own control to be judged unreasonable and he then has responsibility for his choices and decisions.<sup>7</sup> An unreasonable choice may arise from lack of reasoning skill with a resulting failure to appreciate the connections in reasoning or from affliction of akrasia, lack of capacity to exercise the will to act upon reasoning. However, such circumstances may be overcome to some extent.

The unreasonable individual, then, is deliberately biased, bigoted, obtuse in the partiality of his beliefs. Peters regards him as strongly influenced by his feelings: "Emotions, usually of a gutsy sort, are aroused by particular people and situations."<sup>8</sup> Feelings, on this account, get in the way of reason which has the added task of surmounting emotion to enable the individual to be reasonable in contrast to unreasonable. Credit arises from being reasonable:

"In order for an action to be reasonable it must be well-considered, intelligent, sensible, far-sighted, etc. and may be presumed to be prudent, wise, etc.; while its being rash, foolish, futile, stupid or inconsiderate will normally disqualify it for praise as 'reasonable'." 9

Credit attaches to reasonable acts because reason is the basis of the judgements of those to whom reasonableness is attributed. The reasonable person judges a situation on the balance of reasons so that if faced with uncertainty as to which alternatives to choose, the decision is established on the sufficiency of reason. No preferable reasons exist for selection when the person appraises these and, essentially, he chooses the best reason or set of reasons over less convincing ones. Reasoning is of a means - end kind because it cannot be adjudged independent of its appropriateness to some purpose or end. Thus, as Black points out, it is reasonable to run for the sake of one's health or to catch a 'bus or for pleasure, but not simply to run quite aimlessly.

The means to the desired end must be appropriate to be reasonable. Therefore, although some sanctions and punishments may be regarded as reasonable in order for school rules to be upheld, the infliction of physical pain may not be reasonable as a means to uphold school rules. Judgement of the reasonableness of the means to the desired end should satisfy an impartial observer that the reasons adopted are better than their alternatives. Nevertheless, actions judged to be reasonable may subsequently still prove wrong or unjustified; outcomes may be sought which are not attained and reasoning may not prove to be correct.

Associated with reasonableness at reason's end of this continuum is the concept of rationality expressing the objective standards attaching to reason and to be considered in Section 2, below.

Rationality is often associated with a high level of reasoning. Thus, if 'reasonable' is associated with what is worthy and creditable, rationality is the ultimate excellence in reasoning. Rationality is associated with a solely human capacity to ratiocinate and handle propositions and proofs with intellectual rigour; reason may be considered to attain its highest expression when regarded as a function of the human intellect engaged in ratiocination. The rigorous intellectual discipline of reflective rational thought is thought to impose its own discipline and standards upon the reasoner who is drawn by the power to reason to conclusions avoiding the pitfalls of illogicality.

Finally, rationalization is not a part of reason's continuum as it is an aberrant form of rationality. It involves an attempt to base a case apparently on reason but to claim it as more rational than is justifiable. An absence of good, appropriate reasons is disguised by what is apparently reasonable. (A Weberian perspective on rationality and rationalization is considered in Chapter 6.)

The nature of reason, then, may be considered along the continuum outlined above from non-rational through unreasonable to its opposite, reasonable and ultimately, rational supported by genuine concern for rational standards. Feelings, on this account, are generally considered as obstacles for reason to surmount. Reason's end of this continuum is thought to encompass standards of an objective, public kind, expressing truth irrespective of the particulars of time and place. Feelings are considered, on this account, as subjective and likely to weaken reasoning. The issue of the objective aspect of reason and its standards is the subject of the next section.

## (2) Reason and standards

Reason, as a function of intelligence, is held by Peters to express a public character and an objectivity in standards based upon criteria independently valid of the wishes of any individual. This notion of public standards attributed to reason will be explored below, first by discussion of what rational knowledge is held to be and, second by analysis of what the standards held to be criteria of good reasoning are.

Peters emphasises the significance of language as a means of expressing the public nature of reason.<sup>10</sup> Language, although private to the individual user, is held to be an expression of public knowledge which is universalizable. Concepts are shared within the process of language within a structure by which rational thinking may be conveyed; syntax and linguistic rules ensure that reason is expressed in a public tradition according to procedures independent of the wishes of any single person. Those language codes described by Bernstein<sup>11</sup> emphasise the public nature of knowledge so that those who are the most capable performers within the public tradition of language usage also prove the most able learners in the sphere of public forms of knowledge. Initiation into defined bodies of public knowledge, such as science or history etc. is what is held to develop rational thought. The individual brings his mind to bear upon established propositions within accepted forms or fields of knowledge and shares in the enlightenment such initiation brings. His consciousness is joined to the public tradition so as to share in that objectivity and universal standard of rationality. Tests for truth specific to particular forms of knowledge give support and credibility to the public nature of knowledge transcending the immediate present and linking with a vast cultural context based upon reason.



This perspective on reason and rational belief is particularly linked to the nature of propositional knowledge outlined in his description of liberal education and forms of knowledge by Hirst who argues that any individual who seeks justification for the pursuit of rational knowledge is already committed to it:

"To ask for the justification of any form of activity is significant only if one is in fact committed already to seeking rational knowledge. To ask for a justification of the pursuit of rational knowledge itself therefore presupposes some commitment to what one is seeking to justify." 12

To determine why rational knowledge in science, history, mathematics etc. should be pursued is, then, to be a reasoner, to seek for good, particular reasons and so to be committed to reason and to rational knowledge. This transcendental justification may hold for an individual asking why he is directly engaged in pursuit of one particular sphere of rational knowledge, but, as White points out, it cannot justify why knowledge should be held as rational truth and pursued in all the different forms of Hirst's analysis.<sup>13</sup> Peters, in a similar way to that of Hirst, also argues that a person who asks what there are reasons for doing is already committed by an antecedent attitude implicit in that question to the pursuit of reason. But a questioner may simply want to know what reason or reasons there may be in a particular case; he may have no greater commitment to reason than this. Indeed to enquire into what one is already strongly committed to would be anathema to autonomy and to reason itself since such enquiry may be undertaken out of habit or upon direction from another person without rational, personal commitment from the individual himself. Furthermore, to be committed to reason by a prior conception or antecedent attitude must require

the individual's willingness to reason because if he is not already rational or reasonable he will be unable to understand the argument based upon reason which is presented to him.

The individual who claims commitment to reason as an expression of objective truth should be in a position to satisfy himself that particular reasons are good ones because they can be tested by standards and criteria which can uphold the validity of those claims. Bailey, following Peters in the intellectual tradition supporting the objectivity of reason, offers four standards as criteria descriptive of a good reason: relevance, appropriateness, logicality, sufficiency.<sup>14</sup> Relevance should relate a justifying proposition to the belief or action which it sets out to justify. The justifying proposition must also be appropriate to the belief for if a belief is prejudiced it may have to rely upon a claim to justification which cannot reach a standard of truth, for example, "... iron expands when heated because rubber stretches when pulled."<sup>15</sup> Two propositions must, further, be logically connected, as a theoretical syllogism could demonstrate. Bailey's fourth criterion of a good reason is sufficiency: the claim that in order to be fit I must undertake gardening is insufficient justification for the gardening. There are clearly other and, perhaps, more effective ways of keeping fit.

A case made out on the basis of reason should reach the categories of reasonable or rational described in the previous section. Objective standards reflecting the criteria Bailey describes as relevance, appropriateness, logicality and sufficiency should ensure that reason holds the key to knowledge, understanding and successful processes of thought. Only when our reasoning does not meet the criteria described will we be subject to, "... many inconsistencies, muddles and mistakes, for these are explained

precisely by our trying to determine our minds by reference to appropriate criteria but with very varying degrees of success."<sup>16</sup>

When reasoning is confined to an intellectual education based upon a school curriculum vested in forms of knowledge and the learner is initiated into disciplines by ratiocination among propositions, perhaps the criteria of good reasons described above may hold. But education also involves preparation for life in all spheres and not solely the intellectual. Practical life requires a capacity to reason in situations where solutions are not known in advance because practical life, in and outside schools, contains situations as part of the human condition which require reasoning and standards which are not immutable in the sense that standards of theoretical reason in an intellectual education may appear to be. The following example may clarify the position.

A syllogism, for example, may read:

'All wars can be shortened by the use of nuclear weapons;  
The American conflict with Japan in 1945 was a war;  
It was appropriate to shorten it by use of nuclear weapons.'

Two scientists, Robert Oppenheimer and Edward Teller, who had much to do with developing an atomic bomb agreed that the above syllogism was rationally acceptable. After the Second World War, Teller proceeded with successful research to produce a hydrogen-bomb; Oppenheimer would not continue with this work and was arraigned for disloyalty to the U.S.A. for his action. Their actions express different beliefs. But why should the valid reasons supporting the above syllogism in relevance, appropriateness, logic and sufficiency of standard be regarded so differently by Oppenheimer concerning the development of the hydrogen-bomb? What made some reasons so compelling for him and others so compelling for Teller?

Undoubtedly both men cared greatly for reason and, in fact, for their own particular reasons concerning the practical dilemma confronting them. And although the reasons they considered may have met the criteria of relevance, appropriateness and logic, sufficiency of reason may have had a variable effect upon these individuals. The sufficiency of reasons was felt differently by these persons. Their strength of feeling contributed to the power a reason had for them because faced with the same information and evidence, only the individual's feelings were left to make him adopt the perspective he did on this issue. Each person evaluated the reasons in the situation and, presumably from a depth of personal, authentic appraisal, came to a state of personal awareness of the sufficiency of reasons to him as a separate, distinct, authentic person. His feelings merged with his view of the sufficiency of particular reasons and led him to know what he wanted to do and what for him he had to do. Thus a view of mind is offered in which there is, " ... internal conflict among rational alternatives, rather than one in which there is simple unity or in which there are feelings being controlled with difficulty by stern reason."<sup>17</sup> (The issue of the place of emotion and motive will be considered in Section 3 below.)

Persons do have different purposes and their perceptions of the same situation may well vary even when reason's standards are maintained. In both theoretical reason when ratiocination in intellectual matters is pre-eminent or in practical life situations where a more practical reasoning may operate, differences and divergence between reasoning individuals are apparent. Equally valid cases may be made out on a basis of reason because individuals with different dispositions and convictions feel that the strength of some reasons is greater than that of others. All good reasons may

be appropriate, relevant and logical, therefore, but not necessarily universally sufficient.

In practical situations of day to day living, most (if not all) individuals suffer restrictions on their time, energy and, sometimes, capacity to follow the steps of reasoning pursued when a case is made out and it becomes a matter of personal judgement at which point that case is likely to be acceptable on rational grounds. The public nature of reason's standards enables the individual to understand a case made out on reason but, whether those reasons are good and sufficient enough to convince him that they should be his reasons to care about, depends upon his authentic self's existing dispositions, attitudes, convictions and judgement of his own motives and ends towards those reasons. A person may maintain the importance of reason in his life and thought as a function of his intelligence but when viewing a case made out on reason, he must bring to bear his feelings and dispositions towards the reasons or a reason in any particular case. One should be consistent in one's rationality whilst recognising that a particular reason is not an absolute and that, essentially, one's feelings and reasonings dispose one to particular perspectives and persuasions.

The individual whose day to day perspectives are, in practice, informed by rational criteria infused and influenced by his feelings may well change his mind about the sufficiency of reasons applying to particular circumstances. The Kantian concept of Practical Reason as a supreme, objective dictator is remote from the realities of practical life in which the autonomous person's "own activity of mind" explains, "... his own choices, deliberations, decisions, reflections, judgements, plannings or reasonings."<sup>18</sup> After all, how could it be otherwise? A good reason today, which passes the criterion of

sufficiency, may fail the test tomorrow because a person may change his views about a reason's sufficiency; he may reflect authentically and come to feel differently about a reason. Reason may enable an individual to change but it is still he who does the changing. Dearden, for example, has come to change his view on the issue of whether the outline of a curriculum may be derived from autonomy.<sup>19</sup> He has come to feel differently about his reasons. A reason or a set of reasons is sufficient or insufficient from the individual's own perspective.

The following two sections aim to show why particular reasons are always open to question about what they should compel because feeling is not separate from reason as a function of intelligence within the circumstances of education and practical life.

## PART B

### (3) Reason and feeling

Bailey argues that: "To do 'what I feel like doing' can never be the basis of autonomy because what I feel like doing can always be what someone else has made me feel like doing."<sup>20</sup> But if I am not to trust my feelings on the grounds that someone has induced these feelings in me, there seems equally little cause why I should trust reasons suggested by others and which are not, necessarily, my own. In this section the implication of feeling for the objective standards presumed to be part of reason will be explored and I shall argue that both my reasons and my feelings should be authentic to me. Both reason and feeling, informing each other, blend in authentic relationship within the thoughts, feelings and acts of the individual.

The relationship between reason and the passions (feelings) has long exercised philosophers. Plato<sup>21</sup> divides the soul into three elements comparing it to a charioteer and his two horses. The horses are taken to represent the spiritual and worldly aspects of the soul (feelings) and the charioteer is representative of reason. Reason helps with the control of the passions in this analogy. But Plato's example does not altogether separate reason and passion because were this to occur, the chariot would have no motive power whatever the skills of the charioteer. Successful action requires a balanced relationship between reason and passion in Plato's view, therefore.

Hume rejects the Greek idea of a balance between reason and passion; reason, for Hume, is cast in the role of passion's "slave".<sup>22</sup> Reason concerns only connections between propositions involving

evidence and argument, therefore, in Hume's view, reason is theoretical and, so, passive in nature. It lacks the motive force to inspire action since only the passions have this capacity; thus an understanding of x cannot compel me to do y. Only when the individual is inclined by his desires or dislikes will he be in a position to act because passion will then dictate it; reason is left quite separate from such determination:

"An active principle can never be founded on an inactive; and if reason be inactive in itself, it must remain so in all its shapes and appearances, whether it exerts itself in natural or moral subjects, whether it considers the powers of external bodies, or the actions of rational beings." 23

In A Treatise of Human Nature, Book II, Part III, Section III and in Book III, Part I, Hume argues the case that reason is "inactive" and "can never be a motive" nor can it "oppose passion in the direction of the will"; it is held to be "perfectly inert" and "wholly inactive". However, reason is not discounted altogether in the Humean account as it is considered able to help in clarifying situations which the individual encounters but, even so, he is always initially directed by his feelings which determine his view of a situation. Reason may also help the passions realise those ends which they prescribe for the individual; reason can light his way but it cannot change his route. This contention will be questioned below, but Hume may be right on the point that, "... it is through their connection with a person's likes and dislikes, desires and aversions, concerns, interests and fears, that reasons ... get a grip on his will, enable him to make up his mind, give him a motive for action."<sup>24</sup>



However, Hume's account of the place of reason as inferior to passion is not acceptable as it stands. Our emotions may well alter given circumstances and considerations of a rational kind. Education itself has much to do with reason; Dearden makes the point that reason has a significant place within an intellectual education as an informer of emotion, so that: "An intellectual appreciation of long-term objectives, a firm grasp of general principles, or a loyalty to the requirements of truth may each conflict with particular emotions ..."<sup>25</sup> The issues we regard as worthwhile may only come to appear so to us by the medium of reasoning when our perspectives are extended by education and reason. Our appetites for food or sex etc. are controlled, in some measure, by reason. Hume underrates the influence of reason upon feeling, an error which Plato avoids as shown by his analogy of the charioteer and the two horses by which he demonstrates the interaction of reason and feeling. Passion may not be reason's slave, but a person who claims to be autonomous will have achieved some balance and interaction between his reason and his passions; he is certainly not one in whom passion always rules.

The Humean error of viewing reason as only passion's "slave" is virtually reversed by Kant. When writing of the individual's will Kant argues that reason should subdue "inclination" (desire or feeling). In this he differs from his near contemporary, Herbart, who describes a balance of factors in his analysis of the will into both objective and subjective aspects which should be in harmony with each other. (Description and discussion of Herbart's analysis of the will follows in Chapter 3.) Kant unequivocally subjects feeling to reason's law:

"... for reason, which recognizes as its highest practical function the establishment of a good will, in attaining this end is capable only of its own peculiar kind of contentment - contentment in fulfilling a purpose which in turn is determined by reason alone, even if this fulfilment should often involve interference with the purposes of inclination." 26

"Inclination" (feeling, passion, desire) is to be controlled by reason. Thus, in Kant's view, Hume's conception of the relationship between reason and passion left the individual merely heteronomous since passion controls and reason remains "inert" in directing the will of the individual to action. For Kant, the will is autonomous when ruled by reason which overrules "inclination". Passion is apparently distilled out of the rational will of the individual who acts in accord with his duty to the moral law.

However, if a person acts according to his duty as revealed to him by Kantian practical reason, he cannot altogether act from prudential reasons; genuine respect for other persons as ends is part of one's duty and it cannot be to gain credit or approval for a virtuous act that an individual acting according to the dictates of Kantian practical reason seeks. The individual responding to duty by dictate of reason must, therefore, act from the right motives. And if this is so, a person's will to act for a good, moral purpose is influenced by "inclination" to do the good; he must want the good and he must want to do his duty in accordance with reason. Therefore, reason and "inclination" operate together in directing the will to the good.

Nevertheless, Kant's view, described above, distinguishes reason from "inclination" and considers reason as a dictator over and above the "purposes of inclination". But if a person recognises that his reason directs him to his duty and he responds to his reason

(as Kant expects) and does his duty, he must in doing it want to do it; his "inclination" is turned in the direction of his duty and action follows in which the duty is fulfilled. The individual may continue to want other things not construed by reason as his duty, but if he follows his reason along the path of duty, he must actually want to do this more than anything else at that time, in that situation. Therefore, the individual has a commitment towards the good and his duty generated by a combination of reason and "inclination", but "inclination" alone, separate and distinct from reason, should be rejected.

Kant's argument that the power of reason directs the individual into a dispassionate respect for moral principles appears to remove even the prospect of passion for reason itself (an issue to be considered below). Reason may be distinguished from passion; it may be disinterested but without some passion or "inclination" it cannot be held to engage the will and, therefore, Kant's term, respect for others is, in practice, expressive of that "inclination" for the good to which reason and passion jointly direct the individual's will.

A modern, influential view on the relationship of reason and feeling is that of Peters who acknowledges a place for passion in relation to reason, but one far more circumscribed than that of Hume. Peters refers to rational passions for truth and other standards associated with reason. The individual who reasons out of a genuine concern for reason is passionate about it; he, "... is one who has taken a critic into his own consciousness, whose mind is structured by the procedures of a public tradition".<sup>27</sup> In Peters's view, to be skilled at reasoning is inadequate because one must also care about reason. The Sophists who were good at reasoning did not, however, care enough about reason to escape Plato's criticisms of their claims

to teach virtue, arete, in The Meno.<sup>28</sup> Mere virtuosity in argument is insufficient criterion for caring, passionately, about reason. Peters stresses that there is an affective aspect to the exercise of reasons; "... there is more to caring about reasons than an infinite regress of reasons for reasoning. At some point we have to have caught the concern ..." This passion for reason, then, excludes the feelings, as such, and emphasises the importance of a concern for truth and criticism requiring depth and thoroughness in levels of reasoning. Such thoroughness and commitment to reason is what it means to Peters to attain rationality upon reason's continuum described earlier. Plato gives proper weight to reason, in Peters's view, but Aristotle who does not divorce reason from affective considerations in general, is regarded as one, "... not sufficiently aware that the use of reason is a passionate business."<sup>29</sup>

However, apart from the passion for reason and reason's objective standards, Peters regards the passions as subsumed within a class of cognitions which he describes as appraisals. Peters has support in psychology for this perspective. For example, Lazarus<sup>30</sup> outlines an individual's response to threat as: first, cognition about the extent of the danger; second, a primary appraisal follows about the extent to which the individual regards himself as threatened; third, a secondary appraisal follows by which he determines causes of action appropriate to the danger he has appraised. The two appraisals may be virtually instantaneous but both are cognitive. However, the appraisal may not, necessarily, be rational; a person may perceive inaccurately and his beliefs may prove false, but the appraisal is cognitive. Feelings follow the cognitive appraisals but as they are often the most conspicuous feature, they may be wrongly taken to be the cause, "But the fundamental thing that generates an emotion is

the cognitive activity of appraisal and the impulses it generates."<sup>31</sup>

Peters concurs with this psychological perspective and holds that if emotion is produced only by cognitive appraisals, emotion, itself, is passive and in order to manage such passivity, it is necessary to control and canalize it. Feelings are rather alien to "wishful thinking", according to this view; feelings cannot, themselves, bring about action. But cognitive appraisals identifying what it is a person wants may then become a motive for subsequent action. Essentially Peters has it that reason is cognitive and appraisals of a cognitive kind lead to the control and utilization of emotion in pursuit of an individual's rational purposes. The subjection of emotion to reason has some similarity to Kant's account.

The only passions which are attributed major significance akin to reason itself within the priorities of the individual are the rational passions. These passions do involve a type of affective support for standards of reason, as described above. And the rational passions are not only confined to theory, in Peters's account, for in interpersonal relationships, care and consistency (as standards) should replace, "... slapdash, sporadic and subjective types of reaction."<sup>32</sup>

However, this account of the emotions is open to question particularly (for my purpose here) concerning the passivity of emotions. White<sup>33</sup> points out that emotions may also be motives and, therefore, relate to subsequent action; thus, fear, for example, can be both a feeling and a motive in that one may be frozen to the spot out of fear or one may run rapidly away from the savage dog (given cognition that a dog is a threat irrespective of whether that cognition is rational). White considers that the strength of feeling may be what distinguishes

emotion from motive. Lyons<sup>34</sup> agrees with this perspective on the issue of passivity. It seems possible to have a motive to murder, for example, but not eventually to dare to commit that murder because other factors overcome the strength of the motive although the motive still exists. Conversely, emotions may prove highly motivating: rage, hate, revenge, shame, remorse, etc., etc. Emotions are passive, "... in the sense that the appraisals central to emotions affect the subject of the appraisals. But then motives can as well, and in so far as they do they become emotions. Emotions and motives overlap."<sup>35</sup>

It may be, therefore, that reason is not only the factor of cognitive appraisal and that emotion is not only the passive recipient of the verdict of an individual's appraisals. Such appraisals may well have a dimension of feeling associated with them and reason may be an association of both cognition and feeling. Reason and emotion may be a part of each other.

The interrelation of reason and feeling is evident in Freud's analysis of ego and id.<sup>36</sup> The ego, representative of reason and rational reflection, is distinguished from the id which contains the passions. (Freud also refers to the super-ego which contains restriction, prescriptions, compensations as, for example, are severe rules and restrictions which a father may impose on his children.) Freud considers that, "The ego is not sharply separated from the id; its lower portion merges into it."<sup>37</sup> And perhaps borrowing from Plato's analogy of the charioteer, Freud indicates that the ego's link to the id is,

"... like a man on horseback, who has to hold in check the superior strength of the horse; with this difference, that the rider tries to do this with his own strength

while the ego uses borrowed forces ... Often a rider, if he is not to be parted from his horse, is obliged to guide it where it wants to go; so in the same way the ego is in the habit of transforming the id's will into action as if it were its own."<sup>38</sup>

Therefore, when the ego resists the appetites of the id, it does so by holding, tenaciously, to other feelings, emotions and attachments. So if a parent forgoes something he wants on behalf of a child, it is because he wants to do so, not because he is compelled to act in this way. In Freud's words, "... one must not take the difference between ego and id too hard and fast, nor forget that the ego is a specially differentiated part of the id."<sup>39</sup>

This perspective of the ego is, then, removed from an identification of it as a controller of feelings as in Kant's or Peters's analyses, since the ego is simply "... midway between id and reality, it only too often yields to the temptation of becoming sycophantic, opportunist and lying, like a politician who sees the truth but wants to keep his place in popular favour."<sup>40</sup> Reason and feeling are part of each other just as ego and id interact with each other in the Freudian analysis. It is a fusion or a blending of the two which enables an individual to care about persons, principles, things in general. Feeling may be, in some situations, highly motivating and, thereby, provide criteria wholly sufficient for a particular decision and course of action. Feelings may be rationally or irrationally motivating but without feeling as part of reason and an influence upon reasoning, it seems unlikely that anyone would want (i.e. have reason) to act at all.

The aim of the following section is to describe reason linked to feeling and forming part of the practical capacity of an autonomous person either in education or in practical life in general. A version

of reason follows which considers both theoretical and practical aspects in connection with personal autonomy.

#### (4) Practical reason

Reason may be distinguished as theoretical or practical. The former has to do only with ratiocination in operating with propositions and testing for the truth of these; the process is largely intellectual. Practical reason also involves ratiocination but engages directly the wants and, therefore, the feelings and desires of the individual as the practical syllogism analysed below reveals. Practical reason includes the strength of an individual's motives and recognises within its operation individual authentic choice and evaluation; it also has some relevance to moral reasoning. Practical reasoning is relevant to practical life and perspectives drawn from practical reason enable a person to use his reason in all situations of practical living and not only within the parameters of an intellectual education; he can act upon reason once convinced of its sufficiency in any particular case.

Feeling is a part of practical reason, as the practical syllogism demonstrates, in which an effect is revealed against the pull of feeling and helps the individual concerned draw a practical judgement out of emotion and reason combined. It would be misleading to ignore the effect of feeling within the rational functioning of the individual. And Peters makes the point that, "It is pointless to tell people that they ought not to feel in a certain way if, in general, human beings cannot avoid being subject to such feelings."<sup>41</sup> The Aristotelian practical syllogism analyses the operation of practical reason thus:



I want x,  
 Unless I do y I will not get x,  
 Therefore, I must do y.

The first premiss encompasses feelings, wants and desires; the second states a necessity without reference directly to wants; the conclusion entails particular action. Thus practical reason is a wants-statement linked to natural necessity requiring a practical necessity analogous to a command. Within the practical syllogism, therefore, the individual's wants, feelings, motives, desires are determiners of whether or not action follows; if the motive is strong enough, action is entailed: "Thus to speak of a practical syllogism is not just to speak of an argument or inference; it is to speak of a situation in which action necessarily occurs."<sup>42</sup> Within the syllogism, "... the two premises result in a conclusion which is an action - for example one thinks that every man ought to walk and that one is a man oneself: straightway one walks ... What need I ought to make, I need a coat: I ought to make a coat. And the conclusion - 'I ought to make a coat' is an action."<sup>43</sup>

The individual acts, therefore, because his wanted end (the deontic statement) combined with the realisation that unless he does something (anankastic statement) he will fail to achieve his end. This situation does not altogether remove all deliberation about ends nor deliberation about the effects of proposed actions upon several ends at the same time. Deliberation ceases only when something relatively specific can be decided upon and, in effect, be known by perception and direct experience. (And not all practical reasoning need be in the form of the practical syllogism.) However, the practical syllogism reveals how reason and passion may interact in practical reasoning, not in Hume's sense with passion determining

that our deep-down wants are just what we come to do, but, "To show why something is an obligation founded upon interest, is not to show that it is something we ('really', 'innermost') want to do, but that it is something we have to do for the sake of that which we want ..."<sup>44</sup> Therefore, wants (feelings, emotions, desires, motives etc.) are linked with the necessities of a situation facing the individual and together they result in action.

Moral reasoning and moral action are taken by Aristotle to be a part of practical reason. Theoretical reason (for example, in science) leads to explanations which require demonstration to be acceptable, but first principles may not always be capable of demonstration. According to Aristotle, some fundamental principles in theoretical or scientific reasoning must be accepted not by demonstration but by nous or intuition and the acceptance of fundamental principles which cannot ultimately be demonstrated avoids an infinite regress in seeking for a scientific explanation. In practical reason, adequate explanations require demonstration based upon fundamental principles which are a basis of justification; these principles are the ultimate end or ends of the inquiry. However, Aristotle seems to consider practical reason is also, ultimately, unjustifiable by scientific, rational demonstration; the ends, the fundamental principles, may only be known by intuition. Both practical and scientific or theoretical reasoning are viewed in a similar way by Aristotle: "...ultimate ends are known by some kind of intellectual intuition."<sup>45</sup> Aristotle attaches having the right ends (underlying principles) as a condition of the excellence of practical reason and in matters of conduct the individual is compelled by practical reason to act in an appropriate interpersonal way, therefore: "If reason is practical it is so in this way ... that the premises of the argument,

in being reasons for believing the practical judgement, e.g. for believing that one ought to do a certain thing, are necessarily also reasons for acting in conformity with the judgement, i.e. for doing that thing."<sup>46</sup>

The end (envisaged by Aristotle) is, itself, ultimately undemonstrable, known only by intuition and, presumably such an end is basically the good life, itself. Nevertheless individuals are likely to hold a wide variety of ends to which they apply practical reason; a life which is rationally ordered will not have only one end in view. Reason will explore an order of priorities among the ends of any individual; ends may clash and give way to each other. However, in Aristotle's view, rational organisation of one's practical life and decisions seems impossible without some ultimate end, known by intuition rather than by scientific demonstration. It is the end which gives coherence and a sense of priority to all other ends. The individual is thereby enabled to order his priorities according to this means - end rational structuring. This intuitive recognition of a fundamental, underlying end, Aristotle perhaps sees as eudaimonia (happiness or human flourishing). The individual has within himself, authentically and rationally determined, a concept expressing what is, for him, the good life. A flourishing life becomes a second-order end giving coherence to the many other ends an individual may have. Practical reason helps the individual to an overall life plan; single ends may be wealth, reputation, altruism, etc. but, for Aristotle, happiness or human flourishing seems, intuitively, inclusive:

"... further we think it (happiness) most desirable of all things, without being counted as one good thing among others - if it were so counted it would clearly be made more desirable

by the addition of even the least of goods; for that which is added becomes an excess of goods, and of goods the greater is always more desirable. Happiness, then, is something final and self-sufficient, and is the end of action." 47

But Aristotle also attaches moral virtue to this end of happiness or human flourishing and the activity of practical reason expressed in the thought and acts of the phronimos (the practically intelligent person). Intellectual and moral virtues meet in this person and Aristotle, somewhat arbitrarily, attaches practical wisdom (with moral virtue) as an end of practical reason. The choice of ends of the phronimos must include practical wisdom and moral standards:

"... the choice will not be right without practical wisdom any more than without virtue; for the one determines the end and the other makes us do the things that lead to the end." 48

However, Aristotle seems open to criticism in attaching practical wisdom with right motives and choice of ends to the person with practical reason. The person of practical wisdom may have practical reason and adhere to moral standards, but so may also the rational egoist (for example, Alcibiades, the man who is clever but bad). Aristotle does not allow for the person of practical reason to be bad; he must have practical wisdom and act morally; he must act in the interest of the community.

"(Men) should pray that the things that are good absolutely may also be good for them, but should choose the things that are good for them." 49

But however praiseworthy the aim, the argument seems insufficient. A man ought, in Aristotle's view, to come to hold the ends, motives and desires of the morally virtuous individual so that out of the right dispositions for moral actions he aims for the long-term good

described as eudaimonia: "The conception of the ultimate end as partly consisting in a life or morally virtuous action, therefore, is in effect a conception of eudaimonia as a comprehensively inclusive second-order end."<sup>50</sup> Moral virtue and a high level of practical reasoning appear to meet in eudaimonia. But there seems no good reason to require the man of practical reason to be morally virtuous.

The limit of Aristotle's argument attaching moral virtue to practical reasoning (and autonomy) remains unresolved and the issue of moral virtue and autonomy will be considered further in Chapter 3 but on a different basis, an analysis of personhood.

A somewhat different perspective upon practical reason demonstrates the uneasy separation of reason into theoretical and practical aspects which Ryle has agreed is mistaken.<sup>51</sup> Reason as theory may be taken to involve the manipulation of propositions whereas reason as practice may be considered in connection with action, morals, practical life, "our capacity ... to feel the proper feelings towards the inhabitants and the furniture of this world."<sup>52</sup> But Ryle shows that such capacities are not somehow internally separated from thought; therefore, "... in telling you what I was amused at ... I am already telling you the thought without which I should not have been amused."<sup>53</sup> The thought was not the cause of the amusement in discrete, separated form from the amusement itself, it was part of the amusement - just as (says Ryle) the heads side of a coin is still a part of the coin. Therefore, it is not the case that, "... to do what one is doing or saying, one must perform, like lightning, a bit of thinking and then pass on to a bit of doing or saying."<sup>54</sup>

Theory and practice as thought and action are parts of the same and practical reason interlocks thought and action. It also has relevance to practical living and everyday human interactions, choices and decisions. In schools, for example, practical reason applies to situations within classrooms but also to those on school corridors, in school yards and playgrounds, the comings and goings, the smoking, the drinking, the glue sniffing. Practical reason also applies to the interpretation of situations by the individual's evaluation of the educational gains of work experience or community service. It has to do with a cognitive and affective active involvement in lived experience at first hand as well as in intellectual practices confined, largely, to classrooms.

Situations of practical life involve personal autonomy because they involve all aspects of our nature as persons. Individuals do not function as in Kant's rational model, (as argued in Section 3) nor does practical reason operate, to use Wiggins's example, like a snooker player who has to choose from the many shots possible the one which rates highest as a combination of, (a) the value of the shot (the colour of the ball) and, (b) the opportunity left available for the next shot.<sup>55</sup> Human life situations are rarely like this:

"... the relevant features of the situation may not all jump to the eye. To see what they are, to prompt the imagination to play upon the question and let it activate in reflection and thought-experiment whatever concerns and passions it should activate, may require a high order of situation appreciation or as Aristotle would say perception (aisthēsis)."<sup>56</sup>

Human concerns may be priorities for some yet not for others and will compete for a place on a hierarchy of priority. The sufficiency of any reason is unlikely to be a foregone certainty. A person faced with a particular situation may, on reflection, change his mind

when he grasps the costs or implications of proceeding as he may have intended. The individual has to find a way through the many possibilities confronting him and use his practical reason as part of his autonomous judgement of situations. Practical reason enables the individual to judge those key concerns and considerations within situations so that out of those cognitive and affective appraisals he comes to know how, when and why to act.

It is misleading to regard reason as only properly evident in education when linked to the pursuit of truth as part of some intrinsic value within forms of knowledge. Human life situations do not neatly fit any particular set of laws or rules. The individual may only have practical reason upon which to rely and although some implications attaching to Aristotle's view of practical reason may be unjustified, as considered above, he may well be correct to consider that,

"... all law is universal but about some things it is not possible to make a universal statement which shall be correct ... In fact this is the reason why all things are not determined by law, viz. that about some things it is impossible to lay down a law, so that a decree is needed. For when the thing is indefinite the rule also is indefinite..." 57

As in the practical syllogism, practical reason comprises reason and feeling, for a starting point in reasoning is the desire or want felt by the individual and its involvement, subsequently, in the judgement and action which follow. Wants and reasons are closely related: "... 'wants' emerge from 'wishes' when children begin to grasp that means can be taken to bring about or avoid ... pleasurable or painful conditions. And with the emergence of 'wants' the notion of 'reason' emerges as well. For a 'reason for action'

is that end, for the sake of attaining or avoiding which, means can be devised."<sup>58</sup> Wants may express emotional turmoil within the individual and when an individual does not do what he apparently wants to do, in the sense that duty or obligation seem to override the want, that want seems to be lost. However, if a person acts because of what he feels he ought to do rather than do what he originally wanted, he must want to do what he ought to do more than wanting to realise his original preference. Therefore, the reason that a person eventually acts upon comprises the want which carries the requirement of action with it. Thus, "the final explanation of what one does in terms of one's beliefs, which supplies an assessable reason not backed by any further reason, must correspond to a want."<sup>59</sup> The reason which the individual finally holds to comprises his ultimate want. To want to do something is, then, to have some reason for doing it and that reason results in the action which comprises the end of that reason; without the want, the reason lacks force to generate action and so the want becomes the reason. The original want may not be the final want because reason informs it but the final want is the reason for the choice and the action. If reason is somehow divorced from wants, as Kant's Practical Reason entails, reason is unlikely to influence action but, "... a want, to be a want at all, must influence action, whereas reason need not."<sup>60</sup> Kant presumably immerses wants within his concept of Practical Reason but does not indicate this in his description. But, as demonstrated by the practical syllogism, the want coupled with practical necessity produces the reason for the action.

Wants and reasons combine in the individual's judgement of situations therefore. And the sufficiency of reasons is determined by an appreciation of the nature of the situation in question.



The practical necessity which informs the person's wants enables him to exercise a judgement and act upon practical reason.

Some educational implications of reason, practical reason and autonomy

Professor R. F. Dearden considers that an intellectual education is one particularly well suited to the development of personal autonomy. Reason governs such an education which need not be narrowly conceived as Dearden shows by including not only cognitive elements within it but emotion and moral judgement also.<sup>61</sup> Elsewhere<sup>62</sup> he stresses the importance of objective standards linked to truth (discussed in Section 2 above) which an intellectual education should yield when expressing rational thinking; he refers to the learner working towards the solution of a "geometrical problem" or thinking "independently" in mathematics, science or history. A failure to achieve understanding of knowledge based upon objective, rational standards explains the "inconsistencies, muddles and mistakes" which characterise the learner who has not mastered the appropriate rational standards. In Dearden's view, the heights of an intellectual education are to be found in the range of studies encountered within a university where knowledge, argued to be intrinsically valuable and based upon objective, public standards of reason, is held to be true beyond, "... particularities of time, place and identity..."<sup>63</sup> This pursuit of truth in rational knowledge is what Peters argues should be supported by a calm, disinterested passion for reason.

Although accepting the intrinsic value of rational knowledge and its public standards, Dearden's main justification for initiating a person into knowledge is in order to develop that individual's autonomy; an intellectual education is, therefore, to be considered instrumentally and practically valuable as a means to that end. Dearden wants to maintain personal autonomy as an aim of

education but the capacity of the individual to make judgements out of his personal autonomy is also what he seems to anticipate since autonomy, "... involves at least some degree of reflexive consciousness of oneself as having a distinct mind of one's own to make up and one's own life to lead, and it will eventually lead to claiming the right against others so to make up one's own mind and act."<sup>63</sup> The expectation that a person of sufficient autonomy will exercise autonomous judgements and act in respect of these goes beyond the confines of an intellectual education. Dearden refers to action and may be assuming more from an intellectual education in developing autonomy than such an education can deliver because it is not clear why personal autonomy developed within the confines of an intellectual education should be equally applicable to actions and situations within practical life outside that intellectual education.

Dearden considers that an individual in a professional career is likely to be more autonomous than a wage-slave. The implication seems to be that the one who progresses furthest in an intellectual education is likely to have achieved more personal autonomy than one who abandoned an intellectual education much earlier. A wage-slave can exercise some measure of autonomy personal to himself and his family life, perhaps, but he lacks the capacity to exercise a wider autonomy. The doctor, the lawyer, the teacher who proceed further than many with intellectual education are, on this account, more likely to be able to exercise personal autonomy than, say, the successful entrepreneur who gave up on a formal intellectual education years before the others. However, the education and professional training of doctors, lawyers and teachers requires their engagement in practical activities having instrumental purposes which must be motivating to those learners since their wants (to acquire the

practical abilities and skills to practise in their chosen professions) sustain them through the rigours of learning and training. Their later education is practical rather than intellectual. Indeed, the wage-slave, whom Dearden puts in contrast to the professional, may be an aspect of all persons and the decline in the need for the unskilled in our modern society requires, increasingly, individuals to be more skilled, more competent, more able to act in situations of increasing complexity than ever before - whatever their occupation.

Reason in education has a practical dimension which requires direct individual engagement in actions and situations involving educational practices. The association of wants with reasons within practical reason emphasises the need to use reason appropriate to the level of individual development (as Piaget describes). Reasoning with a child must be done in relation to his stage of development if the practical necessities of a situation are to merge with his wants, yielding practical reason meaningful to him and resulting in action. The reasoning which teachers and parents undertake with the young should aim to inform the child's wants in order to assist the resolution of conflicts between wants so that situations can be appreciated from different situational perspectives. But without wants, reasons are unlikely to bite. In situations involving guidance to the young, attachments and caring relationships between children and young persons and their parents and teachers are of major significance because if such relationships are, "...affective and affectionate..."<sup>64</sup> there may be more likelihood that wants informed by reason ensure an appropriate appreciation of situations both within educational contexts and in all dimensions of practical life.

If an individual learner is to exercise reason and develop autonomy in education, he must directly engage in a practice. His thoughts and feelings must engage the nature of the practice directly whatever the nature of that practice - intellectual or otherwise. And if reason is to be realised in education and in practical life later on, all educational activity must be in some way, practical. In an intellectual education, intellectual practices, such as Dearden's examples of mathematics and history, should be experienced at first hand; the teacher's task is, then, to ensure the student encounters the actuality of the practice - but at a level appropriate to the learner's reason. The endeavours and dilemmas of learning should be felt by the learner. And it may be that it is chiefly through procedural aspects of knowledge, in learning how to learn and in the acquisition of skills that reason in all its dimensions can facilitate the development of personal autonomy within education. (This issue is further explored in Part 3.)

Should a student not engage his wants coupled with the sufficiency of his reasons in learning within those practices which comprise his education at first hand, he will not have opportunity to develop his own powers of reason nor is it likely that his autonomy will develop. There certainly seems little justification to claim that personal autonomy will develop outside the strict confines of the intellectual education which Dearden describes unless the individual is required to engage his reason directly to the practices of his education.

What should be a more likely means to ensure the development of personal autonomy within education and outside it in practical life is for the learner to grapple directly with the thoughts, feelings and actions entailed by reason when it is applied within an educational

practice. Thus, in an intellectual education the student should think and feel as a mathematician and the history student should handle the implications of particular primary and secondary evidence directly; only by seeking solutions himself to the problems of learning within the practices of intellectual disciplines may the individual's reason be exercised in learning situations and so perhaps also carry into other situations in practical life in general.

The implications of reason in formal education are explored in Part 3. There I shall endeavour to show how the learner's reason may have most scope when educational activity is a series of practices directly engaging the individual himself for only then may that person's reason be effectively utilized.

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### CHAPTER 3      PERSONS AND AUTONOMY

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## Introduction

The preceding two chapters analyse the components of autos and nomos which together comprise autonomy. Reason and the criteria it picks out inform the nomos of the concept and authenticity more particularly illuminates the autos (self). However, the autonomy under consideration is personal autonomy and the adjective holds major significance as Dearden indicates: "There is no redundancy in insisting on the adjective in this phrase. Autonomy can intelligibly be attributed to many other sorts of things besides persons."<sup>1</sup>

The first use of autonomy may have been in connection with the Athenian polis, a city-state maintaining an individual identity under its own laws, traditions and customs. And the city-state was regarded by Aristotle as the only political form in which the individual person could pursue his life's purpose or telos which Aristotle associated with eudaimonia (referred to in the previous chapter as human flourishing or happiness) or, as MacIntyre expresses it, "... the state of being well and doing well in being well, of a man's being well-favoured himself and in relation to the divine."<sup>2</sup> It is the good for the individual and for the polis for in Aristotle's experience eudaimonia and autonomy were goods both for the individual person and for the state. The private good of the individual was inextricably linked with the public good so that each member of the community acknowledged responsibilities towards other members. However, in modern society when an individual has the power of autonomy but lacks a sense of the public good, his autonomy may be used to exploit others. Dearden instances the 'rational egoist' as such an individual.

This chapter aims to show how the implication of person, in, for and through education has considerable significance for the concept of personal autonomy as an educational ideal. Persons have both rights and responsibilities attaching to them. An individual has rights respecting his status as a person; those individuals who commit murder are not put to death in this society; paternalist interventions are circumscribed. (Paternalism is the subject of Chapter 6.) However, responsibilities also attach to persons although in everyday life there may be no certain way by which to ensure an individual exercises the responsibilities of a person with acts with due regard to appropriate standards of inter-personal life. Nevertheless personhood as an ideal does hold implications for responsibilities of a social and moral kind for among the 'endowment' of a person explored in Section (1) below is the concept of universality and reciprocal awareness and relationship to other persons. Section (3) further examines the social context in which the individual person develops in personal autonomy; Section (4) outlines the value of a sense of community within which the personally autonomous individual functions.

It is my contention throughout this chapter and the thesis as a whole that an ideal of personhood does attach social and moral responsibility to the individual. This is not to claim that all 'persons' are necessarily moral. But to hold personal autonomy to be an educational ideal and properly to explicate the relevance of personal autonomy (as distinct from any other autonomy) both attach moral and social responsibility to the concept of a personally autonomous individual. However, I should emphasise at this point that my brief is very different from that of John White's and others who have explored means of reconciling pupil-centred educational aims

with moral aims.<sup>3</sup> White explores the area of educational aims as a whole; my concern is solely an analysis of the concept of a person in connection with personal autonomy.

The format of this chapter is first to define in Section (1) what the concept of a 'person' may be held to be in comparison and contrast with the 'self' and the reciprocal nature of the social identity and responsibilities of persons is explored. The Kantian concept of a person as an 'end' is analysed and that 'distinctive endowment' of a person referred to by Mill is described in its components of reason, the will and the universality of reciprocal responsibilities.

Section (2) demonstrates rational autonomy as the end of psychological theories of the development of persons and shows the related concepts of 'person' and 'rational autonomy' to be closely associated. An alternative perspective of individual development in the virtues (from the Greek tradition) is also considered as part of the theme of the development of persons.

Sections (3) and (4) consider the individual of personal autonomy in a social context and explore the sense of community which attaches essential social and moral responsibilities of personhood to the educational ideal of personal autonomy.

The chapter concludes, in Section 5, with a brief discussion of Dearden's view of personal autonomy which the implications of personhood analysed in this chapter put in question.

(1) The concept of a person

In order to attain personal autonomy, one must first be a person and in clarifying what is meant by a person it is easy to adopt a stipulative definition which may colour consideration of autonomy applied to persons. However, use of a stipulative definition here will be resisted because, "... stipulative definitions of person can have a dramatic effect on the outcomes of metaphysical, moral and political reasonings."<sup>4</sup> But as the Oxford English Dictionary offers seven separate meanings with several meanings sub-divided, the temptation to stipulate is strong and, perhaps, may not be altogether avoided.

Bailey stipulates: "By 'person' I mean a rational living body."<sup>5</sup> He seems to combine two sub-divisions of the O.E.D. for his definition: 'a self-conscious or rational being' and 'living body of a human being'. And he produces a hierarchy from this:

- "a) non-living bodies ... things
- b) non-sentient living bodies ... plants
- c) non-rational sentient living bodies ... animals
- d) rational living bodies ... persons." 6

Just why persons lack sentience in item (d) is never fully clarified because Bailey indicates that; "Recognition of something as a person involves the attribution to the other of feelings, capacities for pleasure and pain ..." etc.<sup>7</sup> Sentience is simply irrelevant or inconvenient to Bailey's argument which follows his definition. Further, the style of Voltaire's reported comment on the Holy Roman Empire as neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire may be extended to Bailey's definition of person as 'rational living body' as it is arguable that a person must be either, rational, or living or a body.

The insane or infants may well qualify as persons although they are unlikely to display rationality; however, they are both members of a rational species and, thus, rationality may, perhaps, be assumed, whereas displays of intelligence by higher primates do not qualify them as rational. But not all persons are living in a physical or human sense as grammatical use of first, second, third persons, or theological use of the three persons of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, or institutions described as bodies such as universities or colleges illustrate. Descartes is even prepared to dispense with Bailey's body by identifying a person with a mind only: "I was a substance whose whole essence and nature consists only in thinking" for, "... the mind by which I am is wholly distinct from the body."<sup>8</sup> Presumably then, on Descartes's view, a person who stopped thinking for ever, ceased to be a person and it might be in order to switch off the life support machine for the one whose brain was dead and who would, never again, be able to think. Descartes's view is constricting in that a person need never have contact with others throughout his life, but he would be a person because he was a centre of consciousness. However, most persons may well regard their bodies as of crucial significance to them and the loss of a limb may be of immeasurable significance to a person; physical pains and pleasures and bodily actions are matters of immediate note to the individual.

Bailey's innocuous definition of 'rational living body' attributed to a person is, then, stipulative, but virtually any definition of person is likely to be so because of the wide-ranging implications of the concept of a person. Perhaps to accept that rationality should be, in a normative sense, a major characteristic of a person and that he or she is a human being is sufficiently



broad and in keeping with common usage to explore in connection with the concept of personal autonomy.

Practical reason, as the nomos of autonomy may then be held as a normative component of a person. But the autos or self of autonomy, described as authentic in Chapter 1, has yet to be explored in connection with a person. One perspective upon the relationship of autos and person would be simply to equate the two. But Dearden points out, as indicated above, that the adjective, personal, as part of personal autonomy, is not redundant because autonomy may be applied to many things other than to persons. Therefore, when autonomy is applied to persons rather than to city-states etc., the nature of the autos is presumably influenced by the implication of the meaning of person.

The O.E.D., in a philosophical sense, describes a person as a 'self-conscious or rational being' or as the 'actual self of a human being', thereby inferring that self or autos and person are the same thing. Nevertheless, usage does indicate some difference. Self is used reflexively, for example, as in myself or yourself, and person can be used to identify others grammatically or literally. Persons may be counted rather than selves. My person, and its evidential associations, may be identified in a way that my self cannot because while others may identify my person, only I can know myself. If I leave my jacket with wallet (containing not unduly incriminating evidence about me) on the classroom desk and invite my pupils to explore this evidence, they find out about my person by using the evidence rather than about my self. An individual knows his own body and mind in the most intimate way; they are not separable from himself and loss of a limb may well be of drastic importance to the individual's self. Although such a loss would

also be of importance to a person, an individual would still be recognised as the same person by those who formally knew him in spite of his physical loss. One who becomes mentally deranged may still be recognised as the same person by others when he may fail to recognise his original self. Therefore (as described in Chapter 1) treatment of a person who cannot recognise himself may require confirmation of his person (as his public self) by his psychoanalyst and by other persons.

However, in real life (rather than in conceptual analysis) person and self are the same. Sartre's concept of self and criterionless choice of self were shown to be incoherent in Chapter 1 because although the authentic individual is a deep, reflective evaluator of his own motives and purposes, he is a person in the world of others and in relationship with individuals, groups, communities and the social world. Personhood should not be conceived of as a role in which the self may hide in Sartrian mauvaise foi. One's self should be present in the person of that 'social self' recognised by others as father, son, husband, teacher, community member etc.

"These are not characteristics that belong to human beings accidentally, to be stripped away in order to discover 'the real me'. They are part of my substance, defining partly at least and sometimes wholly my obligations and my duties. Individuals inherit a particular space within an interlocking set of social relationships; lacking that space they are nobody, or at least a stranger or an outcast." 9

Nevertheless, one's person is how one's self is identified in relationships in social life in general:

"... the concept of a person is the concept of one who has the concept of a person. This draws attention to the reflexive nature of the concept of a person and that in turn leads to a view of persons as necessarily social, since persons not only see themselves as persons but also others as persons like themselves." 10

Thus, I am recognised as a person by others and recognise others as persons in turn and this generates the idea of a social group of persons. A person is a social being, therefore; he does not live a separate, totally isolated existence; he lives in a world of others and shares this world with others. He has, "... a shared conception of the world - for example, a shared concept of a person - or shared purposes as when persons co-operate to bring about common ends, as in formal education."<sup>11</sup> Sharing a common conception of the world, persons can consciously bring about change and, therefore, may be held responsible for what it is they bring about; things, plants and animals, from Bailey's hierarchy referred to above, are not attributed responsibility because, unlike persons, they cannot consistently bring about change.

One's claims to be any particular person or kind of person must be recognised and upheld by other persons. If I claim to be any particular person, my person requires recognition by others as such for I cannot be a leader or member of any group unless that group recognises me as leader or member. Reciprocity is imperative; language only has meaning between persons in groups, communities and societies; money is a commodity of value only to exchange between persons; a teacher must, "... be seen by others as in authority, the others concerned including some at least of those over whom authority is exercised."<sup>12</sup>

The reciprocal nature of the social identity and responsibilities of persons holds implications for the nature of the relationships which develop between them. A person can consider himself within his group or community as, "... socially responsible or accountable for his actions."<sup>13</sup> Therefore, impersonal, moral standards should follow in the social rules and interaction between persons in society as from childhood they increasingly come to recognise themselves as persons as seen by, "... others who are also seen as seeing themselves in the same way."<sup>14</sup>

In what follows in this chapter, then, a person is taken to be the concept of a rational human being existing in societies or communities and as such a concept attaching to it moral significance, "... For morality, if it exists for anything, exists for the sake of human beings, not for the sake of a philosophically defined set of rational substances."<sup>15</sup> The association of person with reason, community and morals and to personal autonomy are themes explored below.

(a) Persons as ends

Immanuel Kant lived in the wake of a scientific revolution which stimulated the ideas of eighteenth century enlightenment. To the scientists of the seventeenth century, nature seemed a vast mechanism over which man could exercise control. Man could use his scientific discoveries to his own ends and although his new knowledge made him an agent of change, he was also part of nature and the natural world. The enlightenment held human reason to be centrally important, not only in science, but also in the ethics which had to take account of scientific advances. Kant, however, in attempting to explicate the centrality of Practical Reason in

governing man, seems to employ reason in man as the essence of his ethics. But, "Reason can supply ... no genuine comprehension of man's true end; ... "<sup>16</sup> because whereas in the ancient world, Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics describes a teleological scheme showing a "... fundamental contrast between man - as - he - happens - to - be and man - as - he - could - be - if - he - realised - his - essential - nature ..."<sup>17</sup>, Kantian reason had no such telos. For Aristotle and his mediaeval commentator, Thomas Aquinas, exercise of the virtues ensured the transition of man towards his "true end" or telos. But this tradition in ethics may have been lost in the eighteenth century enlightenment when the human self was first thought to have achieved recognition of its own autonomy. Thus Kant's ethical theory may, in some respects, be seen as an attempt to find a telos for man in reason and autonomy to replace the loss of the traditional, ancient concept of the public identity of a person exercising the virtues and thus realising his true end as a rational human being whose activities were circumscribed by a social and moral context.

In Kant's theory, man is identified as an end and a moral being; "... morality is the condition under which alone a rational being can be an end in itself, because only through it is it possible to be a legislative member in the realm of ends... For, as an end in himself, he is destined to be legislative in the realm of ends, free from all laws of nature and obedient only to those which he himself gives."<sup>18</sup> Things are accorded relative value and of use only for the satisfaction or happiness they may provide for the individual. In Kant's view, an autonomous individual or person holds absolute value and every rational person is the concern of every other rational person. And it is wrong to use

persons as "means only"; persons must not lose their dignity as persons to be made, for example, slaves or tools of others because this would be to treat them only as a means to some other end.

Persons are used as means in normal, everyday social transactions. If I buy or sell anything to another person, both he and I use each other as a means to achieve the sale or purchase; however, neither of us should use each other as a means only. There is a strict limit to which we use each other only as a means. During the transaction between us, I should still regard the other person as a person in his own right, a sharer in our common social identity, embracing and going beyond his role as salesman and in this sense I regard him as an end in himself. For Kant, reason led him to a perspective that persons are "... objective ends - that is, things whose evidence is in itself an end..." Therefore, his practical imperative is: "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end."<sup>19</sup>

To describe someone as an end seems odd. An end is the desired product of a course of action distinguished from means or methods; in the era of payment by results in schools, children's demonstration of knowledge to inspectors was a means by which the school gained the end of financial security. Schools currently affected by falling pupil rolls may see the attracting of new pupils as a means of keeping teachers' jobs. However, if an end is, in itself, valuable so that for example, a pupil is not only regarded as a means of absorbing knowledge, but is seen as a person in his own right who is better for the knowledge that he gains, then he is, in a sense, the end of the process of learning. So, "... to respect a person as an end is to respect him for those features

which make him what he is as a person and which, when developed, constitute his flourishing."<sup>20</sup> Those features are what Mill describes as, "... the distinctive endowment of a human being."<sup>21</sup> They are the merits of a person; they are what is intrinsically valuable about him or her.

(b) The 'endowment' of a person

(i) Reason, in Kant's view, is the power which, through its processes of legislation, will make a person moral and, therefore, the primary element of his endowment is his power to reason. Each person is linked to every other person by reason: "The practical necessity of acting according to ... duty, does not rest at all on feelings, impulses and inclinations; it rests merely on the relation of rational beings to one another, in which the will of the rational being must always be regarded as legislative, for otherwise it could not be thought of as an end in itself. Reason, therefore, relates every maxim of the will as giving universal laws to every other will..."<sup>22</sup> Reason, then, guides the will of the person in making maxims to be applied as universals. Kant's view of the relations between persons, the morality of social life, has a strong legalistic aspect in that it is always the maxim of a person's will which expresses a principle of universal legislation. In describing the principle that one should, "Act according to the maxim which can at the same time make itself a universal law "<sup>23</sup>, Kant requires that the actions of the individual should be those which every person should do or will, themselves. Reason is accorded the status of a power over the Moral Law which should be obeyed in a world community of persons who are free yet whose wills are controlled by their duty to obey the will of

other rational persons. In summary, then, rationality led to maxims of the will which became universalised moral laws which had to be obeyed and which Kant expressed as the Categorical Imperative.

However, there are difficulties with a Kantian perspective of the process leading to the Categorical Imperative as the 'endowment' of the person. The Renaissance may first have articulated an individualism which scientific ideas and the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century took further. Traditional social authority of priest or guardian and the individual's social and community identity - akin to the virtue which Aristotle terms friendliness, a public friendship between persons - diminished.<sup>24</sup> The motive force of the acts of the individual and that to which he had to account, in Kant's view, was conscience, a kind of inner self. It was those inner thoughts, the promptings, the overcoming of reluctance, the delays which made the individual his own man. He might decide that it was wrong to kill, to steal etc. but another might consider it right to perform an abortion or to steal a drug vital to a friend's life which he could not otherwise obtain. An individual acting according to his private conscience was performing a private act and his view of himself determined the nature of his moral actions. However, as this process was individualised, Kant sought a way to universalise moral issues so that each individual was bound by them. Each individual could make moral law and contribute to the binding power of universal moral law; each moral legislator acted according to the will of his conscience, his highest rational personality, which bound the individual to the universals which he, himself, willed. Should a man will that every member of a society could lie because he did so himself, chaos would result if nobody told the truth. Reason was the key endowment of the individual enabling him



to contribute to the making of this somewhat mechanical, legalistic concept of universal imperatives.

Kant's thesis is, however, open to question in that, "My judgement that certain general rules or principles pass the universalization test, does not suffice to show that I am morally bound to obey them."<sup>25</sup> And, if laws exist which do not pass the same test, this also does not decide that I should not obey them. "He (Kant) seems to have jumped from the fact that a society which grants its members democratic rights of participation in the making of laws, is autonomous, to the conclusion that the individual members of such a society are also literally autonomous."<sup>26</sup> After all, if a society is democratic in giving each person a share in the law-making of that society his share must be very small in any large modern society given that his share is equal to that of others. (Smaller communities may yield other perspectives.) Only if each person's self-legislating will co-incides with all others' wills can the law be universalised and even if all wills do coincide, any one member of that society can still question whether he should obey. Kant's moral system based on rationality does not determine that 'endowment' of the individual referred to above. Reason, alone, cannot prescribe a content to morality as Kant's scheme assumes.

Although Kant's thesis of morals is questionable, reason is of major significance to the nature of the 'endowment' of a person. Practical reason, discussed in Chapter 2, in both its rational and affective dimensions, is concerned with actions of the individual and although reason may not, alone, produce moral precepts, it can significantly influence the form by which a set of moral beliefs may be arrived at; thus, "... although a consideration of rationality

cannot provide us with any help on the issue of what moral principles we should adopt and act upon, it can tell us a good deal about the form, the manner, the language of our moral code, displaying the need for this to be coherent, consistent and subject to evidence and reasons of a public kind."<sup>27</sup> Indeed, Downey and Kelly argue that to seek for a set content of moral principles is to "... surrender one's autonomy and all claims to individuality."<sup>28</sup> If one doesn't have a set content of morals one retains autonomy and individuality, in their view, and this, in itself, is a moral gain. However, discussion of respect for persons and first and second order moral principles are reserved for Section b(iii) below.

Dearden also finds that reason cannot prescribe moral principles: "Moral concern for others is moral concern for others, and not for the protection of our own autonomy."<sup>29</sup> And he regards morality as a limit upon the freedom of the individual and, hence, a threat to autonomy. But he contrasts such a situation with one by which, "If we start from a moral point of view then a different sort of autonomy becomes possible. We can now make independent moral judgements, and we can reflect (morally) on the criteria of judgement which we employ, holding to what we really think with what will now become moral integrity."<sup>30</sup> However, it is not "we", alone, who must start from the moral point of view. It is the person within personal autonomy who is prescriptive of a moral point of view within the nature of the concept. Persons logically precede their attainment of any measure of autonomy and if morals exist for anything they exist for human beings as persons in that public or social sense referred to above: "... it is the ability to think for oneself, to make choices and to act morally ... that constitutes what it means to be human."<sup>31</sup>

Children must be brought up from infancy in some context of values; by engaging in educational practices, opportunity for a cultivation of virtues within developing dispositions should be afforded the learner but only if he has scope for some measure of the exercise of autonomy in his learning. Personal autonomy should then be a means for developing dispositions of a moral as well as an intellectual nature. (The exercise of personal autonomy in educational practices is considered in Part 3.) Rational autonomy and developing moral dispositions become complementary, in an educational context. The person comes to show, perhaps, those characteristics of personhood described by Wilson:

PHIL (HC), "... having the concept of a 'person'."  
 PHIL (CC), "... Claiming to use this concept in an overriding, prescriptive and universalized (O,P and U) principle."  
 PHIL (RSF) (DO and PO), "... having feelings which support this principle, either of a 'duty-oriented' (DO) or a 'person-oriented' (PO) kind." 32

Baier<sup>33</sup> presents an analysis of how a person exercises his reason in making moral judgements. He offers four types of proposition in a hierarchy of rational judgements. The first type yields answers to questions about whether it is right or wrong for someone to do something at one particular point in time; the second type considers whether acts such as killing are wrong for everyone in all circumstances or only for certain categories of persons in particular circumstances; the third type of proposition tests the second type and comprises general principles such as justice or benevolence. The fourth, final, level of propositions concerns statements about the rationale for and function of the institution of morality and this level of proposition justifies, questions or explains a person's adherence to the general principles the individual comes to hold from level three upwards.

However, Baier is unable to show why persons should reason in this way. If an individual lives in a moral community, Baier's hierarchy of moral reasoning carries weight; it becomes valuable and desirable to all to live in a moral community. However, an individual may prefer to live in a moral community and not follow the rules; he may reason very differently from the hierarchy Baier describes, or he may only reason according to it for solely prudential motives or for even more selfish purposes to exploit opportunities for selfish gains from a community very largely given over to Baier's analysis.

The educational task has to do with the development of a sense of moral community, in schools and in wider communities later on, in which the dispositions of rational persons in exercising moral and intellectual virtues are formed; therefore, "... the fact that the concept of a person entails a community of persons who acknowledge each other's interests as reasons for actions explains why self-interest must be defined as consistent with the interests of others and thus with morality."<sup>34</sup>

(ii) A further component of the 'endowment' of a person is his will which Peters rightly points out is only contingently associated with autonomy. It is, however, central to the nature of personhood. A person exercises his will and it is regarded as a quality of that individual rather than some component of the nomos of his autonomy because, like reason, it may be thought of as a process enabling the individual to fulfil his purposes. Straughan describes two traditional perspectives on the will as competitive and conformist.<sup>35</sup> The former is considered to be essentially Kantian in the struggle it entails between inclination and obligation; the latter tradition is, in

origin, Aristotelian and the account which follows holds, largely, but not exclusively to the latter.

Kant views the will as 'autonomous' in that only action compatible with the autonomy of the will is permitted. The will is based upon reason which is distinguished from desires, wants and the emotions. The collective will of all rational persons produces the Categorical Imperatives which all persons must obey. The rational will is thought to be controlled by allowing the interests of all rational persons to influence the individual's choices and he becomes both maker and subject of the moral law. Thus the maxims of the will become the basis of universal law, binding upon all; everyone is enjoined to act on the principle that: "... his will is therefore never to perform an action except on a maxim such as can also be regarded as universal law, and consequently such that the will can regard itself as at the same time making universal law by means of its maxim."<sup>36</sup> However, the Kantian concept of reason is considered in Chapter 2, Section 3, and there it is argued that reason and inclination or desire must together influence the will. If emotion is removed from reason there seems little prospect for reason to engage the will of the individual, therefore, practical reason encompasses reason and emotion and a person's inclinations should be acknowledged as part of the will.

The somewhat oddly named conformist tradition of the will is, perhaps, more apparent in Herbart's analysis of the will because although considerably influenced by the Enlightenment and Kant, Herbart's analysis shows associations with a more ancient tradition. He shares Kant's conviction that the essence of morality lay in a 'good' will, therefore it is the teacher's task to make the child's will 'good'. Education, for Herbart, is concerned with morality

first and foremost, but morality is also made a part of a highly structured pedagogy sub-divided into government, discipline and instruction forming a kind of grid, or synthesis, of teaching and learning. Underlying the whole educational scheme is ethics and linked to it is the will.<sup>37</sup>

Herbart analysed five elements of the will with each element sub-divided. The first element is inner freedom which is possible only when the two parts of the will are in harmony; one part, the 'objective' or 'obeying' will is based in wants, desires, appetites and the 'subjective' or 'commanding' part of the will is that responsive to moral considerations. The 'obeying' part is commanded by its counterpart creating inner freedom for the individual. This has similarity to Kantian reason subjecting emotion to the maxims of the will, but Herbart considers there could be an intuitive recognition of the good - like the ear recognising a combination of musical sounds as pleasing. The idea of balance or harmony is evident. However, there are evident difficulties associated with intuition and an intuitive sense of the good because clearly unless the dispositions of the person are moral, intuition may well mislead.

The second element of the will, in Herbart's analysis, is 'perfection'; this expresses the force of the will, a kind of ego-strength, and Herbart can admire Napoleon Bonaparte's will although disapproving of the directions it took. The third element of the will is 'benevolence' shown when the will of one person complements that of another and mutual striving develops. The fourth and fifth elements chiefly concern the relations between wills; 'rights' or 'law' is a fourth element and ensures that competition between wills is resolved by 'law' in the attainment of the object. 'Law' should operate in maintaining a conflict-free harmony between wills, not

displeasing to an aesthetic sense. The final element is 'recompense' or 'requittal' to ensure that if 'law' is infringed - recompense is approved; Herbart seems to have an analogy with punishment arising from the criminal law in mind.

All elements of the will should harmonize, in Herbart's analysis - both the 'objective' and 'subjective' parts and all five elements: "... only all of them combined can give direction to life."<sup>38</sup> Irrational actions might result from a loss of any one component because man is considered likely to be morally one-sided. Although all elements of the will should harmonize in the adult, Herbart considers that young children will most benefit from emphasis in teaching an extension of the inner will at first and education should stimulate wide-ranging interests to give scope for this development.

Herbart's analysis of the will is the essence of his theory of ethics and is Kantian in making the will of major importance and in associating this with reason for the determinations of the will are to be essentially rational in kind. However, Herbart's emphasis upon harmony and balance between the elements of the will in order to achieve an appropriate means seems reflective of an Aristotelian perspective upon the virtues. Sophrosyne, a balance or harmony and a uniting of the virtues may express a synthesis of moral virtues in Aristotle's view. Such a virtue seems to represent the idea of self-control or self-rule as in a balance of reason and feeling achieved in practical reason.

Also partly in the sphere of a Kantian, competitive perspective on the will is Peters<sup>39</sup> who views it as concerned with action having strong connections with moral considerations. Consistency in holding

to moral principles, in his view, is only possible if persons, "... genuinely care about the considerations which are incorporated in fundamental principles." Standing firm against desires and wants or to "social pressure" is only likely if rational persons are, "... passionately devoted to fairness, freedom and the pursuit of truth and if they have a genuine respect for others and are intensely concerned if they suffer."<sup>40</sup> It is shown in Chapter 2 Section 3 that emotions may be motives and it seems unlikely that a rational person will come to exercise his will unless he wants to do so. Peters refers above to a passionate devotion to fairness, freedom and truth, to a genuine respect for others and intense concern for others' sufferings. And it may well be unlikely that children come to care, rationally, for others unless they want to do so and are committed in the emotional terms used by Peters to show that care and concern in moral action. A person may come to have such cares only if his dispositions incline him to that perspective; if the virtues are actually exercised in an educational situation, moral dispositions are more likely to be enhanced. This issue will be explored in Section 2 below.

An inter-relationship between reason, emotion, care, concern and strength of purpose from both the competitive and conformist perspectives of the will are evident in Wilson's analysis of KRAT in which he distinguishes four components:

"KRAT (1) (RA) Being in practice 'relevantly alert' to (noticing) moral situations, and seeing them as such (describing them in terms PHIL etc.).

KRAT (1) (TT) Thinking thoroughly about such situations, and bringing to bear whatever PHIL, EMP, and GIG one has.

KRAT (1) (OPU) As a result of the foregoing making an overriding, prescriptive, and universalised decision to act in people's interests.

KRAT (2) Being sufficiently wholehearted, free from unconscious countermotivation, etc., to carry out (when able) the above decision in practice."<sup>41</sup>



The outline of personal development presented in Section (2) below demonstrates how an individual may come to have a will akin to Wilson's analysis.

(iii) The final component of the 'endowment' of a person to be considered here is the relation of a person to a concept of universality in the responsibilities of personhood. A person has a social identity; he lives in relationship to other persons. He is aware of others and they reciprocate this awareness. Group activities involve behaviour and habits which are shared by members of the group:

"The possession of the concept of a person makes it possible for an individual to be seen and to see himself as socially responsible or accountable for his actions; it also makes it possible for a group of such persons to acquire impersonal standards by reference to which such actions can be judged. Standards which apply to all members of a community, thus giving it its basic identity, and which are thought of as having overriding importance, are usually called moral standards." 42

Should a person not be held responsible for what he does, he is, then, to be denied the status of a person in the sense given above.

Kant draws out this concept of the relation of person to person in his description of persons as ends who all, equally, by the combined force of collective reason, through the maxims of the will, make universal law and thus impose the moral standards referred to by Langford, above. That every person has to obey rules of conduct governing the behaviour of all rational persons is a view which Kant may have acquired from Rousseau. Kant refers, for example, to the, "... felt dependence of the private will upon the general will,"<sup>43</sup> and the concept of the general will he, presumably, derives from Rousseau's The Social Contract in which the nature of the contract between persons is described: "... whoso gives himself to all gives

himself to none."<sup>44</sup> Each member of the social group is to acquire the same rights as those which each other member surrenders, thus each person has precisely the same rights and, as parties to the "social pact", "... each of us contributes to the group his person and the powers which he wields as a person under the supreme direction of the general will ..."<sup>45</sup> The general will is the strength of the community and aims at the good and even though only a minority of the community know the good, eventually their expression in the general will should lead the whole community to the right ends. However, how this theory might work in practice is never demonstrated by Rousseau who does produce federal constitution models in some attempt to engage persons as directly as possible in their communities. However, the problem of consensus is never resolved.

The basis of a public relationship between persons is often described as one of respect for persons: "To feel respect for persons ... is to be moved by the thought that another is, after all, a person like oneself (i.e. a centre of consciousness) and that as such he is to be accorded certain rights and to be treated with consideration."<sup>46</sup> To respect a person is, then, to acknowledge that another, like one's own person, is an expression in his own being of those attributes which are what a person is. Therefore if *x* is to be conceived of as a person it is inconsistent not to treat *x* as a person to whom respect is due on the basis of the nature of *x*'s person status. To treat a person as such is then to respect that person as he is (according to the concept described in this chapter) - a rational and social being with moral potentiality in his 'endowment' of personhood. Respect for persons is an imperative of social life because it is the acknowledgement not only of others as persons but also that others contribute to our self-identity.

It is in our reciprocal relationships that obligations arise and a person's authenticity is an enhancer of an awareness of care and concern for others. Therefore, the authentic person's evaluation of his own motives is not separable from his relationships to other persons. (Chapter 1, Section 4 explores self-evaluation of motives.)

There are, however those who appear not to respect persons - apparently failing to recognise the attributes which comprise what a person is; Dearden considers that the rational egoist may well be autonomous, for example. However, the individual who does not recognise the nature of another's personhood and, therefore, withholds respect so as to use another only as a means, is not fully rational quite aside from any other obligation. A rational egoist presumably bases his egoism upon his reason and argues that use of others as means only is in his interest and, as such, rational. But this argument is based upon reason and yet persons are reasoners, indeed, persons are the only source of reasoning, thus the rational egoist is inconsistent in his reasoning and is not rational because of his inconsistency. So-called rational egoists, therefore, claim to, "... value reasons, but do not take reason as far as it could be taken; they value reason, but not reasoners or persons, who are the only sources of reason."<sup>47</sup>

Bailey's point is a good one and endorses the idea of persons as the sources of reason and, thereby, requires that those who respect reason, respect persons. But Bailey further argues that there is a fundamental difference between rational care and affective care. He contrasts caring for a bone china cup with caring for a person: "In both cases ... caring involves treating the object in such a manner as to at least maintain the characteristics of its conceptualisation."<sup>48</sup> He then indicates that care about bone china

is dependent upon affective regard, but care for persons is based upon care for reason which is integral to what a person is. He must have a minimal concern for persons, therefore, irrespective of what he feels about them. However, it is the individual person who determines the nature of his regard for objects. A person may value a piece of china not for its aesthetic features but solely for its monetary value and he may secrete the object in a bank vault as an asset at a time of rapid monetary inflation; it will be, to him, a means only of preserving his wealth and although he may attach affective regard to his wealth, the piece of china, in its own right, holds no affective claim upon the owner. Another person may have affective regard for the china cup because he is a tea fiend and the object is a means of satisfying that desire. He may prefer a large mug, but for want of anything bigger, the china cup has to suffice - again, there is a lack of regard for the intrinsic nature of the object. But if the designer and maker of the object considers it he may well feel an affective regard for it because he has engaged in the practice of making the object which may, in its intrinsic being, express its creator's joys, satisfactions, frustrations and disappointments. The collector of bone china may also, in perhaps, a less direct way than the maker, but with aesthetic sensitivity, hold a strong affective regard for the object in its own right. The maker, above all, is the person whose dispositions have been influenced by his investment of himself in the practice of ceramics.

However, in caring for a person, Bailey's argument that if one cares for reason one must care for reasoners who are persons may be acceptable, but reason has an affective dimension, as described in Chapter 2, Sections 3 and 4. Reason cannot be isolated from emotion in Kant's sense as it has been shown that both work together

to determine action. However, it may be the case that to feel concern for reason is also to have respect for reasoners, but if a person is not rational, as is an insane person, for example, one can only respect rational kind. Nevertheless a minimal respect for a rational species of persons may be acceptable for a basic relationship to others. But human relationships exist in lived situations in which practical reason functions by enjoining emotions and wants to reasons and a person's sympathies must then also be part of his reason.

Bailey views the Christian injunctions concerning relationships with enemies and those who hate others as sensible only when considered as injunctions to act in the minimally rational sense of respecting others: "It does not make sense to urge me to have certain feelings towards my neighbours, enemies or denigrators, but it does make sense to remind me that even those who hate me are persons to whom I have a duty of minimal respect and concern."<sup>49</sup> But how the force of reason is to be so strong when divorced from all feeling as a motivating factor is unclear. The Christian is further enjoined to do good to enemies and denigrators and to show love, charity or caritas towards them. These injunctions are much stronger than a minimal respect. The Christian, hated by another person, does not simply stifle his reciprocal animosity by minimal respect, but shows an "active sympathy" or an "attitude of agape"<sup>50</sup> to that person because he is, presumably, wrong to hate the Christian and needs help to enable him to attain a true perspective on the relationship.

Persons are able to reason, thus respect for persons is entailed in the nature of what a person is as a reasoning being. However, the integration of emotion and reason in the nature of practical reason

(as shown in Chapter 1) involves an affective dimension in reasoning about persons, and, dependent upon a person's authentic awareness of things, an affective dimension in reasoning about inanimate objects also. (See note in references to this Chapter.)

Thus far, therefore, it is maintained that a person is a social and moral being with attaching responsibilities. A person may be thought of as an end in him or herself and is endowed with reason, a will and is due respect from other persons.

## (2) Development of a person

### Introduction

Developmental psychology sets out to describe the development of a person as a social and moral being. And this section will consider, under (a), some popular psychological accounts of personal development. The theories of Freud, Piaget, Kohlberg and others present models of development out of different and often restricted experience and research. Piaget's work with his own children is very particular in emphasis; Kohlberg's conclusions that moral development is invariant irrespective of culture are also based upon limited data. These psychologists present accounts of development of a sweeping kind which are, then, models - because a development must proceed in some direction and psychological accounts of personal moral development lead to a model of the person as a social and moral being. The individual emerges, within these models, in a manner akin to Froebel's analogy of the maturation of a human being and that of a tree - from seed, through stages of growth into a tree. An acorn cannot develop into anything other than an oak tree; a human new-born baby cannot develop into anything but a person.

Developmental psychologists pre-select the concept of what a person is, as a fully social and moral being and then demonstrate how development occurs to that point. The model of the end of the process of development is the same for all psychological theorists - that of rational autonomy exercised by the developed person. A social and moral being is then held to be rational and autonomous. However, without a prior conception of what it is to be a moral person, development theories would be meaningless; "... we persist in thinking that a morality of self-accepted principles is a higher human achievement than conformity, when the small numbers achieving this might lead to the conclusion that it is some kind of abnormal (and therefore undesirable) aberration from the statistical norm of conformity."<sup>51</sup> A person is held not to have reached the end of his development as a person until he is both rational and autonomous because he cannot be moral unless he is able to exercise rational choice - and chooses the good. Further consideration of psychological development is reserved for (a) below.

A second [and somewhat opposing] perspective, (b), upon the development of a person has its roots in Aristotle's thought and the concept of eudaimonia which complemented autonomy when applied to the polis. Eudaimonia was held to be the end (telos) for a person and pursuit of this end was a kind of individual development. Such pursuit was to travel through life with a purpose - "It is to find oneself placed at a certain point on a journey with set goals; to move through life is to make progress - or to fail to make progress - toward a given end. Thus a completed and fulfilled life is an achievement and death is the point at which someone can be judged happy or unhappy. Hence the ancient Greek proverb: 'Call no man happy until he is dead.'"<sup>52</sup> MacIntyre's modern perspective drawn

from the Greeks is in a tradition maintained in the middle ages as a quest: "The unity of an individual life is the unity of a narrative quest."<sup>53</sup> The narrative quest is in pursuit of the good for man, but this good is no end to be attained by the individual's passage through invariant stages, as in some psychological accounts. The good for the individual is a life spent in seeking that good life; by engaging in activities and practices of what is for his good as a person, the individual exercises the virtues and thus attains the end of the quest in the progressive unfolding of his life. Therefore, this concept of development as a quest embracing intrinsic exercise of the virtues is, in itself, an instantiation of an individual person's nature as a social and moral being. The additional issue of a relationship between personal development (as a quest), the virtues and rational autonomy is considered in (b) below.

(a) A person in developmental psychology

Freud's psychoanalytic perspective of personality is referred to in Chapter 1 in the connection of an integration of reason and emotion in Ego and Id.<sup>54</sup> His clinical observations led him to make rationality a key theme in individual development although not all persons reached the point of autonomous reasoning and accepted social conventions by assiduous rule-following. He did emphasise the early years of a person's life as a most significant time in development.

Freud seems to have influenced the investigations of Hartshorne and May.<sup>55</sup> Their enquiry into honesty in the conduct of 10,000 children of secondary school age found that it was practised only in certain situational contexts and a child who acted honestly in one situation might not necessarily do so in another. Group norms and group approval were identified as significant factors in honest



behaviour rather than the internalisation of moral principles; direct teaching of moral guidance had little effect. Hartshorne and May concluded that moral conduct was shaped according to Freud's perspective - when the self struggles through emotions towards a Superego ideal. However, a different perspective on this research might view the individual developing in cognitive rationality and identify the honesty characteristic as an example of ego-strength, holding meaning only in relation to rationality's development in a person. Virtues or character traits would be held meaningless outside a perspective of individual reasoning.

Peck and Havighurst's research revealed more affinity to development towards a perspective from rational autonomy and also from a Freudian perspective, particularly in the importance attributed to a child's early years.<sup>56</sup> They arrived at a character analysis of development of five types:

- amoral: ego-centric, giving little thought to others' feelings;
- expedient; ego-centric but ostensibly moral;
- conformist; lacking internalised moral principles, but fear of disapproval leads to actions apparently moral;
- irrational - conscientious: holding a moral code but rigid in its application; disregards others' sensibilities;
- rational - altruistic; having consideration for others.

This final character type is presented as the height of moral maturity in the development of a person. Such an individual would have care and thought for others and would be alert to the consequences of his actions; differing circumstances would influence his actions.

Piaget's analysis of personal development more clearly presents a developmental model through the medium of rationality towards individual autonomy.<sup>57</sup> Three stages are identified by Piaget:

egocentric, transcendental, autonomous. Each stage is held to be invariant. At the first, egocentric, stage the child shows no understanding of what a rule is; from about six years of age, a child is in a heteronomous state in which he grasps a rule's requirements and regards these as immutable. From about twelve or later, a child comes to view rules as not immutable and, in co-operation with others, open to change. This final stage is autonomy. Piaget holds that autonomy can only be arrived at when a child has understood what rules are, therefore an invariant sequence must mark moral development.

A Piagetian analysis of development is formal. Piaget does not present a view of virtue, although he holds to a distinct model of moral action and judgement. For example, he contrasts a child's reaction to breaking many cups by accident and one cup deliberately showing that, at first, a child considers the quantity of breakages to mark the deviance, rather than the intention of the cup-breaker. But the accidental breaking of cups is hardly a moral issue and only a person's intentions and actions make acts moral or otherwise. A moral perspective can only be maintained when there is understanding of what it is to be a moral person. However, Piaget presents his perspective as process of development, rather than as the product of what a moral perspective generates.

This analysis of development owes much to Kant in its connections with autonomy, heteronomy and the will and it also has associations with Durkheim's sociological perspectives.<sup>58</sup> Bull<sup>59</sup> and Kay<sup>60</sup> have evolved similar developmental analyses. Bull presents a four stage development model; beginning in anomy, the person moves through heteronomy and socionomy to autonomy. Kay's three stage model begins with the amoral proceeding through the premoral to the moral stage at which autonomous, rational judgement occurs.

However, perhaps the most influential thesis developed out of a Piagetian analysis is that of Kohlberg.<sup>61</sup> Kohlberg's six stage analysis seems to be a more detailed account of Piaget's three stages having two stages to each of Piaget's one. The stages are regarded as invariant with respect to the development of the individual although not all persons may reach the final two autonomy stages. Essentially the stages represent steps in the development of an individual's rational reflection. Kohlberg's research, with limited samples, has extended to America, Turkey, Malaysia, Mexico and Taiwan and he considers the stages of development invariant - irrespective of culture or geography.

Kohlberg accepts the existence of moral principles which may guide a person's moral choices, but a principle is not seen as a Categorical Imperative but as an aid to the autonomous person in resolving conflicts. Justice is the major principle in resolving moral questions, in the view of Kohlberg, following Piaget: "... the role of justice is a sort of immanent condition of social relationships or a law governing their equilibrium."<sup>62</sup> Justice is considered to stand above all principles at the autonomous stage. Concern for others and empathy with others are only, "... the precondition for experiencing a moral conflict rather than a mechanism for its resolution."<sup>63</sup> The principle of justice may resolve claims between persons holding each individual to be of equal value as a person and, therefore, Kohlberg regards it as, "... the ultimate basis of morality," and, "... the most autonomously moral form of moral judgement."<sup>64</sup>

Justice is, then, a key principle and contrasted with all other virtues by Kohlberg. Character traits such as honesty hold little meaning as development depends upon cognitive rationality, in

Kohlberg's view; "In cheating, the critical issue is the recognition of the element of contract and agreement implicit in the situation and the recognition that although it does not seem so bad if one person cheats, what holds for all must hold for one."<sup>65</sup> In Hartshorne and May's research into honesty, children not attaining autonomy in reasoning are to be seen as unable to apply reciprocal thinking and obligation. Cognitive rationality is the process of moral development and although Kohlberg acknowledges an affective component to be part of reasoning at the autonomous stage in that, "... all mental events have both cognitive and affective aspects"<sup>66</sup>, he does regard the affective as subsumed within the cognitive. Thus when two adolescents plan to steal and the anxiety one feels is put down to 'being chicken' yet the other regards that anxiety as a 'warning of conscience', the difference is the ability to reason so as to make sense of feelings. The affective dimension is controlled by the cognitive in Kohlberg's view; an interaction occurs but the cognitive is always superior at the autonomous stage.

There is, then, emphasis upon rational autonomy as the end of the psychological models of moral development of persons described above. These models largely agree that individuals are amoral before becoming moral persons and individuals must learn a self-interested prudence before assuming morality. It seems most likely that adherence to the rules and principles of others, such as parents or teachers, is probably essential prior to the attainment of the end of the model, namely that of personal, rational autonomy. If the Piagetian - Kohlberg model is taken to be essentially correct, little guidance is afforded educators from its insights concerning educational practice in achieving rational autonomy as a final stage. Kohlberg is no more than tentative in a view that cognitive

stimulation may hasten development towards autonomy. Valuable though psychological perspectives may be, however, the educator must bring up children in some way which will enable them to realise their 'endowment' as autonomous persons. Therefore the educator must hold to some model of his own expressing a measure of social consensus of what it is to be a person in the full sense of a rational, moral, social human being. A person achieves autonomy, but only after an education in which the autonomous person becomes accepted as a social being within a social framework in which there is acceptance of what it is to be moral:

"If we talk about moral development at all it has to be done in terms of some conception of what it is to be moral. If this conception implies self-acceptance of rules and principles, then one must have gone through a phase of acting on other people's rules and principles, and through a phase of internalizing in some sense those rules and principles, for how else does one have hold of any rules and principles to exercise choices or rejection over?" 67

(b) Personal development in autonomy and the virtues

The development of a person as a social and moral being in the psychological models may provide a true description but the major issue remains as to which features of social and moral activity educators should inculcate in the young as they progress towards some exercise of rational autonomy so that their autonomy becomes part of the social and moral competence which is fundamental to the nature of a person. Development of the individual to a realisation of himself as a person (in its full social and moral sense) is referred to above, in MacIntyre's term, as a quest in pursuit of the good. The individual develops - "Man is in via"<sup>68</sup> - in, and towards, the good. Parents and teachers as the educators of children and young

people should enable them to realise themselves as persons with social and moral natures moving towards autonomy. And to move towards autonomy and the good requires practice and the exercise of autonomy and the good to an extent appropriate to the individual's development.

In education in schools the good for one individual is in some measure the good for others and it may well be in the exercise of the virtues and the exercise of autonomy in educational practices, to the extent made possible by his stage of psychological development, that a person realises his nature as a social and moral being and his power to exercise autonomy. From the exercise of the virtues, dispositions should be developed in a person because, "Virtues are dispositions not only to act in particular ways, but also to feel in particular ways. To act virtuously is not, as Kant was later to think, to act against inclination; it is to act from inclination formed by the cultivation of the virtues."<sup>69</sup> Both affective and cognitive dimensions fuse in the virtues and in the dispositions arising; Piaget, in spite of his emphasis upon the child's cognitive reasoning, agrees that feelings and sympathies are also significant to development: "... the child's behaviour towards persons shows signs from the first of those sympathetic tendencies and affective reactions in which one can easily see the raw material of all subsequent moral behaviour."<sup>70</sup> The exercise of autonomy and practice of the virtues should shape the dispositions of the developing child through the medium of his educational activities. (Discussion of the nature of educational practices to enable the development of autonomy and the virtues is presented in Part 3.)

Practical reasoning, demonstrated best, perhaps, in the practical syllogism described in Chapter 2, informs the actions of the

individual in situations at particular times and in particular places. Practical reason should integrate emotion and reason in human acts by which the virtues may be exercised. Aristotle emphasises a distinction between the intellectual virtues which require teaching and moral virtue which results from habit: "For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them, e.g. men become builders by building and lyre-playing by playing the lyre; so too we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts ... It makes no small difference, then, whether we form habits of one kind or another from our very youth; it makes a very great difference, or rather all the difference."<sup>71</sup> However, if a person exercises moral virtue by doing acts which are just, temperate or brave, the nature of what comprises a just, temperate or brave act must be known in order to know whether a virtuous act has been accomplished. A standard or model seems necessary before it is possible to determine the just or temperate action of the individual, therefore.

The significance of habit in development of the virtues is explored by Peters<sup>72</sup> and is discussed more fully in Chapter 4. Peters presents three uses of habit: habitual action as a descriptive term; explanatory phrases embracing habit, 'out of habit', 'from force of habit' etc.; learning by habituation. Activities which are descriptive of habit or explanatory phrases may be adhered to, adapted or cancelled as a person chooses, as is the case with respect to punctuality. But other examples may require much more reasoning, as is the case with honesty. However, habit remains of some significance here, because if each time a person faced with a moral dilemma needs to think through all reasons and reflect fully on the situation in hand, he may have little time for the unusual situation or, indeed,

for other things. Habits may even, "... serve a useful anti-weakness purpose in cutting short deliberation and initiating action before the allure of counter-inclinations becomes too great,"<sup>73</sup> where children are concerned. Character traits, such as honesty, may be habitually applied, hence they may become established character features. The acquisition of standards of habit may simply be the expression of consensus through one's rationally acquired rules of behaviour.

Peters's third category of habit, learning by habituation, applies markedly to the first two stages of moral development described as egocentric and transcendental by Piaget who refers to the need of the individual at these stages, that "... adult pressure imposes on his mind a system of realities which at first remains opaque and external."<sup>74</sup> However, the limits on the efficacy of habit are evident as the person reaches autonomy. At this stage he must use his practical reason when action is required calling upon virtues of a high order such as justice, integrity, tolerance etc. Stable, systematic behaviour is unlikely to result until a person's practical reasoning determines his actions: "The genuinely virtuous agent ... acts on the basis of a true and rational judgement."<sup>75</sup> Nevertheless, until practical reason and autonomy have sufficiently developed in the person, habituation in the exercise of the virtues has a part to play. (The validity of Peters's view of habituation is more fully explored in the following chapter.)

The virtues describe a relationship between rational autonomy and moral principles of action: "Virtues are valuable not because they promote the agent's self-interest, but because they involve the desires and capacities to regulate one's life by the ultimate standards of morality and rationality."<sup>76</sup> Exercise of the virtues,



the Aristotelian origins of which are considered by note in reference 77, requires rational choices to be made by autonomous persons in that the courageous person overcomes his fear by the exercise of practical reason in order to pursue his objective. Justice calls for a systematic, rational regulation of conduct and not only when self-interest matches justice. And in spite of Kohlberg's scepticism about the 'bag of virtues', justice is held to be a key principle enabling the individual to make rational and moral choices at Stage 6, autonomy, in Kohlberg's developmental model; justice is held to be, "... the most autonomously moral form of moral judgement."<sup>78</sup>

If a person achieves his potential as a person and enjoys the 'endowment' of his personhood described earlier, he will be moral, because the more he realises his 'endowment' as a person, the more evident will be his moral sense. To be virtuous a person must be rational and autonomous because he must be in a position to choose virtue rather than non-virtue. The acquisition of the 'endowment' of personhood through habituation and the acquisition of the right dispositions is not a check or denial of individual autonomy, but a means of informing that autonomy of the implications of the nature of what a person is. Therefore personal autonomy is autonomy expressed in conjunction with the ideal of personhood.

The two strands illustrating the development of a person, the psychological model of development considered above in (a), and the integration of the virtues with rational autonomy, (b), describe personal autonomy. The end of the psychological accounts is autonomy based on reason. The virtues are exercised (in Aristotelian terminology) by a person whose practical reason leads to practical

wisdom. And although habituation has an early, significant part to play in development of the virtues, eventually the increasing exercise of the virtues and the exercise of autonomy by the individual person require the use of his own independent practical reason as he develops in virtue and in autonomy. The ideal of personal autonomy brings together, then, the nature of a person as essentially social and moral, and autonomy.

(3) Context for the development of a person towards autonomy

Universality (in social and moral responsibilities) distinguished in Section (1) (b) (iii) as part of the 'endowment' of a person has particular significance in relation to the social context in which personal autonomy develops. A person, as a social being, has relationships with others and the nature of those relationships, the social roles which are occupied and the ethos of a community of persons have all some bearing upon autonomy.

Mill comments on personal development thus: "Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inner forces which make it a living thing."<sup>79</sup> Mill's analogy of person and tree seems to locate the autonomy of the individual as an inner endowment. However, although there may in some situations be meaning in such analogies, a tree and a person are significantly different. A tree requires a suitable physical environment if it is to develop appropriate to its "inner forces" which determine the kind of tree it is. But human beings may develop in ways which may or may not enhance the possibilities for autonomy and they require social contexts for their development: "Autonomy has 'outer' and 'inner'

dimensions, for people are persisting beings, and there is something odd about a characterisation of personal autonomy which leaves this out of account."<sup>80</sup> The individual person as a social being should show, "... a willingness to take the initiative in interpersonal transactions and an ability to enter into constructive relations with others."<sup>81</sup>

Personal autonomy is a social product and has meaning in a social context. Indeed, without care, love and the formation of good habits a child may fail to develop his capabilities for the exercise of personal autonomy. Parents are recognised as crucially important to a child's development not only in respect of inborn characteristics which may predispose a person to interpret events in his world in a particular way, but also in their child-rearing practices. Authoritarian or 'liberal' parents are likely to influence children in some direction. Social class, is also likely to be influential; middle class parents who may encourage their children's participation in family decision-making and who answer their children's questions freely and openly are thought likely to speed their development. Language codes of elaborated or restricted kinds are also influential in development. Peer group influence may be significant and co-operation with others is stressed in Piaget's account of development.<sup>82</sup> A jumble of media influences surround the individual with T.V. quiz programmes and 'star' prizes of goods of material value interspersed with advertisements to stimulate acquisitiveness and envy for others' material goods. Violence, salacious titillation, sex stereotypes and, in general, a material version of the good life scream out for individual indulgence in fanciful unreality.

However, by the very social nature of persons, autonomy when attributed to persons can only occur in a social context. Peters writes warmly of the English public school system of character training in that the individual is helped to, "... stick up for principles connected with 'fair play' in the face of group pressure"<sup>83</sup> and he is sceptical that Kohlberg's single virtue, justice, will be able to ensure the individual resists pressures with moral courage gained from his social upbringing. But Kohlberg is not dismissive of environmental, social factors and the speed at which an individual passes through the stages of development which Kohlberg identifies as invariant may be stimulated by the social context, for, "... social-environmental determinants of development are its opportunity for role-taking."<sup>84</sup>

The development and exercise of personal autonomy is not accomplished remote from social roles. A person is someone's son or daughter or father. He is a citizen; he is a member of a profession and his personhood is realised, to a considerable extent, in roles. One individual plays various parts in the lives and development of many others. Indeed to divorce an individual from his roles is to weaken the social relationships which provide, "... that arena ... in which the Aristotelian virtues function if they function at all."<sup>85</sup> Each person's history is intertwined with that of others like the interrelationships of Becket and Henry II or Mary Stuart and Elizabeth I, in MacIntyre's examples.<sup>86</sup>

A danger, in Kohlberg's view, is a dissolving social perspective in modern American society.<sup>87</sup> He expresses concern that trends are influencing persons to look after 'number one'; the 'me' generation, at a Stage 2 level of development, has little participation in school, work or government. Hence Kohlberg wants a greater

participation in school democracy and in community activity. But lacking environmental stimulation, he considers few will progress to the higher stages of development; the school may well have a significant part to play in such stimulation, perhaps.

School practices involve relationships which entail exercise of the virtues since these define the nature of the relationships of those engaged in educational practices. (The nature and implications of education practice are explored in Part 3.) It has been argued that, "Moral attitudes are caught from every interaction of teacher and pupil since these again, like all human interactions, are moral interactions."<sup>88</sup> The relationships between pupils and teachers operate in learning situations of all kinds, in the use of rewards and punishments and in the kind of respect between them. And should the relationships within educational practices fail to recognise the full social and moral nature of persons by, perhaps, centering too much upon the development only of the intellect, those relationships miss the opportunity for a wider exercise of the virtues; indeed, "discovering" Mozart or learning to care for the elderly may be greater strides into personhood than, "examinable 'knowings-that'".<sup>89</sup>

The organisation of the school and a "hidden curriculum" of unstated values may significantly influence personal development towards autonomy. Ability groupings and a ruthless examination sieve may engender feelings of failure and rejection of the school's offerings.<sup>90</sup> The school's control system alongside other day to day realities may well make for an authoritarian system in which, "... anything of importance is decided by the fiat of the headmaster and in which the prevailing assumption is that the appeal to a man is the only method of determining what is correct."<sup>91</sup> The result,

according to Peters, is unlikely to encourage autonomy because such attitudes are most appropriate to, "... Piaget's first stage of development. These institutional realities are bound to structure the perceptions of the students."<sup>92</sup>

The importance of the school as an environmental context for the development and exercise of personal autonomy and as a major opportunity for the encouragement of a sense of community is stated by Durkheim<sup>93</sup> whose influence on Piaget's developmental model may be considerable. The group and small community enable group norms, "... everything constituting the intellectual and moral patrimony of the group"<sup>94</sup> to be absorbed. School community activities are seen as transitional stages between family life and adult society. The opportunity to influence a child's development towards the good is considerable: "The habit of common life in the class and attachment to the class and even to the school constitute an altogether natural preparation for the more elevated sentiments that we wish to develop in the child. We have here a precious instrument, which is used all too little and which can be of the greatest service."<sup>95</sup> The crowds, praise and power of school life create a climate, in Durkheim's analysis, of a group and community ethos and experience holding great potential for personal development.

#### (4) Conclusion for persons and personal autonomy - a sense of community

Authenticity and practical reason, the subjects of the previous two chapters require the addition of the social and moral dimensions of personhood in order to complete the account of personal autonomy developed in this thesis. The social and moral dimensions of persons shown in the 'endowment' of a person as an end have been explored

above as practical reason, the will and universality; the concept of personal development has been considered both from a psychological perspective and that of habit, practical reason and the virtues. These themes involving persons and autonomy meet in an educational environment in which social, moral and intellectual activities operate. And it may be that for educational practices to contribute to the development and exercise of personal autonomy a sense of community is essential. Indeed, the school (i.e. the groups of which it is comprised) should be an expression of a community covenant between pupils, parents, teachers, employers etc., both as an instantiation of what the school (as a community) is and, also, as a centre for educational practices of social, moral and intellectual kinds, linking individual persons to wider community implications and associations.

The ancient sense of community, referred to in the introduction to this chapter, involved both autonomy for the polis and eudaimonia for the individual within the moral and social community sense specifically evident in the exercise of the virtues. However, the present day has lost much of this sense of a shared good for a community: "When Aristotle sought to clarify what he meant by phronēsis and the phronimos, he could still call upon the vivid memory of Pericles as the concrete exemplar of the individual who possessed the faculty of discriminating what was good for himself and for the polis. But today, when we seek for concrete exemplars of the types of dialogical communities in which practical rationality flourishes, we are at a much greater loss."<sup>96</sup> The polis expressed a sense of community among the citizens of Athens but modern societies seem to lack the same sense of personal identity. Autonomy for the individual has become partly divorced from the fundamental implications

of persons but some sense of community expressing, "... an ethos and the shared acceptance of nomoi ..." <sup>97</sup> is an imperative for personal autonomy so that no escape into egoism is possible for those who, in spite of all, pursue such an imperfectly rational perspective. A sense of community is required in order to, "... attempt to recover and reclaim the autonomy of practical rationality and show its relevance to all domains of culture." <sup>98</sup> In such a community, the individual must exercise authenticity by reflection and awareness of his own motives but his self-awareness is also his awareness of himself as a person in all its social and moral implications; in other words, the autos of autonomy instantiates the moral and social dimensions of a person.

In Section (1) (b) above, Dearden's distinction between moral concern for others and autonomy was noted. His use of the word 'we' to stress the moral perspective is significant and akin to Aristotle's (similar) style in the Nicomachean Ethics for although Aristotle's Ethics may be a set of lecture notes using the first person plural for effect during delivery to a live audience, 'we' - as persons - collectively share a common social and moral heritage only to be realised in a community context. A person cannot escape moral implications within a sense of community where shared goods and individual claims can be weighed. Rawls argues that:

"We have the guiding principle that a rational individual is always to act so that he need never blame himself no matter how his plans finally work out. Viewing himself as one continuing being over time, he can say that at each moment of his life he has done what the balance of reasons required, or at least permitted. ... Now looked at in this way, the principle of responsibility to self resembles a principle of right; the claims of the self at different times are to be so adjusted that the self at each time can affirm the plan that has been and is being followed. The person at one time, so to speak, must not be able to complain about actions of the person at another time." <sup>99</sup>



Rawls identifies 'self' and 'person' in this extract and argues that a person has a moral duty to himself as a person at different points in time because he is the same person irrespective of any time lapse. (An alternative view to this is considered in Chapter 6.) The individual has an obligation to himself to act on the best reasons because he has this same obligation with regard to all persons. However, this obligation and identification of the rights and interests of the self with others seems to require an ideal self to which duties are owed. The interests of the individual, however, must be weighed not only by his person over time, but also in competition with other persons' interests; this situation requires the existence of a community because only by living together and weighing conflicting claims by reason can the interest of the individual become consistent with that of others.

White expresses reservations about small communities because of the, "... obvious danger of communal egoism - of living only for itself and ignoring the needs of those outside it -"<sup>100</sup> And he argues that in order to preserve his psychical unity, the individual must enlarge his life-plan to integrate moral conflicts in, "... an enlarged conception of his own well-being."<sup>101</sup> However, this use of "well-being" is akin to the implications of personhood explored in this chapter and it may only be when a person has exercised the virtues and developed the right dispositions that he will even seek to resolve the dilemmas and moral conflicts challenging to his life-plan. An individual could still, presumably, rest in heteronomy or anomy whatever the cost to his psychic unity as a person. In practice, a recognition of his personal identity over time and the fact that his history is interlocked with that of others in a collection of communities of smaller and larger kinds, political,

spiritual and intellectual, in which he has practical engagement may, most effectively, ensure that the autos of his autonomy carries the full implications of a person:

"Autonomy ... has to be understood not against but in terms of social existence. The core of personal autonomy ... is developed in a social setting, and its content is also socially conditioned." 102

(5) A note on persons, autonomy and Dearden's view

In this chapter, I have tried to show that, ideally, the term person, carries implications of a social and moral nature when denoting the characteristics of a human being, man or woman. To live up to these characteristics and attributes determines, in some measure, the relative standing in personal autonomy attained by an individual. The greater claim an individual has to be a person, the greater his potential for personal autonomy, for the concept of a person can be nothing but the autos of personal autonomy; the adjective, personal, colours the nomos of practical reason engaging it in consideration of respect or sympathy for other persons.

The concept of personal autonomy which Professor R. F. Dearden has analysed is distinguished by him from morality which he considers "requires a separate root".<sup>103</sup> He does hold that morality is a major educational consideration, but its place in relation to the aim of autonomy remains uncertain: "... he still faces the problem of relating his main pupil-centred aim, personal autonomy, to this moral aim."<sup>104</sup> In what follows, then, I shall endeavour to show how uneasily a divorce between autonomy and morality sits in Dearden's account and that these concepts complement each other.

"There is no separate task of acquiring the concept of a person, as a piece of learning quite distinct from forming practical and role concepts, or such rules as those of not hurting, telling the truth and keeping promises. To grasp such concepts and rules is also necessarily to understand their anchorage in cares, concerns, interests and desires, and hence their complementarity to the existence of persons. To observe such rules is to have respect for persons. Moral life and respect for persons are, as Peters has pointed out, two sides of the same coin." 105

Dearden emphasises here the "rules" anchored in the "existence of persons" with one result expressed in the maxim of "respect for persons". He echoes this idea in a reference to habit which he considers unsuitable for the, "... more obviously moral sort of action, such as truth-telling, keeping promises, responding to others' needs and avoiding hurting others. For there we are dealing directly with persons and ought to be mindful of what we are doing."<sup>106</sup> Dearden must be using "person" in an evaluative sense in the above quotation otherwise he would be expressing a naturalistic fallacy in the last sentence because certain aspects of "persons" carry a high value, hence his conclusion from this that we "ought to be mindful" of our actions.

Peters also describes a relationship of person to high qualities of personhood in personal autonomy:

"'Being a person' is connected conceptually with ... being, to a certain extent, an individual who determines his own destiny by his choices. ... We are all persons in that normally we have a potentiality for developing these capacities, but human excellences seem to consist in developing such capacities to a considerable degree. Critical thought ... autonomy of choice, creativity of the attempt to launch out on one's own and to impose one's stamp on a product; integrity is shown in sticking to one's principles ... and strength of will ... We often say of someone, 'He is a real person'. We are not using the phrase to stress the fact that he is a person in the sense in which any normal human being is. Rather we are drawing attention to the impact he makes on us in respect

of some quality of mind which is intimately connected with being a person - for instance his independence of mind and his strength of character." 107

The "human excellences" described by Peters as relevant to a person are qualities illustrative of personal autonomy. One who attains a high level of personal autonomy will on Peters's account be, "a real person". Social and moral aspects of a person show through in this description in terms such as "integrity" and "strength of character" and Peters goes on to state of integrity that, "... we do not seem to use the word of a man who sticks to principles which we regard as immoral."<sup>108</sup> Dearden outlining why personal autonomy should be valued presents as the first of his grounds: "that through it we can achieve integrity and thus not be involved in self-deception, or the deception of others."<sup>109</sup> Personal autonomy by its association with persons of integrity seems clearly to be reflective of the social and moral implications of a person; Dearden's fourth ground for valuing personal autonomy, "that consistency with its principles already requires that we be fair in our dealings with others"<sup>110</sup> is descriptive of the virtue of justice or fairness in relations with others. The moral implications of personhood seem evident in this account.

However, in subsequent accounts of personal autonomy, Dearden shows what distortion can occur if the social and moral implications of a person are divorced from that of autonomy. He emphasises, as stated above, that the adjective in the phrase personal autonomy is not redundant and separation of it from its noun leads to a most uneasy situation:

"Suppose that a person chose, decided, deliberated, planned and so on, but the considerations he bore in mind were false, or the criteria which made them considerations for him were

inappropriate, what then? For instance, a man might determine for himself the early history of the world by consulting Genesis, or a man might plan some crime without reference to, or even in deliberate disregard of, any moral scruples. Would that still be autonomy? On the account given here, it would, or at least could, still be autonomy. If so that shows truth and morality not to be among the conditions which must be present for there to be autonomy." 111 (My emphases)

The clarity and simplicity of Professor Dearden's literary style may well mask much reflection upon his choice of words. He refers at the beginning of the passage above to "a person" who is in error; evidently the person's reasoning has gone wrong because many persons who seek for the truth may end in error. However, when the example moves further into the realms of gross irrationality and moral turpitude, Dearden abandons "person" and adopts the alternative term, "man", and, "The point is that the concept of a man (or a human being) is a biological concept, whereas that of a person is not."<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, when Dearden presents a rhetorical question about whether a collection of gross failures to reason to an adequate standard and evil disregard for "any moral scruples" may "still be autonomy?", he decides it can still qualify as "autonomy". This conclusion may be acceptable because Dearden omits the crucial adjective, personal, to govern autonomy, with similar implication to his change of "person" into "man" earlier in the extract. The implication of "person" remains a guide and influence upon the nomos and although "autonomy" as a term in its own right may be explicated in ways which remove it from the moral government of persons, it must, as an educational concept and as an educational ideal be harnessed to its adjective, personal.

The person exercising personal autonomy determines the criteria which will determine choice and those criteria will become the nomos.

Dearden describes how features of a situation are picked out as reasons<sup>113</sup> and these features will be selected by criteria which then enable the individual to select relevant reasons. Dearden, as argued in Chapter 1, is rightly sceptical of criterionless choice made by the existentialist whose criteria do not extend beyond himself. The only choice for the existentialist is choice of himself. Dearden's argument is that, "... the existentialist position is not in itself free of all criterial presuppositions in its supposedly fundamental choosings. For even such supposed choosings as this has reference to what is required if one is to be a good existentialist: sincerity, respect for truth and the courage to face it, and self-knowledge. 'Bad faith' can be bad only if certain value-criteria are taken for granted, or pre-supposed."<sup>114</sup>

Dearden's contention here is a good one. The existentialist's choice of self is incoherent as argued in Chapter 1; some value-criteria must be pre-supposed. However, when Dearden divorces autonomy and persons he is, himself, weakening the criterial considerations of the implications of a person in relation to autonomy. Personhood removed from its social and moral associations would leave autonomy similarly crippled. But, "Autonomy neither does nor could require the stepping outside of all criteria to engage in some supposedly criterionless choosing"<sup>115</sup>; autonomy's nomoi are shared by rational criteria and the moral and social criteria of the implications of personhood. When Dearden states that, "Great criminals are markedly autonomous men," he precedes this sentence with the qualification that, "Without morality ... the more autonomous an agent is the worse he is likely to be."<sup>116</sup> "Men" and "agent" figure in these statements because the values implicit in the words, person and personal, are, in this context, divorced

from autonomy. A person, developing in the full moral and social implications of that term, must exist prior to achievement of personal autonomy.

The values which Dearden attributes to the autonomous person are very positive ones: "A person could not be to any marked degree autonomous without this being an important part of his self-concept. As such it will be an important part of his dignity, or sense of personal worth, and its exercise will be claimed as a right to be respected by others."<sup>117</sup> Dearden's references to dignity and the individual's right to respect from others infer the "central values" or virtues of the endowment of a person to which he refers in The Philosophy of Primary Education, including: reason, integrity, truth, freedom of choice, judgement of what is worthwhile, responsibility and fairness.<sup>118</sup> Telfer refers to similar virtues in the autonomous person: "Honesty with oneself is the most obvious of these ... courage to face unpleasant truths, patience and thoroughness are others."<sup>119</sup> She further adds: perseverance, patience and courage to the list and although such virtues as character traits may be relative, "There would be no point in marking them out ... if there did not exist, in general, inclinations which they regulate or canalise."<sup>120</sup> Such "inclinations" are presented as descriptive of the autonomous person.

Therefore, although Dearden may be precise to the letter when he states: "Ultimately, however, it must be admitted that an autonomous agent could refuse all moral concern for others, quite compatibly with retaining his autonomy"<sup>121</sup>; he is precise in that agencies of an impersonal nature - institutions, economic investments etc. - may act autonomously; a 'man' may also refuse moral concern for others. But only persons can exercise personal autonomy and they act in the

light of very definite implications relating to the concept and nature of a person. The implications of the responsibilities of personhood should contribute substantially to an analysis of what personal autonomy, as an educational ideal, expresses.



### References to Chapter 3

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The implications of the enlightenment of the eighteenth century as a restatement of individualism and the moral implications of this for the present day are a key theme in the thesis of: MacIntyre, A. C.; op.cit., Chapter 5. This thesis holds that the individual person's community identity in the tradition of ancient and mediaeval societies is finally dissolved in the Enlightenment and, "What was then invented was the individual..." (Ibid., p.59). MacIntyre, although giving little space to the significance of the Renaissance in his thesis, does claim connection between the Republicanism of the eighteenth century (in France and America, for example) and its Renaissance antecedents as an attempt to revive the public virtues of the Roman, if not Greek, tradition:

"Republicanism in the eighteenth century is the project of restoring a community of virtue; but it envisages that project in an idiom inherited from Roman rather than Greek sources and transmitted through the Italian republics of the middle ages. Machiavelli with his exaltation of civic virtue over both the Christian and the pagan virtues articulates one aspect of the republican tradition, but only one. What is central to that tradition is the notion of a public good which is prior to and characterisable independently of the summing of individual desires and interests. Virtue in the individual is nothing more or less than allowing the public good to provide the standard for individual behaviour. The virtues are those dispositions which uphold that overriding allegiance. Hence republicanism, like Stoicism, makes virtue primary and the virtues secondary." (Ibid., p.220).

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- 69 Ibid., p.140.
- 70 Piaget, J., op.cit., p.405.
- 71 Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics; Book II 1103(b) in Ackrill, J.L. (1973) Aristotle's Ethics (London, Faber).
- 72 Peters, R. S. (1974) Moral Development: a Plea for Pluralism, in: (ed., Peters, R. S.) (1974); op.cit., pp.317-324.
- 73 Straughan, R., op.cit., p.222.
- 74 Piaget, J., op.cit., p.93.
- 75 MacIntyre, A. C., op.cit., p.140.
- 76 Richards, D. A. J. (1971) A Theory of Reasons for Action (Oxford, Clarendon) p.284.
- 77 Note: The Aristotelian virtues are mainly developed in the Nicomachean Ethics and the Eudemian Ethics and are listed in, Kenny, A. (1978) The Aristotelian Ethics (Oxford, Clarendon), p.23:  
 Courage  
 Temperance  
 Liberality  
 Magnificence  
 Magnanimity  
 Ambition (unnamed as such) not included in the E.E.  
 Gentleness  
 Candour  
 Wittiness  
 not included in the E.E.

Friendliness

Dignity

not included in the N.E.

Shame

Nemesis

Justice

Hardiness

not included in the N.E.

Wisdom

not included in the N.E.

Not all Aristotle's virtues have meaning in the present (e.g. magnificence). Some virtues also have meanings different from present usage of the same term; friendliness, in Aristotle, describes a public, community based relationship with others holding a shared perspective of a common good rather than the modern use of personal friendship which may often be isolated from public or professional relationships. However, some virtues seem to convey modern meaning.

MacIntyre summarises the traditions of the virtues as follows:

"We thus have at least three very different conceptions of a virtue to confront: a virtue is a quality which enables an individual to discharge his or her social role (Homer); a virtue is a quality which enables an individual to move towards the achievement of the specifically human telos, whether natural or supernatural (Aristotle, the New Testament and Aquinas); a virtue is a quality which has utility in achieving earthly and heavenly success (Franklin)." (MacIntyre, A. C., op.cit.; p.175).

A weakness in Aristotle's argument involving practical reason and the virtues is described in Chapter 2 Section 4.

78 Kohlberg, L., op.cit., p.68.

79 Mill, J. S., op.cit., p.52.

80 Kleinig, J. (1982) Philosophical Issues in Education (London, Croom Helm); p.76.

81 Ibid., pp.75-6.

82 Piaget, J., op.cit., Chapter III.

83 Peters, R. S., op.cit., p.328.

84 Kohlberg, L., op.cit., p.50.

85 MacIntyre, A. C., op.cit., p.191.

86 Ibid., p.199.

87 Kohlberg, L. (1980) Educating for a Just Society: an updated and revised statement, in: (ed. Munsey, B.) (1980) Moral Development, Moral Education and Kohlberg. Basic Issues in Philosophy, Psychology, Religion and Education (Birmingham, Alabama; Religious Education Press); Chapter 16, pp.455-470.

- 88 Downey, M. and Kelly, A. V., op.cit., p.133.
  - 89 A point made by, Thatcher, A. (1980) Education and the Concept of a Person, in: Journal of Philosophy of Education; (14); 1; p.126.
  - 90 This issue developed in some detail from a sociological perspective may be found in; (a) Hargreaves, D. H. (1967) Social Relations in a Secondary School (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).
  - (b) Sugarman, B. (1968) Moral Education and the Social Structure of the School, in: Journal of Curriculum Studies, (1); pp. 47-67.
  - (c) Wilson, J., Williams, N. and Sugarman, B. (1967) Introduction to Moral Education (Harmondsworth, Penguin) Part II (B).
  - 91 Peters, R. S. (1974) Freedom and the Development of the Free-Man, in: (ed., Peters, R. S.) (1974) op.cit., p.352.
  - 92 Ibid., p.352.
  - 93 Durkheim, E., op.cit.
  - 94 Ibid., p.232.
  - 95 Ibid., pp.230-231.
  - 96 Bernstein, R. J. (1983) Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press); p.230.
  - 97 Ibid., p.225.
  - 98 Ibid., p.230.
  - 99 Rawls, J. (1971) A Theory of Justice (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press) pp.422-423.
  - 100 White, J. (1982) The Aims of Education Restated (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).
  - 101 Ibid., p.98.
  - 102 Kleinig, J. (1982) The Ethics of Consent, in: (eds., Neilson, K. and Patten, S. C. (1982) New Essays in Ethics and Public Policy; Canadian Journal of Philosophy; Supplementary Vol. VIII; p.112.
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  - 104 White, J., op.cit., p.70.
  - 105 Dearden, R. F. (1968) The Philosophy of Primary Education. An Introduction (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul) p.164.
- The reference to Peters is, Peters, R. S. (1966) Ethics and Education (London, Allen and Unwin) Chapter 8.

- 106 Dearden, R. F. (1968), op.cit., p.167.
- 107 Peters, R. S. (1972) Education and Human Development, in: (eds., Dearden, R. F., Hirst, P. H. and Peters, R. S.) (1972) Education and the Development of Reason (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul), pp.512-513.
- 108 Ibid., p.512.
- 109 Dearden, R. F. (1968) op.cit., p.47.
- 110 Ibid., p.47.
- 111 Dearden, R. F. (1972) op.cit., p.455.
- 112 Langford, G. (1985) op.cit., p.188.
- 113 Dearden, R. F. (1972) op.cit., p.456.
- 114 Ibid., p.457.
- 115 Ibid., p.458.
- 116 Ibid., p.461.
- 117 Ibid., p.460-461.
- 118 Dearden, R. F. (1968) op.cit., p.47.
- 119 Telfer, E. (1975) Autonomy as an Educational Ideal, II, in: (ed., Brown, S. C.) (1975) Philosophers discuss Education (London, Macmillan), p.24.
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- 121 Dearden, R. F. (1973) op.cit., p.191.



PART 2PERSONAL AUTONOMY AND SOME RELATED CONCEPTS

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CHAPTER 4      AUTHORITY

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## Introduction

Dearden refers to the connection of personal autonomy and authority as a "paradox":

"This paradox was classically expressed by Aristotle, who observed that 'the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them.' Thus we become just by performing just acts, brave by performing brave acts and so on. But does not performing a just act presuppose that we already are just? To be done as a just act, an act must be done not simply with outward conformity, but with knowledge of what it is to act justly, doing this for its own sake, and doing it from a settled disposition so to act. But in that case we must already be just." 1

Aristotle's view on the development of moral virtue is that the forming of good habits will lead to an exercise of virtue which will, eventually, be understood in full rationality by the individual. However, Dearden points out that, logically, a person cannot be said to have performed a just act until he knows what justice is; his reason must be developed to the point at which he has attained understanding of what a just act is. Therefore, a paradox seems to exist between autonomy and authority, in Dearden's view. The young are taken to lack the rationality to be able to exercise autonomy as a person may only be able to exercise autonomy when he knows what autonomy is. A school pupil needs to have gained knowledge, for example, and to have become rational before he can understand what it is to exercise autonomous judgement. Thus authority must be maintained over the young, developing person, deferring the exercise of autonomy until, at least, formal education in school is completed. Authority is justified by enabling the development of autonomy in the young.

However, Dearden is not altogether satisfied with his own explanation of mitigating the effects of the paradox of autonomy and authority: "Something of a paradox nevertheless does remain. It seems unavoidable when we are dealing with a being which develops across time and in ways which may set the particular interests of different times in conflict with each other."<sup>2</sup> Certainly the age range of school pupils in Britain is considerable.<sup>3</sup> And physical, moral and intellectual development of persons across this age divide may well be immense. Thus the relationship of autonomy and authority is likely to change as students aspire to and eventually attain adult status for if an individual does x only because another in authority so directs, that individual's rational autonomy is negated within a framework of education law up to the age of eighteen by present legislation.

The aim of this chapter is to suggest a resolution of the paradox Dearden states between personal autonomy and authority largely within the context of schools, teacher authority and student autonomy. Section (1) defines authority and clarifies the distinction presented by Peters of the teacher as an authority and, also, in authority. Section (2) distinguishes in part (a) the implications of 'person' in the relationship between personal autonomy and authority and takes further the description of development in moral virtues presented in Section (2) of the previous chapter. The Aristotelian emphasis upon the importance of developing good habits is argued to be relevant to the development of appropriate dispositions and Gardner's case criticising Peters's argument for a particular kind of habituation is countered. Part (b) of Section (2) explores the relationship of rational autonomy and

authority outside considerations of moral virtue and clarifies the authority of the teacher as an authority upholding appropriate standards in learning. But it is argued that teaching methods should give scope for the exercise of some student autonomy in learning even though the content of a curriculum may be established by authority.

Section (3) presents a resolution of the paradox of personal autonomy and authority through the medium of developing dispositions and it is held that there is much in common between dispositions of both moral and intellectual kinds. A conclusion is drawn that by enabling students to exercise some measure of personal autonomy in learning, there is more likelihood that dispositions attaching to personal autonomy will be developed in the student. If knowledge of justice is presupposed in one who carries out a just act and yet the exercise of autonomy is altogether denied the individual student learner, it will never be known (within the educational process) whether that person has developed in the educational ideal of personal autonomy.

(1) Definition of authority

Hobbes contrasts human society with a natural one governed by the law of nature. In the natural world, animals or insects invariably behave according to their own social code which is acquired by instinct. Human society, however, requires the authority of rules or laws which are stated in language so that appointed individuals in any society have the right to make judgements on these rules or laws which apply to particular cases.

Peters<sup>4</sup> develops a perspective on authority in education from the analysis of Max Weber who distinguishes three kinds of authority in human society: (i) traditional authority, by which laws rest upon long established social conventions, the authority which, for example, a local Justice of the Peace in Tudor England would have exercised; (ii) legal-rational authority by which the person having authority has it on grounds of the normal rules of legality established in that society, the authority by which judges of the American Supreme Court may, for instance, declare unconstitutional measures passed by Congress; (iii) charismatic authority, Weber's third category, is vested in the characteristics of the person who has the charisma to influence others by virtue of his own personality - such as Jesus, Hitler or Napoleon.

Using Weber's analysis, Peters draws a distinction between a person being in authority, as distinct from being an authority. The traditional and legal-rational categories of authority place a person in authority in such authority within the structure of a particular society's rules or within a legal structure of an institutional framework. A headteacher is, therefore, in authority in his own school, but not in any other school; a teacher is in authority with respect to his class in a way appropriate to that of a good parent

and the power of the individual in authority will be contingent upon the rules which are established for the profession or institution in question.

The concept of an authority is applied to an individual who has special skills or knowledge to impart in a particular situation and such authority is accepted when recognised by a sufficiently informed and rational community of learners. An authority is one who claims recognition as an expert; his claim to authority is based upon knowledge, skill or training, whereas charismatic authority is derived chiefly from personality.

In the school, authority may well require power to provide the teacher in authority with status or respect in order for him to exercise his authority. The person who holds charismatic authority may well be able to exercise authority with little questioning of that authority by the young but where there is little charisma, authoritarianism may prevail.

Authority need not be authoritarian. This is to be distinguished from authority when one who is in authority by virtue of his position, exercises and upholds that authority for no reason other than the fact of that authority. Rules of reason are discounted and the only concern of authoritarianism is obedience. Such a situation is far removed from rational autonomy.

The teacher as an authority may also be considered a provisional authority with respect to his pupils. If the teacher (as an authority) exercises his authority with regard to knowledge and skills effectively, his pupils should learn to operate the processes involved in educational practices for themselves in order to extend understanding and enhance skills and, indeed, put the teacher's own expertise to the test. Eventually pupils should reach a point at which they can

determine the strength of a teacher's authoritative statements concerning some area of knowledge; his case must rest upon good reasons and be held to be true under scrutiny of maturing minds. Thus a teacher's authority is more justifiable if it is used in order to develop autonomy in pupils by encouraging their exercise of autonomy within a learning framework provided by that teacher's authority. The more removed authority may be from pupil autonomy the more authoritarian it becomes. If a teacher's job is merely to tell pupils what to think his authority will be authoritarian in that his being in authority will be the sole justification for his instruction. But the exercise of a provisional authority encouraging to autonomy may be one condition to enable pupils to think for themselves and, therefore, a teacher's function is not, "... just to stuff the minds of the ignorant with bodies of knowledge which they themselves have managed to memorise. For they are concerned with teaching others how to think not just with telling them what to think."<sup>5</sup> A teacher's role as an authority may be used to attain very different ends therefore; unless the teacher as an authority in learning allows for both the development and the exercise of autonomy in learning, educational practices may never reflect a realisation of the aim of personal autonomy. Nevertheless, the teacher in authority still holds a custodial responsibility in ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils; this authority is not negotiable.

## (2) The paradox of personal autonomy and authority

### (a) Persons

Dearden's reference to a paradox in the deferring of personal autonomy to authority in education has implications both for the social and moral implications of a person, and also for rational



autonomy. Discussion of the moral issue and authority will be considered in this section, (a), and the extension of the paradox to rational autonomy and authority under (b).

The paradox of moral education is stated by Peters<sup>6</sup> explicating Aristotle who distinguishes two kinds of virtue, moral and intellectual, and the circumstances required for the cultivation of each.

Intellectual virtues are developed by teaching but moral virtue, "... comes about as a result of habit."<sup>7</sup> Habit seems the antithesis of rational moral action, hence an apparent paradox is created which Dearden transposes into a relationship between authority and rational autonomy in which he points out that understanding must logically precede an action denoted just or brave etc., (as described in the introduction to this chapter). However, in Aristotle's view, states of character emerge from the acquisition of good habits, "... for by being habituated to despise things that are fearful and to stand our ground against them we become brave, and it is when we have become so that we shall be most able to stand our ground against them."<sup>8</sup>

Aristotle does, then, emphasise the importance of habit in the acquisition of moral virtues for, in his view, only habitual practice of moral virtues will enable the individual to reach an appreciation of what these are, because, "Neither by nature, then, nor contrary to nature do the virtues arise in us; rather we are adapted by nature to receive them, and are made perfect by habit."<sup>9</sup> The forming of good habits makes "... all the difference", in Aristotle's opinion, in developing moral virtues. But Aristotle does not leave moral virtue only in the sphere of habitual action. He infers that although habituation may well lead an individual to moral virtue, moral action is the antithesis of habit in the sense that habit involves doing things only from force of habit rather than as action involving

essential reflection and judgement of a rational nature. Aristotle's analysis of a virtuous act requires a person to understand what he is doing, to choose so to act "... for its own sake" and, furthermore, to show a "... fixed and permanent disposition" so to act.<sup>10</sup> If an action does not meet these criteria, Aristotle does not regard an action as morally virtuous. Therefore, Aristotle, himself, presents a paradox because he considers habituation imperative to the forming of moral virtues, but that moral action cannot proceed only on the basis of habitual action because habit alone will not require individual, rational, autonomous thought prior to the performance of an action.

Peters agrees with Aristotle that habit is a means to the end of producing a morally virtuous person. The "brute facts" of child development, as revealed by psychological research and intelligent observation, delay and defer the acquisition of fundamental moral principles by the child. Habits must first mould him to act in a virtuous manner even though he has not attained the standard of Aristotle for judging an act to be virtuous. Parents and teachers should, then, use their authority over the young to habituate them to moral habits of thought and action. Their authority is justifiable on the grounds that it is essential in ensuring the child's development as a person who can choose the path of virtue for its own sake. Children must, therefore, "... enter the Palace of Reason through the courtyard of Habit and Tradition. This is the paradox of moral education ..."<sup>11</sup>

The difficulty attaching to the acquisition of necessary habits is how to ensure that they do not, "... stultify the development of a rational code ..."<sup>12</sup> in the individual who moves towards virtue and personal autonomy. Peters endeavours to reconcile the reason and

habit paradox by arguing that habit should not be interpreted too narrowly as an automatic, mindless response, conditioned by repetition and drill under authority's directives. If a young person learns, by habit, to act upon a rule, this is, of necessity:

"... an open-ended business requiring intelligence and a high degree of social sophistication. For the child has to learn to see that a vast range of very different actions and performances can fall under a highly abstract rule which makes them all examples of a type of action. If the child has really learnt to act on a rule it is difficult to see how he could have accomplished this without insight and intelligence. He might be drilled or forced to act in accordance with a rule; but that is quite different from learning to act on a rule.

So it seems as if the paradox of moral education is resolved. For there is no necessary contradiction between the use of intelligence and the formation of habits." 13

Young initiates into moral virtue need not be creatures of habit and act out of force of habit; Peters indicates that there must be an intelligent adoption of habits in a growing awareness of the reasons for the rules of moral conduct which these habits reinforce. He seems to suggest that the young can be habituated into a rational acceptance of rules of conduct. Habit must remain the starting point because the "brute facts" of the development of children do not admit acting on rules at first in that a child just cannot appreciate and be moved by the practical necessity of reasons for the rule.

Peters adopts Oakeshott's analogy of a subject's "language" and "literature" in order to illustrate the paradox of habit and reason.<sup>14</sup> This analogy describes a subject's "language" as the level of thinking and reasoning possible within that process of learning which can take the learner to the highest levels of thought of which he is capable. In Oakeshott's view, the level to which subjects are taken in universities enables the individual to reach the highest point in the

learning process. (Dearden has more recently expressed a similar view.)<sup>15</sup> The "literature" of a subject is, in the analogy, taken to be the body of knowledge supported by approved and reliable authorities. Peters transfers Oakeshott's "language" and "literature" analogy to the paradox of reason and habit showing that it is necessary to induct the young into the "literature" of moral knowledge and virtuous conduct so that, eventually, they will acquire understanding of the "language" of virtuous action. The "literature" (gained by habit) is the means to the end of learning the "language" (of moral actions). Having acquired the "literature" or moral virtue, the learner comes to an understanding, by practical reasoning, of how to use the "language" to think for himself in the realm of morals.

The resolution of the paradox of habit's contribution to a person's capacity to exercise moral virtues offered by Peters is criticised by Gardner<sup>16</sup> whose argument centres on two interconnected issues: the nature of the language, or "sphere or discourse", used by Peters and its place in a "progression" or developmental perspective of moral education. A "progression" or development of child to adult is, in Gardner's argument, within the sphere of a psychological or psychoanalytic perspective on child growth (as described in Chapter 3, Section 2, above). According to Gardner, Peters describes a psychological development process of moral education employing habit training and, at the end of this process, puts a concept drawn from a completely different area of thought or "sphere of discourse"; Peters is said to have engaged in drawing a conclusion, i.e. the autonomous person with practical reason, from an argument in a different language from this concluding concept. The conclusion is, "... the type of moral agent described by moral philosophers."<sup>17</sup> But the language of psychoanalytic argument cannot result in such a conclusion, therefore, Gardner

considers that Peters's argument contains an antinomy. Gardner points out that: "I regard psycho-analysis as a sphere of discourse or mode of explanation and I treat the language of the moral philosopher, that is, of those who share Peters's Aristotelian view of the moral agent, as another sphere of discourse or mode of explanation."<sup>18</sup>

Gardner's case is that the psycho-analytic perspective on children's development is logically removed from the concept of moral agent which moral philosophers hold. On the one hand, character, personality and behaviour are explained, for example, by genetic features and early life experiences (as in Freud) so that, "... in this sphere of discourse notions like 'autonomy', 'responsibility', 'choice' and 'spontaneity' would seem to have no home ..."<sup>19</sup> In contrast to this there is a moral philosopher's perspective; "It is the realm where notions such as 'autonomy', 'responsibility' and 'choice' are at home, where explanations terminate with the conscious operations of the agent's mind ..."<sup>20</sup> Thus Dearden's view that a person is autonomous to the extent that what he thinks or does cannot be explained without particular reference to his own independent thinking is, in Gardner's argument, a concept quite removed from any account of psycho-analytic development. Habits are crucial in Peters's account but as these are the antithesis of genuine moral action and Peters concludes his argument at the point of the rational, moral person in a different language from habits and development, the paradox of moral education is unresolved. Peters is considered to draw an antinomy, "... in which the domain where agents are the initiators of their actions is contrasted with the domain where all events are treated as the products of antecedent causes."<sup>21</sup> As a result, Peters's case that, "... there is no

contradiction involved in talking of individuals acquiring habits and being rational, intelligent and fairly spontaneous"<sup>22</sup> is insupportable.

Gardner finds three possible resolutions to this paradox which he considers unresolved by Peters; the first two are: that the young are more rational than the psycho-analytic model allows and that autonomous adults will emerge whatever their childhoods - both resolutions are dismissed. The third possible resolution is to abandon the, "... moral philosopher's view of the adult moral agent"<sup>23</sup> but Peters's conclusion is to avoid this and Gardner evidently will not grasp this nettle and, instead, hopes for a new way of conceptualising children which will not end in the contradiction he claims to identify in Peters's argument.

If Gardner's criticism of Peters is tenable, considerable implications stem from it. Any philosopher or any psychologist who utilises the perspectives of the other's area of investigation and who presents the rational, autonomous person as the ideal of any outline of development of a person is, from Gardner's argument, presumably in error. Piaget and Kohlberg, for example, use both philosophic and psychological perspectives presenting a developmental view of morality in the individual whose acquisition of reason may eventually enable him to reach a stage of adult autonomy. Peters's argument has considerable affinity to both these writers' views.

However, there are difficulties attaching to Gardner's position particularly in connection with his account of "progression" or development and to his case concerning a "sphere of discourse"; he gives examples as follows:

"For instance, if the problem is getting to a certain town, we may plot a course, and if the problem concerns going from a profit to a loss, we may devise a strategy. But these problems are not analogous to the type of issue

we find in Peters's main presentation of his paradox, for in our examples both the start and the goal or objective can be contained within the same realm or sphere of discourse." 24

Gardner's argument hinges, to a considerable extent, upon what he stipulates as a "sphere of discourse" because common use would presumably regard this as rational thought and argument which would apply to many areas of thought and associated practices. But if Gardner's stipulation is supportable, he should extend the implications of it to his choice of examples cited above. The first of these, the distance between two points, has little claim for comparability with a "sphere of discourse" embracing the moral development of persons. Rational thought in any particular sphere is determined by the key concepts with which it is concerned and in moral education, the subject determining the nature of the discourse is that of a person, and such a subject, because of the breadth of implications implicit in an analysis of the concept of a person, requires discourse appropriate to such breadth. The concept of a person, as the autos of personal autonomy, carries social and moral implications (as described in Chapter 3) but it also has implications for many other aspects of understanding. And it may only be when the perspectives generated by science, philosophy, morals, religion et alia are combined, that the concept of a person is fully identifiable by rational thought and argument across many "spheres of discourse". Indeed, if all "discourse" is compartmentalised in segregated "spheres", knowledge, understanding and human perspectives will be blinkered; different "spheres" should try to borrow from each other because without the "cognitive perspective" of Peters, there can be little thought which blends, enlightens and integrates varied perspectives for the individual. Peters is true to his calling in using different areas of knowledge to derive the most revealing analysis.

Gardner's second example above is of the economic prescription for progressing from loss to profit to illustrate development in a particular "sphere of discourse". It may be possible to adhere strictly to economics in evolving a strategy in order to move from loss to profit but economics concerns persons as do all other social sciences and any strategy which omits consideration of the human condition may have little chance of success. The economist's investigation into the nature of the interaction of persons helps him reach perspectives which involve values to shape key decisions in economic strategy. Although strains of intellectual activity may be sometimes stated under titles such as economic history or economic geography in the humanities and human sciences, the nature of a person calls for a combination of expert authority in ensuring as wide a perspective as possible is achieved. Therefore, at school level, a broad curriculum is essentially a gaining of understanding across a wide spectrum of knowledge synthesised in the learner's perspectives.

Moral virtue in the individual transcends all discrete areas of "discourse" since it relates to the concept of the whole person. Thus, Peters's phrase, "...the brute facts of child development", is not specific to any discrete intellectual perspective; its rawness may make a psychologist squirm even given the reference to development which, in Gardner's view, is here the "sphere of discourse" of psycho-analysis. The phrase has meaning in philosophic discourse and opens a wide perspective upon moral education involving a concern for the whole person.

A further feature of Gardner's argument is that the development of children by habit is formative; the child becomes father of the man. Therefore, given the significance attached to habit by Aristotle and Peters, Gardner questions whether a rational, autonomous person



could ever, possibly, emerge from such inauspicious beginnings. Peters is convinced of the formative nature of habits when he points out, "And so we stand at the door of the nursery which is the gateway to moral education. For it is here, in all probability, that the pattern of character-traits and the manner of exercising them is laid down."<sup>25</sup> Such habits may lead to persons becoming, "compulsives, obsessives, Puritans and impractical idealogues." But Gardner considers that if individual children can be shaped, moulded and indoctrinated by habits imposed by authoritarian adults, a child's future may never result in rational autonomy. However, Peters stresses that it is how habituation occurs that is of major significance; "Habits need not be exercised out of force of habit."<sup>26</sup> The acquisition of good habits should allow the mind greater freedom to exercise itself in other ways which require greater thought. Habits can be used constructively, if used carefully:

"For it is only if habits are developed in a certain kind of way that the paradox of moral education can be avoided in practice. This is a matter about which psychologists and practical teachers will have much more to say than philosophers. For I have only tried to resolve the theoretical paradox of moral education in a theoretical manner." <sup>27</sup>

Thus, it's not (only) what you do, it's the way that you do it which is Peters's message regarding habituation. And Gardner agrees that habits should be acquired by particular means although maintaining the paradox is unresolved. Brute drill in habits of moral virtue is not a feasible method to develop rational autonomy because autonomy is remote from such drill with its implications of mindless, conditioned response. The methods of habituation are of central importance in enabling the individual some measure of flexibility to exercise judgement as he develops. Dearden points out

that without some flexibility, moral development might be stunted, "... if the second stage really were as authoritarian as Piaget is sometimes made to say that it must be, then it is hard to see how autonomy could ever emerge from it."<sup>28</sup>

The educator in authority over children and young persons must exercise his authority by applying the appropriate means and style of habituating the young into moral virtue. The teacher is no moral expert but a shared perspective of moral virtues should be extended to encompass the young so that a school, for example, becomes a community with expectations of adherence to rules reflecting moral virtues. The educator in authority must have great care for the means of habituation and, when feasible, encourage reasoned discussion of rules and standards by inviting active involvement of those of suitable age in the maintenance of standards. The paradox of moral education, as Peters argues, enables personal autonomy to gain expression as adulthood approaches.

(b) Rational autonomy and authority

Peters resolves the paradox of moral education by judicious use of appropriate methods in forming habits expressive of moral virtue in the young and a person, as a social and moral being, comes to rational autonomy by adults in authority habituating him or her initially into the path of moral virtue. Autonomy and authority reach a modus vivendi in the way habits are inculcated. However, Dearden's description of personal autonomy distinguishes this concept from moral action and in this section, therefore, other facets of rational autonomy will be considered in order to clarify the nature of the relationship between autonomy and authority apart from in the sphere of moral virtue.

The attempts made to clarify the relationship between authority and autonomy in society in general do show that both apparently intractable concepts have a relationship in some respects. The following schema from R. P. Wolff's, In Defense of Anarchism, is used to describe an autonomy - authority relationship as a paradox of democracy:

- "(1) Authority is the right to be obeyed.
- (2) Obedience is doing something because someone tells you to do it.
- (3) Autonomy is self-legislation - never doing something because someone else tells you to do it.
- (4) Therefore, for authority to exist autonomy must be forfeited." 29

In order to retain some power for autonomy, Bates argues that the prima facie moral principle to obey the law may be overridden by some other moral principle on a particular occasion and the individual person should reserve the right to make that final decision. The individual is not alone in claiming his autonomy as no philosopher - even Hobbes - considers the state's authority and power over the individual to be unlimited. The task of philosophers has been to clarify the limits of obligation binding upon the individual who claims autonomy over the state's authority. It seems likely that a person in a modern democratic society will, in general, obey the authority of the state but reserves to himself the ultimate decision whether to do so or not were the laws of the state to conflict with other prima facie moral principles. Were Bates's analysis to be amended to read:

(1) Authority is to claim the right to be obeyed, and, (3) Autonomy is self-legislation - never doing something only because someone else tells you to do it (an emphasis Bates, presumably, intends from his emphasis of the word because),

it would, perhaps, more precisely convey his qualification upon authority in the form of autonomy. The paradox of autonomy and authority is not only confined to education and the young, therefore, since it remains unresolved in adult society which has grown, to some extent, out of the institutional framework of mass education.

Gibbs<sup>30</sup> examining The Republic finds a paradox of autonomy and authority. He points to Plato's strong support for authority even to the point of authoritarianism when defining the society of The Republic, but, at the same time, Plato is also in favour of rational autonomy and is critical of societies which omit features of autonomy, such as Timocratic, Oligarchic and Democratic societies. But, in The Republic, the highly autonomous Guardians rule a society of different classes who are responsible for defence or material production for all; these specialists are recognised as expert in their particular fields and in consequence, the rulers recognise the autonomy of each of these groups within its own sphere of responsibility. Therefore, the authority of the rulers is tempered by autonomy within particular groups in The Republic, because: "It would be unrealistic to demand that a person's judgement shall always be determined by his reflections, without recourse at all to the judgements, testimony and advice of other people."<sup>31</sup> However, the Guardians in authority would only attain rational autonomy and authority after the long educational process described by Plato during which autonomy for the Guardian submits to appropriate discipline and authority.

In a political context of a whole society, therefore, Bates and Gibbs find some scope for autonomy when government is in authority, just as Peters too finds it possible to draw autonomy out of careful and judicious practice of authoritative habituation into moral virtue.

It may be unlikely that schools could function as organisations upholding educational and moral standards in the virtues without their teachers in authority over pupils. However, a teacher is also an authority with expertise in what he teaches, but it does not necessarily follow because a process of authoritative habituation into moral virtue is required prior to the exercise of personal autonomy by the individual as the end of that process, that teacher expert authority involving other learning should delimit the exercise of autonomy until formal education is completed. Nevertheless, methods of forming good habits in the moral virtues are emphasised by Peters as a means of resolving the paradox of moral education; teacher methods of using expert authority may be equally significant in the intellectual sphere.

Dearden describes the relationship of autonomy and an intellectual education, thus:

"Perhaps autonomy is like happiness in this respect: that you do not achieve it by making it your primary objective. A decentred concern for appropriate standards would be the primary point. But the collateral effect on the person himself would be no less important for being indirect." 32

What are these standards within an intellectual education? They are presumably the levels of practice that an authority would accept as appropriate to the educational practice in question; they, therefore, should be acknowledged and adhered to by the learner. They are, also endorsed by the expert who is most aware of what the standard should be and adheres to it himself. However, standards are not immutable; review and improvements, appropriate to some standards, are likely to be essential to their maintenance.

But, unless a learner comes to grips, in the learning process, with meeting standards for himself, questioning accepted standards

as good ones and, at some stage, rationally questioning the authority of the teacher's view on an issue confronting them, there is little reason to assume that autonomy will develop at all. Autonomy within an intellectual education should be exercised by the learner day by day, albeit, in the early stages, with due respect to expert authority of teachers. As with moral virtue, the method of developing intellectual autonomy is crucial, but without scope for its expression in the learning process, there seems little reason why it should come into existence at some later stage. An intellectual education should be a stimulating experience in which learners, conscious of standards, tackle problems, question accepted statements and explore the territory with intellectual rigour. Without, in some measure, an exercise of autonomy, this situation is not possible because if the teacher, as an authority, does no more than convey his conclusions to his pupils on all significant issues within an intellectual education and gives them little scope for autonomous thinking in the learning process, authority rather than autonomy will become the aim. Learning will be circumscribed by the teacher's perspectives when the teacher's task ought to be the use of his expert authority to enable the learners to reach the point of questioning accepted conclusions.

Dearden presents the concept of learning how to learn in connection with the teacher as an authority, illustrating particular methods of using that authority:

"The teacher properly has authority, but he may choose to exercise it by teaching general principles, Information-getting skills, modes of inquiry, self-management skills and the habits which are necessary to back up all of these and to make them operative. Instead of just telling, as an authority, the teacher may rather elicit autonomous activity by posing questions, raising problems, suggesting new directions for an interest, or Socratic probing." 33  
(my emphases)

But a teacher may not choose these methods; he may choose alternatives which place repeated, heavy emphasis on rote learning with the result that opportunity for the exercise of pupil autonomy in the learning process may well be lost. How the teacher chooses to use his authority is crucially important as is the manner in which habits are inculcated in the young towards moral virtue. But pupil learners must get to grips with the constraints of learning within any particular discipline of an intellectual education; they must encounter those constraints at first hand as autonomous learners. (External constraints in learning situations are described in the following chapter.)

In schools, the learning situation is one in which careful balances should be struck. The teacher as an authority has a significant place in determining the content of a curriculum in terms of knowledge and examination of different ways of life (as White points out in Towards a Compulsory Curriculum) which the inexperienced would otherwise know nothing about. But within a context of guidance, the learner must be enabled to exercise a measure of autonomy within the learning process itself. If autonomy is not exercised in educational practices there is little reason to suppose that it will develop at all and deferring to authority, even without justification, may become a habit formed from an absence of pupil autonomy in learning. To exercise autonomy is to be autonomous within the area of learning circumscribed; without the exercise of autonomy there seems little likelihood that a disposition encompassing autonomy will develop and personal autonomy, as an educational aim, will not be directly realised.

Dearden's borrowing of Peters's paradox of moral education in order to apply it to a relationship between autonomy and authority

within the context of a liberal or intellectual education, therefore, has meaning if the methods employed by an authority are appropriate to autonomy. Even habits are relevant to reinforce learning as Dearden indicates above, but these habits are an habituation into suitable learning practices rather than brute drill. One major habit of mind is to think for oneself and to seek information to confirm or deny one's view, rather than to depend absolutely upon the spoken word of the nearest claimant to be an authority. However, it is also necessary to recognise and, when appropriate, defer to an authority in order to exercise an intellectual autonomy revealing independent judgement, initiative and originality in thought and practice. Perhaps the Aristotelian concept of the mean is a useful guide to practice in this respect. Methods of learning may be considered on a continuum from drill to the exercise of autonomous thought and although some kinds of drill may suit some kinds of learning, opportunity at the opposite end of the continuum must allow for the exercise of autonomous thought and practice in learning. The teacher as an authority who holds to autonomy as an aim of education should use that authority to promote the exercise of autonomy by the methods of teaching and learning he adopts. (Educational practices towards the exercise of autonomy are explored in more detail in Part 3.)

### (3) Towards a resolution of the paradox

It has been argued that those in authority in schooling should ensure that the route to personal autonomy followed by the young should be guided by habituation of a particular kind so that the social and moral implications of the nature of persons are realised. Children must be brought up somehow and establishing the right dispositions to engage the virtues is a central element in the



development of personal autonomy in its moral dimensions. It is maintained, above, that Aristotle, as Peters explicates him, is essentially correct to emphasise the importance of habit, given the appropriateness of the habituation involved. Settled dispositions should lead to virtuous actions, therefore. However, reason and understanding are also part of autonomy and cannot be excluded from the acquisition of the right dispositions for if the stage of development of rational autonomy is reached the individual achieves the ultimate disposition of autonomy; moral virtues meet with authenticity and reason to dispose the individual to be personally autonomous. But until a young person has sufficiently matured, his dispositions will be held on grounds which are not arrived at by his own process of reason. Habituation into particular dispositions is necessary and, later, practical reason should illuminate the value of the disposition for the individual.

A disposition has similar characteristics to an attitude. Both are directed at a referent which may be a category, a set of phenomena, objects, events, persons, behaviours etc. The direction is always external, away from the person thereby relating him through his dispositions to other persons and things. Attitudes and dispositions are, therefore, unlike traits of character which have only subjective reference to a person with such traits and describe an external, outward-oriented perspective. Both attitudes and dispositions seem to have three main features; firstly there must be knowledge by the referent of the attitude or disposition. This cognition will vary with age and developing rationality, achieved, partly by expanding knowledge and understanding. Second, there will be an affective element in that the individual will have positive feelings towards the referent if early habituation succeeds; negative

or neutral feelings may also characterise attitudes or dispositions. The third element is conative to ensure behaviour is generated towards the referent and an element of will is involved in ensuring that action occurs in accordance with the attitude or disposition.

Attitudes differ from dispositions in that an attitude is less fixed in its response and, therefore, the conative element so essential in a disposition will be less regulated. Attitudes are predispositions in that they may influence and precede adoption of settled dispositions. But only when the three elements, cognitive, affective and conative, combine is a disposition likely to become settled. Even then, the level of cognition and the power to reason, may well influence the nature of the disposition. The acquisition of knowledge is not an end in itself but it may well influence the formation of particular dispositions. A settled disposition, in the sense intended here, may be what teachers look for in pupils and describe as 'the right attitude'. And although a teacher may mean no more by that phrase than his judgement of a pupil's view of teacher authority, on reflection, a teacher should mean something more akin to 'the right, settled dispositions'.

In the social and moral development of a person, inculcation of the right dispositions engaging the virtues seems a generally uncontentious issue. White emphasises the need for the individual to acquire these dispositions or self-regarding virtues:

"... He needs courage to prevent his being dominated by fearful desires when his long-term good opposes this, temperance to keep his bodily desires within bounds; patience, strength of will; a good temper ... the reflective disposition to integrate the whole gamut of his desires ... the disposition to act on these desires ... not to leave himself, Hamlet-like, eternally reflecting but never committed to anything." 34

Parents and teachers in authority should use that authority in order to develop these dispositions constituting the social and moral aspects of persons in the young. Authority should ensure the exercise of these dispositions and virtues within the home and the school because they cannot be developed other than by practice and habituation.

However, dispositions also influence the individual in spheres of activity which do not obviously involve moral issues. Habits of mind and standards of thought in intellectual practices also involve the development of particular dispositions. Dearden identifies similarities and differences between moral and intellectual dispositions:

"Thus an analysis of the learning task of moral education closely parallels what was said, in effect, concerning the other forms of understanding. For there, too, in mathematics or art for example one can distinguish the same three elements of knowledge, caring (intrinsic interest, appreciation) and action, the acting again ranging from good work habits, such as neatness and legibility, to the more mindful and considered activities of problem-solving and constructive thinking. There are also differences, of course, since morality concerns our relations to others, whereas these other pursuits may not." 35

Dearden expresses a parallel between moral virtue and other kinds of learning in his three criteria of knowledge, caring and action, but he also distinguishes some aspects of learning from morality because the latter concerns the person's relations to others. However, much learning in mathematics and art, for example, within a school context will involve relations to other persons as social and moral beings. Neatness and legibility, which Dearden rightly emphasises as good work habits are, essentially, aids to communication with other persons. Such habits are presumably of less significance if communication with others is not intended and the individual's pride

or self-respect in the appearance of his work is solely at issue. School based learning does involve much learning together in small and larger groups of persons so that the moral dimension involving persons with persons becomes inextricably linked to the learning of, for example, specific mathematical principles or drawing techniques.

The relationship between teacher and student in a school context involves the teacher both in authority and as an authority simultaneously. He is in authority in that he must maintain the rules determining relationships between persons in the institution; he is also an authority in mathematics or art etc. as an expert assisting his students to gain insights into these educational practices for themselves. The dispositions related to the virtues developed by habituation under guidance of those in authority grow by association with the intellectual dispositions aided by those who are authorities in these intellectual disciplines. Personal autonomy is revealed by the range of dispositions which the individual exercises both in respect of the moral and the intellectual virtues.

Many activities have implications for both moral and intellectual virtues. Dearden describes the need for authority to require certain behaviour in children; "Learning that pinching hurts, how gardens are to be treated, what a library-user does, what truth-telling and promise keeping are, involves discovering expectations and finding out that their fulfilment is if necessary insisted upon."<sup>36</sup> He is writing here of those in authority requiring the maintenance of certain rules shaping moral dispositions. But the examples given can carry both a moral and another dimension. Learning that punching hurts by receiving or delivering a punch may, given a set of rules, a referee and a boxing ring, not be considered a moral issue by the protagonists, at least; learning that punching hurts by a child who

is bullied so that another releases his prejudice about class, colour, race etc. is a moral issue. That a library user does not deface books so that neither he nor others can enjoy them is a moral issue; learning how to use a catalogue or how to survey a book are not, as such, moral issues. Personal autonomy expresses the relationship of the person to autonomy and, therefore, both the moral and intellectual dispositions are called for in a child's development towards autonomy. Some issues are, inescapably, moral - such as Dearden's examples of truth-telling and promise-keeping, but issues which may seem neutral may well have moral implications because education is concerned with the development and learning of persons in a full social and moral sense and, in schools, relationships with others are not confined only to particular lessons on a weekly timetable. Therefore, the authority of the teacher who is both in authority and has expert authority in some area of intellectual activity should be used jointly to ensure the exercise of the virtues and the development of dispositions in the student in order that he may exercise personal autonomy within the limits set by the school.

The teacher or the parent's authority should aim to inculcate the dispositions which enable children and young persons to exercise a personal autonomy in moral and intellectual areas. They should be guided to get on the inside of the activities to which they are disposed through the processes of education. They should acquire the "language" of learning from the authoritative "literature" (to borrow from Oakeshott's analogy) and gain experience of educational practices for themselves:

"The problem is to introduce them to a civilised outlook and activities in such a way that they can get on the inside of those for which they have aptitude.

The same sort of problem can be posed in the case of their attitude to rules of conduct." 37

Peters seems to be suggesting that the developing of the dispositions which a learner requires for intellectual matters is a process not dissimilar to the need to habituate a person into the moral virtues. The "literature" may be required prior to the acquisition of the "language" of the activity, the latter expressing the right dispositions to the learning in question. The individual should apply both his knowledge from the intellectual sphere and the moral dispositions he has developed so that, "... as a scientist he will not be oblivious of the moral presuppositions of scientific inquiry nor of the aesthetic features of theories; neither will he be insensitive to the relevance of his findings to wider issues of belief and action."<sup>38</sup> The learning situation involves the individual's dispositions in general: "Some of the values of scientific thinking - for instance being clear and precise, looking for evidence, checking results and not cooking them - are instantiated in the learning situation."<sup>39</sup> There is no separation between the dispositions shaped by those in authority or the dispositions developed by those who are authorities in areas of intellectual learning, therefore; the person involved expresses a range of dispositions in his own person.

However, it is unlikely that any disposition will flower unless cultivated. Authority should not, then, be considered as a means of keeping shut the flood-gates against the tide of personal autonomy until formal education is completed. Authority should be used to organise, guide and instantiate autonomy in the processes of learning. The paradox of authority and autonomy is resolved not by one cancelling out the other but by those who are in authority and those who are authorities using that authority to provide parameters to the exercise of personal autonomy by students within schools.

This may best be accomplished by engaging pupils in educational practices directly to ensure the development, shaping and exercise of the right dispositions in both moral and intellectual spheres.

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- 2 Ibid., p.267.
- 3 At present, the ages between which formal education (at school or in other circumstances satisfactory in the opinion of a Local Education Authority) is compulsory are five to sixteen years. Persons up to eighteen years of age can also be held at law to be of child status; e.g. Children Act, 1949; Children and Young Persons Act, 1969. Definitions of child and young person based on statutes are to be found in, : Barrell, G. R. (1975) Teachers and the Law (London, Methuen); pp.379-381.
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- 9 Ibid., 1103 (a).
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- 18 Ibid., p.47; Note 20.
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## Introduction

In this chapter I intend to clarify the relationship of personal autonomy and freedom. The latter concept has aroused much interest in philosophy for centuries and is avidly claimed as an attribute in the workings of modern states by governments of any political persuasion. When applied to the individual, freedom is also used as a commendatory term as Cranston points out: "The word, 'freedom' - like its synonym 'liberty' - has a strong laudatory emotive meaning for English-speaking peoples ..."<sup>1</sup> And, echoing this tradition, White emphasises that, "Any infringement of liberty is prima facie morally unfustifiable."<sup>2</sup> Rousseau complains that, "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains."<sup>3</sup> But The Social Contract is given over largely to persuading the reader to experience and appreciate those "chains" which are necessary for a real sense of freedom. Indeed, the constraints, Rousseau's "chains", are necessary for an understanding of what freedom is because in the application of the word, freedom is always freedom from x or freedom for y or freedom from x so as to do y etc. (Negative and positive concepts of freedom will be explored in Section 2.) It would seem that, "Our favourite use of freedom ... is to get rid of it."<sup>4</sup> Marriages, jobs, contracts and formal arrangements impose constraints invited by individuals and constraints, therefore, will receive consideration in Section (1), below.

Perhaps because freedom tends to be regarded as a good thing, it has come to be, mistakenly, taken to be a power. Locke associates freedom with power: "... the idea of liberty is the idea of a power in any agent to do or forbear any particular action, according to the determination or thought of the mind, whereby either of them is

preferred to the other..." And he argues that a man standing on a cliff can leap twenty yards down but not up, "... but he is therefore free because he has a power to leap or not to leap. But if a greater force than his either holds him fast, or tumbles him down, he is no longer free in that case because the doing or forbearance of that particular action is no longer in his power."<sup>5</sup> However, if a person is able to do something and thus has the power to do it, he is not necessarily free to do it. Hence, in Locke's example, a man may be free to try to leap twenty yards upwards, but without assistance, he will, given the limits imposed by gravity, lack the power to do so.

The words 'may' and 'can' have been taken by Cranston to emphasise the difference between freedom and power; I may set out on a journey, but whether I can, or not, depends on whether my car will start or whether the bus arrives etc. "Truly there is little point in 'being free to' unless we 'have the power to', but it certainly does not follow from this that the one is identical with the other."<sup>6</sup> However, Cranston's illustration of the use of 'may' does not distinguish between 'may' expressing freedom and 'may' expressing possibility but with some measure of doubt entailed. Thus, for example, 'may' may not always express freedom, as in this sentence. However, when contrasted with 'can', 'may', generally, seems to infer that the individual faced with a choice is free to elect for one option or others.

Perhaps one reason why freedom is regarded as such a commendatory term is that it can be confused with power (as the example above from Locke shows) and thus appears to enhance the potential of the individual to whom it is applied. An individual who is free is in a state or condition in which constraints upon his thoughts and actions are

either withheld or are absent. The person has opportunity to act as he claims. But, in practice, it is possible that he lacks the capacities or powers enabling him to act even though the opportunity exists for him to do so. He enjoys freedom and opportunity but he lacks personal power and capability. Thus freedom may be seen as a kind of state or condition.

However, it may also be argued that the power and capability of an individual also constitute a state or condition. A ruler may be in a state of power over his subjects, but he may decide not to exercise his power in some particular, thereby allowing his subjects the freedom to act in ways he has not specifically prescribed. And a teacher in authority over a class, having institutional authority vested in him, will soon find when he wishes to exert that authority, whether he has the power to do so or not. (Authority in this context is considered in Section (1) of the previous chapter.)

Although, therefore, it may be an over-simplification to contrast freedom as a state or condition without which power cannot be exercised with power as a capability, ability or active faculty applied to an individual, it is nevertheless apparent that power only clearly exists when it is exercised; the significance of the light switch is not proven until the light comes on. Personal autonomy is in a close relationship with freedom, because without a condition of freedom the individual cannot exercise autonomy. Autonomy is a kind of power, therefore, which remains emasculated without freedom in which to operate. And although it is presumably possible for a person to be autonomous but not in a condition of freedom - a frustrating situation for such a person - that condition of freedom is no guarantee that a person will be or will act autonomously; he may simply make heteronomous or conformist choices

in his life and squander the opportunity which freedom provides for the exercise of his autonomous powers. However, the knowledge that an action or a choice is autonomous may well require rational explanation on the part of the individual in order to demonstrate this.

In Part I of this thesis, autonomy is held to give the individual a personal power and capacity to be self-determining from a perspective which is both authentic and rational and the implicit nature of the ideal of personal autonomy will further require the autonomous individual to recognise inter-personal standards within a community life requiring moral perspectives as a part of the very nature of personhood. Therefore freedom from constraint cannot be freedom to pursue egotistical ends if personal autonomy is the power determining action.

In the sections of this chapter I shall explore in turn:

(1), constraints upon freedom; (2), the nature of negative and positive freedom as conditions or states involving the individual and these concepts of freedom will be compared with that of personal autonomy; and, (3), a perspective on freedom and autonomy within education will conclude the chapter.

(1) Constraints upon freedom

It seems appropriate to begin with constraints when trying to clarify the relationship of freedom and personal autonomy because, "The fundamental sense of freedom is freedom from chains, from imprisonment, from enslavement by others ...", and "... to know one's chains for what they are is better than to deck them with flowers ... otherwise there will be danger of confusion in theory and justification of oppression in practice, in the name of liberty itself."<sup>7</sup> Bantock<sup>8</sup> has argued that 'real' freedom must involve a measure of constraint because children having uninformed minds will only attain freedom by education and the acquisition of suitable knowledge. As they mature in character, abilities and all their faculties, constraints are reduced. But the range of constraints is considerable. Harris<sup>9</sup> refers to: logical, physical, psychological, moral, legal constraints and, indeed, there seems to be as many constraints as there are freedoms. A person's life style engages constraints in its day to day operations and a style of sleep, food and T.V. may imprison an individual by constraints of habit and ignorance for only by experiencing and rejecting alternatives may he be considered free or autonomous.

Two categories of constraints may be identified: those which are (a) external to the individual and those which are (b) internal or psychological. The individual who attains personal autonomy still lives in a world of external constraints; he must come to accept the restrictions upon his activities imposed by the physical world - he cannot jump twenty yards in the air etc. - and there are also those external constraints which society creates towards which the individual must orient himself.

(a) External constraints

Entwistle<sup>10</sup>, although making little reference to internal constraints, provides a good analysis of external constraints: regulatory, disciplinary, custodial. Regulatory constraints are those concerned with law and order in human society. Each and every person encounters constraints imposed by law; Locke, concerned with the constitutional implications of the Stuart prerogative, articulates the need for regulation between persons: "For in all the states of created beings capable of laws, where there is no law there is no freedom. For liberty is to be free from restraint and violence from others; which cannot be where there is no law; but freedom is not, as we are told, a liberty for every man to do what he lists (for who could be free when every man's humour might domineer over him?) but a liberty to dispose, and order as he lists, his person, actions, possessions, and his whole property, within the allowance of those laws under which he is, and therein not to be subject to the arbitrary will of another, but freely follow his own."<sup>11</sup> Hobbes has a similar conviction in the necessity for the constraint of law regulating individual wants: "For the use of laws, which are but rules authorised, is not to bind the people from all voluntary actions; but to direct and keep them in such a motion, as not to hurt themselves by their own impetuous desires, weakness or indiscretion; as hedges are set, not to stop travellers, but to help them in their way."<sup>12</sup> He emphasises that liberty is the silence of the law.

Schools and the individuals within them function within the framework of legal constraints. The rules of any particular school will express the requirements of the law as well as require certain behavioural standards for the protection of persons and property and it is part of the education the school provides that institutional



power should be seen to be used properly. In a democratic society, citizens accept the restrictions of the law in approving its imposition on all, equally, in that it, in Hobbes's phrase, "hedges in" the citizen. School pupils who participate in the framing of rules may come to understand those rules more clearly and be more likely to respect them. Given that the individual pupil may develop in personal autonomy, he will live in a situation hedged in by regulatory constraints, not least of which is that which requires his attendance at school until a certain, stipulated age is attained. If personal autonomy develops in school pupils then, it develops in a situation of constraints.

The disciplinary constraints of education also bear on the individual from outside. Much learning imposes the constraints of its own disciplines of thought. Subject disciplines apply their own rules of logic and limit, thereby, the freedom of the learner. Subject disciplines have their own internal principles, concepts and rules of thought. In some respects it is the constraint of the subject rule which makes for the highest expression of the subject - as in the rigidity imposed on the poet by the form of the sonnet. Such rules allow the outstanding performer to show his ability in his discipline. Spontaneous free expression in art is regarded as of little value by Bantock. He considers that those children who are encouraged by a tradition (which he considers derives from Rousseau and Froebel) within which they may express some sense of self rather than respond to the practice of techniques acquired from outside, achieve little: "For an essential part of any mental therapy lies surely in the re-ordering of experience in relationship to something other than itself, a coming to terms with that which lies outside the self, and the consequent emergence of the self on a new level of

experience; this involves a submission at some stage to a discipline of a sort ..."<sup>13</sup> If personal autonomy is to be accepted as an educational ideal, disciplinary constraints of the kind referred to above should not fundamentally prevent the growth of the pupil learner in autonomy; indeed, Bantock regards such constraints as essential to free the individual from the constraint of ignorance.

Entwistle's third category of external constraint upon children is custodial. Denial of freedom to children is usually justified on grounds that it is in the child's interest not to be free. Locke indicates that equality is an essential measure in the relationships of persons, "... that equal right that everyman hath to his natural freedom, without being subjected to the will or authority of any other man ..." But "Children, I confess, are not born in the full state of equality, though they are born to it..." And "To turn him loose to an unrestrained liberty before he has reason to guide him is not the allowing him the privilege of his nature to be free, but to thrust him out among brutes, and abandon him to a state as wretched, or as much beneath that of a man, as theirs is."<sup>14</sup> Bantock considers that custodial constraints are imperative and he views the authority which children should come to accept as an imperative: "It seems to me that the most pressing problem of the moment in education - as in the whole of our social life - is the search for an 'authority' that will give strength and meaning to man's free development of himself that will allow man to come to his true 'self', in Lawrence's significance of the term - which, in the last resort, is what education implies."<sup>15</sup> Although Bantock touches here on a view of this constraint which has implications for the psychological aspects to be considered below, he clearly considers it imperative that parental and teacher authority over children should be competently and confidently applied.

In schools, teacher authority, as a constraint upon children, is partly formal in that it is derived from legal obligations of both common and statute law embodied in the institution of the school itself. However, a teacher's authority is also his or her own, in the sense of that which an individual earns by performance in the job undertaken; personal competence, knowledge, training, common sense and a concern for children's intellectual, physical and emotional development are a part of this actual authority which, in our schools, is far more significant than the formal authority of the institution - in so far as effective teaching is concerned. (Authority is addressed more directly in the preceding chapter.)

A school student lives, then, in a world of external constraints - more so than does the adult citizen. And the extent to which a student's freedom should be subject to external constraint will be considered in the final section of this chapter because no easy way exists, it seems, by which external constraint can be judged appropriate or inappropriate. It would be of little practical use to adopt the maxim that a person should be free from constraint as long as his freedom does not interfere with another's freedom because every social situation would involve balancing one type of constraint against another with no sure way of determining particular claims. It does, in practice, seem nonsense to claim that children should be free from all constraints because the consequences of constraint clashing with claims to freedom might result in the most evident kinds of anti-social behaviour. The picture of the choir's activities in Lord of the Flies may be more likely than those children pictured in Coral Island! Constraints, of particular kinds, upon children may enlarge their freedom and their autonomy (later on as adults) by their acquisition of knowledge and experience.

(b) Internal constraints

More significant as a bar to the development of personal autonomy may be internal constraints which have particular significance in positive freedom (to be considered in Section 2). Benn<sup>16</sup> describes three conditions in which autonomy can be restricted by constraint: compulsive acts or inner drives; "defects of epistemic rationality" such as paranoia; lacking consciousness of the sense of ability to change the world - as in dissociation of personality or schizophrenia. Obsessions, compulsions, drives may divert the individual from attaining a state of freedom, since these may become so powerful an influence upon the individual that he may lose sight of his rational purposes and the capacity for autonomous thought and action: "A man's freedom can therefore be hemmed in by internal, motivational obstacles, as well as external ones."<sup>17</sup> If an individual has internal, psychological fetters or constraints which figure largely in his judgements, his freedom will be, to that extent, limited.

Reference has been made earlier to the importance of overcoming internal constraints by the individual person. In Chapter 1, Section (4) (b) and (c), authenticity was argued to be evident in the person who was able to evaluate, deeply and reflectively, his own motives. Recognition of the strength and importance of one's motives, expressed in a language of worth, is central to authenticity as a key component of the autos. The deep or strong authentic evaluator encounters and overcomes internal constraints in making evaluation of his motives; unless inner constraints are set aside no authentic evaluation is possible. Further, in Chapter 2, Section (4), analysis of practical reason revealed the significance of wants in connection with reasons and such motives have relevance to the strength of will required to overcome at least some inner constraints. The will was

recognised as only contingently connected with autonomy, in Chapter 3, Section (1) (b) (ii), but as part of a person's capacities it does have direct relevance to personal autonomy in enabling the individual person to set aside inner constraints and pursue those motivations which he evaluates as of the greatest significance to his life and learning.

It may be that inner constraints are much more significant a restriction upon the individual than external ones partly because society makes for a level of external constraint upon all individuals because of the nature of society itself as a community constraining all by rules and laws. (Skinner argues for the benefits to society of wholesale constraints upon the individual in Beyond Freedom and Dignity.) External constraints can, usually, be recognised; internal constraints may not be as easily recognised for what they are. Therefore it would be nonsense to claim that a compulsive murderer was psychologically freer because of the acts he committed when he was, in fact, driven to act as he did. Fromm draws attention to two kinds of constraint:

"... we are fascinated by the growth of freedom from powers outside ourselves and are blinded to the fact of inner restraints, compulsions and fears, which tend to undermine the meaning of the victories freedom has won against its traditional enemies ... the problem of freedom is not only a quantitative one, but a qualitative one; that we not only have to preserve and increase the traditional freedom, but that we have to gain a new kind of freedom, one which enables us to realise our own individual self, to have faith in this self and in life."<sup>18</sup>

Fromm is describing the individual overcoming irrational fears to achieve a true state of self-awareness in which internal constraint is kept in check.

The individual's authenticity and autonomy give him the power

to accept some internal constraints as part of himself (of his personality and way of thinking) and to reject others which may stand opposed to his major motives and purposes. Berlin describes an educational process by which external disciplinary constraints may be taken on board by the individual's rational autonomous judgement and made part of his way of thinking so that although they are, in a sense, still constraints, they become part of him and enlarge his state of freedom:

"If I am a schoolboy, all but the simplest truths of mathematics obtrude themselves as obstacles to the free functioning of my mind, as theorems whose necessity I do not understand; they are pronounced to be true by some external authority, and present themselves to me as foreign bodies which I am expected mechanistically to absorb into my system. But when I understand the functions of the symbols ... because they appear to follow from the laws that govern the processes of my own reason, then mathematical truths no longer obtrude themselves as external entities forced upon me which I must receive whether I want it or not, but as something which I now freely will in the course of the natural functioning of my own rational activity." 19

Berlin describes an individual who takes the external constraint, makes it his own and thus makes himself internally, psychologically, freer. The activity of his reason has shown him the way to the intellectual enlightenment of number systems. Bantock would be well pleased! However, not all persons require the freedom from inner constraints to reason at higher mathematical levels. Perhaps the vast majority do not require such a state of liberation and the acquisition of a complementary personal autonomy may well vary from person to person.

Both internal and external constraints set parameters for the state of freedom within which the individual functions. When

personal autonomy is pursued as a major aim in education it may be that internal constraints limiting freedom also restrict the development of that autonomy. However, the relationship of freedom and personal autonomy will be reserved to Section (2) (c) and Section (3), following the analysis of freedom in Section (2)(a), into negative freedom and (2) (b), into positive freedom.

## (2) The nature of freedom

I have argued above that two kinds of constraints influence and circumscribe the actions of the individual - those constraints which are external to him and those which are internal, a part of his psychological make-up, making him, partly, the kind of person he is. If constraints are minimised, the more freedom the individual has so that he may develop in his own way. Freedom is regarded as a good thing and communities with pretensions to be democratic tend to regard it as a necessity; hence the imposition of constraints upon an individual by such a society must be made justifiable because a Western democratic society, at any rate, will tend to regard infringements of liberty as prima facie morally unjustifiable. Although constraints will be applied, it seems desirable to extend the area of freedom as much as possible so that the individual may obtain the greatest scope by which to attain his own purposes. It is the constraints which must yield justification and withstand scrutiny; all departures from that state or context of living which freedom expresses must be for compelling reasons.

External constraints upon the individual bear upon negative freedom and internal constraints bear more upon positive freedom; the analysis of freedom into negative and positive aspects will be explored below:

(a) Negative freedom

Isaiah Berlin's essay, Two Concepts of Liberty, has been described as seminal because of the influence it has exerted over discussions of freedom. Negative freedom, in Berlin's analysis, is to do with that area of his life within which a person ought to be left to do or be what he wants without interference from other persons. The wider the area of non-interference by others, the wider scope for freedom. This view of freedom as the area within which the individual can pursue his own purposes is that of Mill who wants the area of freedom of action to be as wide as possible and because human activities do not always run harmoniously together, external constraints upon negative freedom require justification based upon high values such as justice, happiness, equality, security, etc. The Millian tradition places great emphasis upon individualism. Each person, according to this view (deriving from Aristotle and, latterly, the Renaissance) should have the inalienable right to pursue his own good in his own way. Mill thought that if the area of freedom was unduly circumscribed, individualism would lack all scope for self-expression and, therefore, the individual would not attain the opportunities which his individualism should afford. Negative freedom is then an "opportunity concept"<sup>20</sup> in that each individual is afforded the opportunity to act in his own way, but he may choose not to exercise his individualism or he may be unable to exercise it. However, no external obstacle obstructs him and he has a measure of freedom within which interference with his purposes does not run. Hence, in Hobbes's example, the individual traveller was free to proceed in his own way on the road which was bounded by hedges; the individual



was free in the area set out for transit and within those bounds, he was free from other constraints.

Negative freedom is threatened by the assumption that it will be bounded by constraints from outside because once that assumption is accepted, consideration of what constraints are proper and to what extent negative freedom should be restricted become the starting point. But a more appropriate starting point in deciding the area of freedom may well be a situation of complete negative freedom - as Mill suggests. However, decisions based upon assessments of the appropriate extent of negative freedom present difficulties because these will be contingent upon the range of possibilities open to a particular individual, how significant these are, how far an increase in the negative freedom of one individual may restrict that of other individuals etc. The maxim that an individual person should be free in so far as his actions do not interfere with the freedom of others is not adequate as a basis for adjudicating claims (to be free from interference) because each claim will require separate judgement. The strength of the claims of freedom over other considerations will have no obvious criteria from which to derive judgement in all cases. It seems unrealistic to make all children free from constraints when attendance at school can claim the justification to ensure they learn and gain knowledge to make them more informed choosers in their adult lives, for example, even though de-schoolers counter-claim (but lack evidence) that school breaches a child's autonomy. Nor are children free from regulatory constraints when at school - few will regard it justifiable to allow children to act in anti-social ways such as bullying or vandalism. But the area of allowable freedom and the extent of constraint are rarely clear-cut and argument over whether children should be free from

corporal punishment for example is, as yet, an issue not fully resolved in Britain and certainly not resolved world-wide.

External constraints and the area of individual freedom giving an individual the opportunity for action is often described as freedom from interference. However, freedom expressed in a more positive sense may be described as freedom to do or act in certain ways. If a person is free from certain constraints the area of his freedom is not limited by the extent of those constraints, but some constraints may be said to make individuals free to do things - as in the above example of children constrained to attend school to gain knowledge so they, as adults, are free to choose and act in informed ways. Indeed, it has been suggested that negative freedom, expressed in freedom from constraint, is also the same freedom expressed in more positive terms - as freedom to act, think, do, etc. Most expressions of freedom can be used to emphasise different aspects of each case: if I am free from my striking union's recommendation, I may go to work; however, I could be just as easily free to go to work because of the absence of my union's recommendation to the contrary. Negative freedom implies that the presence of some constraining factor makes a person unfree, whereas expressed in positive form, freedom implies the absence of something making for unfreedom so, therefore, it may be argued that, "In recognising that freedom is always both freedom from something and freedom to do something, one is provided with a means of making sense out of interminable and poorly defined controversies, concerning, for example, when a person really is free, why freedom is important and on what its importance depends."<sup>21</sup>

The understanding of statements about freedom may hinge more upon the nature of the constraints operating upon each individual in each situation rather than upon juggling with words involving

freedom from, freedom to, freedom for - in order to, etc. Therefore, as well as a consideration of the area of freedom left clear from interference by external constraints, it is necessary to consider those internal constraints which affect the freedom of the individual and to examine, then, the positive nature of freedom.

(b) Positive freedom

Both negative and positive freedom may well be aspects of the same thing. However, the absence of external constraints enables a person to realise the opportunity presented by freedom in the negative sense but it does not enable the person to do things which other kinds of constraints may prevent. Some constraints are inner constraints - within the psychological make-up of the individual and freedom in a positive sense may require the removal of certain kinds of inner constraints if such freedom is to be achieved. Some writers have pursued the links between inner constraints and positive freedom in some depth; Kant, Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, T. H. Green follow this theme, whereas Hobbes, Locke, Bentham, Mill direct their attention to external constraints and freedom in the negative sense.

E. G. West describes the positive sense of freedom thus:

"... the 'positive' sense of the word 'liberty' consists in the attainment of self-mastery, or, in other words, the release from the domination of 'adverse' influences. This 'slavery' from which men 'liberate' themselves is variously described to include slavery to 'nature', to 'unbridled passions', to 'irrational impulses', or simply slavery to one's 'lower nature'. 'Positive' liberty is then identified with 'self-realisation' or awakening into a conscious state of rationality. The fact that it is contended that such a state can often be attained only by the interference of other 'rational' persons who 'liberate' their fellow beings from their 'irrationality', brings this interpretation of liberty into open and striking conflict with liberty in the 'negative' sense." 22

T. H. Green distinguishes a lower and a higher self associating the rational, ideal self as the one which should master the lower, baser self concerned for immediate gratification and governed by no more than irrational impulses. Positive freedom involves release from inner constraints such as these so that a condition is reached in which the individual attains the self-realisation to which West refers above. Fromm, writing in the light of the effects of National Socialism upon Germans in the 1930's and '40's comes to a similar conclusion about the 'self' as that of T. H. Green. The 'higher' self which lives in positive freedom has strength and dignity, in Fromm's Freudian-inspired analysis, but Fromm fears that man, unable to reach a condition of positive freedom, will find the means of escape from freedom altogether. In a similar view, West, in the extract above, ironically refers to 'rational' persons 'liberating' fellow beings from 'irrationality'; in reality he infers the subjection of the individual by some outside power which subsumes the individual's purposes within itself, fusing the self with some idea or ideal; this outside power can be a person, an institution, a god, a nation, hence, for the person: "The meaning of his life and the identity of his self are determined by the greater whole into which the self has submerged."<sup>23</sup> Authoritarianism, destructiveness, automaton conformity are stated as mechanisms of escape from freedom for the individual in Fromm's analysis.

Persons can, in the name of positive freedom, be subjected to oppression and torture by political power on the grounds that it expresses the higher self. Totalitarianism or democracy may impose sovereignty upon the individual, subsuming his freedom in the political concept which does away with the individual's 'irrationality'. A democratic state is one through which the individual rules and is

ruled; therefore, in a democratic state, it may be argued that the individual is free and, indeed, if the power of that democratic state increases, the individual's freedom also increases. This, however, could be a distortion of positive freedom. Only individual persons exist and no one is able to legislate for himself even in the most democratic society; he is ruled by a majority of his fellows, perhaps.

Fear of the subversion of positive freedom leads some individuals to a Stoic position of retreat into an inner self, or "inner citadel", which no outsider can penetrate. The Stoic retreats by eliminating the importance of things about him and, therefore, he preserves, in his view, his inner freedom. If prison or ill-treatment are not held to be a menace by the Stoic, they will not influence him. When the slave, Epictetus, was badly treated by his master to the extent that his master broke his slave's leg in spite of Epictetus's advice that this was likely to happen, Epictetus stoically pointed out to his master that he had warned that this would occur. The slave withdrew from the worldly condition into his inner self, hence preserving his freedom. Although the Stoic acts according to his reason, his withdrawal from the world and from, if need be, compassion and concern for others, provide a strong limitation on this position.

The distortion of positive freedom into its very opposite is a danger. Winston Smith eventually has to accept that, "Freedom is slavery"<sup>24</sup> and Aldous Huxley's perceptive passage below illustrates the same contradiction:

"But if you want to be free, you've got to be a prisoner. It's the condition of freedom - true freedom.

'True freedom!' Anthony repeated in the parody of a

clerical voice. 'I always love that kind of argument. The contrary of a thing isn't the contrary; oh, dear me, no! It's the thing itself, but as it truly is. Ask any die-hard what conservatism is; he'll tell you it's true socialism. And the brewer's trade papers; they're full of articles about the beauty of true temperance. Ordinary temperance is just gross refusal to drink; but true temperance, true temperance is something much more refined. True temperance is a bottle of claret with each meal and three double whiskies after dinner ...

'What's in a name?' Anthony went on. 'The answer is, practically everything, if the name's a good one. Freedom's a marvellous name. That's why you're so anxious to make use of it. You think that, if you call imprisonment true freedom, people will be attracted to the prison. And the worst of it is you're quite right.'" 25

The presentation of something as its antithesis is not, of course, confined to freedom but has become a feature of modern advertising for example - as in the representation and identification of the smoking of cigarettes with healthy sports. But however skilled the presentation it cannot make opposites the same thing. And positive freedom ought not to be shunned because freedom is sometimes distorted into what it is not.

In reality, "... Positive freedom is identical with the full realisation of the individual's potentialities, together with his ability to live actively and spontaneously ..." <sup>26</sup> Fromm's view is that, avoiding the distortion and subversion of mechanisms of escape from freedom, real freedom is expressed in the individual's self as, "... the spontaneous activity of the total integrated personality." <sup>27</sup> The condition he describes is an attitude of mind of an individual free from inner constraints inhibiting attainment of positive freedom.

### (c) Positive freedom and personal autonomy distinguished

R. F. Dearden quotes Berlin's description, below, as an account of personal autonomy. He indicates that Berlin, "equates autonomy

with what has traditionally been called 'positive freedom'.<sup>28</sup>

"The positive sense of the word 'liberty' derives from the wish on the part of the individual to be his own master. I wish my life and decisions to depend on myself, not an external force of whatever kind. I wish to be the instrument of my own not of other men's acts of will. I wish to be a subject, not an object; to be moved by reasons, by conscious purposes which are my own, not by causes which affect me, as it were, from outside I wish to be somebody, not nobody; a doer-deciding, not being decided for, self-directed and not acted upon by external nature or by other men as if I were a thing, or an animal, or a slave incapable of playing a human role, that is, of conceiving goals and policies of my own and realising them. This is at least part of what I mean when I say that I am rational, and that it is my reason that distinguishes me as a human being from the rest of the world. I wish, above all, to be conscious of myself as a thinking, willing, active being, bearing responsibility for his choices and able to explain them by reference to his own ideas and purposes. I feel free to the degree that I believe this to be true, and enslaved to the degree that I am made to realise that it is not."

Dearden considers that the essentials of personal autonomy are included in this description. It is certainly apparent that the individual here acts rationally; he is authentic in his wishes; he is an "individual", a "human being" - a person, therefore, with a moral sense; he has a will of his own. Nevertheless, there is a strong emphasis upon the word, "wish", in the passage above (see my emphases) and if a person wishes for something, he presumably has not actually achieved or attained the object of his wish. The person in Berlin's description wishes to attain a condition of positive freedom. It is, however, an ideal condition removed from the real, practical world; he indicates that: "I wish my life and decisions to depend on myself, not on external forces of whatever kind." But even the Stoic in his inner citadel will require food and drink - unless he withdraws from life itself, the ultimate negative act. It is also a condition which seems to give little direction to

the individual who is said to be able to explain his choices, "... by reference to his own ideas and purposes". This latter phrase is reminiscent of Dearden's description of that individual who makes choices in relation to, "his own activity of mind", but it is hard to imagine anyone who does not (if rational) make choices, and yet is totally unable subsequently to explain his choices. Although the essentials of personal autonomy are included in Berlin's passage, they are wished for, or sought for, by an individual who may well be mistaken about his attainment of a condition of positive freedom; Berlin states that, "I feel free to the degree that I believe" the attainment of the condition described has been attained - however, I am also, "enslaved to the degree that I am made to realise that it is not". If I do not realise that I have not reached my desired condition of positive freedom and if only believing that I have reached it, when I may well be mistaken, is enough for me to "feel free", then positive freedom, itself, exposes me to control from outside which I may fail to realise has occurred.

Personal autonomy, although sharing most of its key concepts with positive freedom, may be especially considered as a power in the individual by which to judge his own relative condition of positive freedom. The individual who attains a high degree of personal autonomy is ruled by autonomy's nomoi, those constraints or rules, internalised by the individual, which enable him to think and act according to the standards set by the nomoi. The individual who attains a high degree of personal autonomy does not only "wish" to attain positive freedom, he does attain this condition of self and the inner constraints imposed by his own internalised rules enable him to act in accord with these same rules or nomoi. The individual who is personally autonomous does not "feel free" in a



state of euphoria like those who bind themselves mistakenly to some external force or ideal; he may often have difficult and painful choices to make - hedged in by those constraints or rules which he has internalised. Personal autonomy is a power setting standards of authentic and rational thought and action but positive freedom remains a necessary condition for the full exercise of personal autonomy because the individual must master some kinds of internal constraints or inhibitions before he attains positive freedom sometimes represented as his 'higher' self. However, without personal autonomy the individual may lack the power to prevent the subversion of his positive freedom into a condition of unfreedom. This condition masquerades as positive freedom, directs the individual's purposes, subsumes his very self and eliminates both individual positive freedom and personal autonomy.

Dearden, in clarifying the relationship of freedom and autonomy makes this point: "Attempts to identify the two more closely lead to a version of 'positive' freedom which may make a kind of sense but which is ill-advised. For when autonomy has as yet no psychological reality in a person, coercion may then be passed off as liberation, as being what he 'really' wants or wills, and thus as needing no further justification."<sup>29</sup> Such a situation will expose the person to exploitation and he will lack the means to recognise the condition of unfreedom into which he may be drawn and, as Dearden indicates, external authority, subverting freedom for the individual, will escape the necessity of justifying itself.

Cranston pursues a distinction in the nature of positive freedom by stating that: "Rational freedom finds freedom in self-discipline. Compulsory rational freedom finds freedom in discipline. Rational freedom is thus, individualistic, linked to a private ethic.

Compulsory rational freedom is political - linked to a social ethic."<sup>30</sup> According to the interpretation presented above, "rational freedom" is positive freedom; it must be attained before the power of personal autonomy can function in and for the individual. Personal autonomy is that "private ethic" linked to positive, rational freedom. The danger to the individual's positive freedom and personal autonomy comes by the wholesale adoption of the "social ethic" which subsumes the person as a part of a greater whole, but which, as Dearden warns, may claim to be rational and, therefore, to be for the good of the individual, even though denying him his personal positive freedom and his personal autonomy.

My argument so far in showing the relationship between positive freedom and personal autonomy has, therefore, presented the following points of contact. First, I argued the necessity for the individual to be released from inner constraints - fetters on his significant motives - which inhibit his actions and thoughts (although it is essential to recognise that the implications of personhood claim the primacy of ethics - as argued in Chapter 3). Thus, free, he can attain a condition of personal, rational, positive freedom. This freedom has similar characteristics to those of personal autonomy, but as argued in the introduction to this chapter, freedom is not a power; it is a state, condition or situation in which the individual places himself, or is placed. Positive freedom is an ideal condition in that the individual can then, from such a state, exercise the power of his personal autonomy. I now wish to consider how the individual's gain in personal autonomy enables him to attain a condition of positive freedom and, also, how the individual who attains a condition of positive freedom can then exercise personal autonomy to a high degree.

Although an individual enjoying negative freedom may be free and independent from the interference of others, such a condition of freedom only places the individual in a situation in which he may choose to act. Freedom in the negative sense in which Isaiah Berlin uses it, is an opportunity concept. External constraints are removed from the individual's situation so that he has the opportunity to act; the individual may choose not to exercise this freedom, but he has the choice and obstacles from outside do not prevent him.

Freedom in the positive sense of Berlin's usage is a concept involving doing or exercising abilities:

"Doctrines of positive freedom are concerned with a view of freedom which involves essentially the exercising of control over one's life. On this view, one is free only to the extent that one has effectively determined oneself and the shape of one's life. The concept of freedom here is an exercise concept." 31

Only when the individual has reached a condition of positive freedom is he in a position to act and think in the light of that condition. He must have released himself from those inner constraints which may prevent his activities, even though he is in a condition of negative freedom giving opportunities for those activities; positive freedom is the state or condition giving potential for self-realisation by the individual.

If a person is to attain a condition of self-realisation (a condition of positive freedom) he must be able to discriminate between his wants, wishes, desires. Many such wishes, impulses and needs will motivate an individual; some of these may act as constraints upon his achievement of self-realisation - or, if it exists, the attainment of a 'higher' self. Some internal constraints will block the individual's route to positive freedom and individuals may be

unable to discriminate, adequately, between different sorts of motivation and, as a result, lead themselves to a false awareness or false consciousness of themselves. Such a situation may result in that collective control of the individual referred to above.

Each person is an individual in his or her own right; he or she has a potential for authenticity and perhaps each person may have to seek a different route towards personal self-realisation; no specific guidelines or prescription of steps to be followed exist to lead an individual to self-realisation. The power to help bring an individual to a state of self-realisation must be particular to each individual autos and express those rules, nomoi, or rational constraints characteristic of a condition of positive freedom. This power, therefore, must be that of personal autonomy. Positive freedom (self-awareness, self-realisation) is the condition to be achieved, hence it is not the power for the achievement of itself. Personal autonomy has been shown above to be similar in its characteristics to those of positive freedom; thus as a person gains the power of autonomy, so he gets nearer to a condition of positive freedom.

The powers which personal autonomy can provide for the individual are: the power to reason; the capacity to develop as a person with an appropriate view of inter-personal relationships; the power of will; the capacity to think and act authentically. (These concepts are considered in Part 1.) Each of these powers contributes to an individual's capacity to select between courses of action, enabling him to find his deeper or real purposes which should weigh more in his scheme of things than transient wishes for comforts easily acquired. The individual achieving his 'real', authentic

purposes will have attained something of the condition of positive freedom. Exercise of the power of personal autonomy should enable the individual to avoid, as far as possible, mistaking his 'real' purposes and should, therefore, act as a constraint or group of constraints upon the person's judgement in any course of action. Autonomy will force out of the reckoning what is not complementary to the achievement of self-realisation so that the person who gains direction by an exercise of autonomy should move nearer to his ideal condition of positive freedom.

When a person attains a condition of self-realisation and he can truly be said to 'know himself' so that he is free in the positive sense, paradoxically, personal autonomy remains a self-constraint in enabling him to act on his more important purposes. Motivations of a less significant kind in his overall scheme of things should be set aside and autonomy's powers should help prevent the individual from error by his capacity to make authentic choices between the motivations he has. His reason imposes standards of thinking upon him; his autonomous personhood involves him in sympathetic consideration of other persons; his will ensures that actions are carried through with a force commensurate with the other powers of autonomy; his authentic self ensures that there is a feature of his choices among motivations which is not extrinsically determined.

Garforth contrasts freedom with, "fulfilment". The latter, in his view, is a major extension of freedom in the negative sense and the acquisition of the capacity to do and to have the potential to be fulfilled: "But liberation is only part of fulfilment, namely, freedom from restraint, self-conflict etc., it is not the whole meaning of fulfilment, which includes also the fruition or

actualisation of potentiality. Therefore, to identify fulfilment with freedom is to impoverish the former by equating it with the conditions which make it possible."<sup>32</sup> For an individual to be fulfilled, in this sense, therefore, he must experience the state or condition of freedom. But true fulfilment is more than this and without personal autonomy, no real fulfilment of individual potential is possible.

### (3) Freedom, personal autonomy and education

In the previous section I argued that development and exercise of the power of personal autonomy in the individual should lead to the attainment of an ideal state of positive freedom. This state is one of self-realisation in which the individual frees himself from inner constraints and is then more able to exercise the power of personal autonomy. The analysis of personal autonomy in Part 1 comprised authenticity, reason and the criteria picked out by reason and the implications for interpersonal life of the adjective, personal, associated with autonomy. In the following sections, I aim to show, (a) where these characteristics of autonomy and the aspects of positive freedom meet, and, (b) where personal autonomy and negative freedom may meet in an educational context. In particular, I aim to suggest an approach to the issue of whether a loss of negative freedom can be justified by gains in personal autonomy.

#### (a) Shared characteristics of positive freedom and personal autonomy

Personal autonomy and positive freedom meet in rational reflection by the individual. A major characteristic of positive freedom distinguished by Berlin in Two Concepts of Liberty is that of reason: "The notion of liberty contained in it is not the 'negative'

conception of a field (ideally) without obstacle, a vacuum in which nothing obstructs me, but the notion of self-direction or self-control."<sup>33</sup> Berlin goes on, in a kind of Kantian argument, to express the resulting symmetry of a "rational society" in which rational goals are shared by "rational minds", hence there results, "... the positive doctrine of liberation by reason". Equally, the individual, using his autonomy, is aware of these rational ends and regards rules as "alterable conventions"<sup>34</sup> which he can subject to rational reflection and adapt in the light of reason if he regards this as appropriate from his vantage point of autonomous judgement. The condition of rational, positive freedom in the individual enables him to use the power of autonomy by thinking and choosing according to the standards implicit in rational reflection.

Positive freedom and personal autonomy also meet in that they apply only to persons. Only a person may enjoy the condition of positive freedom, and as I have argued in Chapter 3, the characteristics of a person are implicit in the ideal of personal autonomy. Not only is the human characteristic of rational reflection shared by positive freedom and personal autonomy, then, but a moral sensibility is equally evident. There are clear dangers to both ideals when distorted from rationality and an acknowledgement of the personhood of others. Berlin points out of positive freedom that; "Socialised forms of it, widely disparate and opposed to each other as they are, are at the heart of many of the nationalist, communist, authoritarian, and totalitarian creeds of our day. It may, in the course of its evolution, have wandered far from its rationalist moorings."<sup>35</sup> However, Berlin does not explicitly indicate that the condition of the ideal of positive freedom is necessarily lost if "rational moorings" are slipped. The opportunity for the individual

to realise a higher self in self-realisation associated with nationalism, communism etc. seems, in Berlin's terms, to leave the individual still in a state of positive freedom.

Dearden points out the danger of a higher or 'real' self having no psychological reality, "... in which case the coercion of an actually existing self will be passed off as the freeing of an as yet non-existent self."<sup>36</sup> It seems necessary to justify coercion of any individual, but in this instance, the justification is subsumed in the name of positive freedom, thus allowing the excesses of any movement or creed to oppress the individual. However, it is hardly appropriate, given the danger of a distortion of individual positive freedom, for Dearden to brush it aside altogether and consider that, "... it would be altogether simpler to confine freedom to external circumstances, as before, and to speak of the conflicting desires which are not yet properly controlled simply in terms of inability."<sup>37</sup> But as the condition from which personal autonomy can spring, positive freedom ought to be acknowledged as such and regarded as an ideal in its own right having characteristics akin to those of autonomy.

The personhood which both positive freedom and personal autonomy share is enhanced by a further common characteristic - authenticity. This characteristic expresses the importance which an individual attaches to his thought or action contingent upon reasons relevant to that individual's personal values. Extrinsic reasons should not weigh in an individual's actions when those reasons are intended (or by accident) deflect him from his own inner purposes when these have been tempered by rational reflection and a proper view of persons. Authenticity attaches to the individual's self and expresses



personal, genuine, first-hand decisions of that individual; it embraces, then, a wide range of issues with which the individual is involved - in values, ideals, preferences, opinions, attitude to rules, etc.

One difficulty in trying to ascertain whether a person's choices are, authentically, his own and, therefore, express his positive freedom and autonomy, is deciding to what extent a person acts in accordance with his own preferences. The influences upon the individual to act in accord with his culture, his family, or the influences described so forcefully by Fromm in Fear of Freedom are strong. Essentially, any judgement upon authenticity of action seems to rest upon awareness by the individual of what his motives are. (See Chapter 1, Section 4 (b) for consideration of authentic self-evaluation.)

Riesman<sup>38</sup> offers an analysis of character types motivated by a variety of circumstances which give rise to a negation of authenticity. In Riesman's analysis, the earliest type he describes is the "tradition-directed" conformist whose conformity is directed by, "... power relations among the various sex and age groups, the clans, castes, professions ... - relations which have endured for centuries and are modified only slightly, if at all, by successive generations."<sup>39</sup> This character-type Riesman distinguishes from the "inner-directed" person whose direction in life and whose aims are implanted in him when he is a child by his parents and his elders in general; they override all authenticity and he proceeds towards in-bred, inescapable goals. The present-day, in Riesman's analysis, has generated the "other-directed" character-type, one influenced by friends and peer group, by the mass media and the signals of society at large. This type lacks the inner stability of the "tradition-directed" or "inner directed" person and may well suffer considerable

anxiety if he believes he is acting other than in accordance with the norms internalised by him from the training or signals received from outside. Only when the individual devises his own norms - his own nomoi - can he attain authenticity of thought and action. This does not, necessarily, require the person to be totally different in thought and action from society or family norms, but the individual person must see for himself the force and reason behind those norms that he does embrace; his decisions must be authentically his own - if he is to be autonomous in action from his condition of positive freedom.

The autonomous person will conform when there are good reasons for so doing and, "He cannot be indifferent to the reactions of others, but he can be moved by other considerations too."<sup>40</sup> He will not suffer the pangs of anxiety if he chooses a path different from those which the "inner" or "other directed" person feels compelled to follow. He will evaluate his motives in a condition of positive freedom so that his courses of action are authentic - reflecting his personal autonomy. He must, then, be in a condition of positive freedom, in order to be sufficiently free from inner constraints and able to know himself by evaluation of his motives. His immediate intentions or the causes of his immediate activities are relatively easy to observe, but the underlying motives may well be obscure. However, the difficulty of ascertaining the authenticity of a person's motives for action does not deter society from holding a person responsible for those actions: "There is a presumption in favour of men being usually responsible for their actions, and the fact that we single out such odd cases for special consideration suggests that we believe that in general men can help doing what they do."<sup>41</sup>

Authenticity - in which positive freedom and personal autonomy meet - implies that a person holds major responsibility for his choices and actions and knows his own motives well enough to feel that responsibility: "We can help doing things provided that, at least, we think we can."<sup>42</sup> If, then, a person is to be held responsible by society for his actions, he will presumably, wish to ensure that these are, authentically, his own. Indeed, self-realisation of his motives is essential in ensuring a person feels responsibility for what he does, "For if people believe they are not responsible for their actions, they tend in fact to become less responsible for them."<sup>43</sup>

The individual who is in a condition of positive freedom and able to utilise the power of personal autonomy revealing this in authentic choices and actions still functions within bounds circumscribed by his own society and culture. Nevertheless these do not prevent the individual's authenticity of motive from governing his activities within that cultural framework; there is, "... no reason why the self that is such a product cannot be free to govern the self it is."<sup>44</sup>

The educational implications for the meeting of positive freedom and personal autonomy in authenticity are those described, very briefly, in Chapter 1, Section (5) and to be enlarged in Part 3. It is essential that the learner should be able to get to grips, directly, with the practices in those disciplines and range of experiences provided within a formal education. Further, the necessity for the learner to gain insight into his own purposes and motives and the implications attaching to these should be supported by the provision of guidance concerning choices within formal education and choice of career alternatives. Such guidance must not

be directive but should encourage the self-appraisal necessary to bring the learner face to face with examination of his own motives. If his choices are authentic, his power as an autonomous person should enable him to attain a condition of self-realisation and fulfilment which only the individual who is personally autonomous may attain.

(b) Negative freedom and personal autonomy within education

The affinity between positive freedom and personal autonomy is strong. However, the relationship between personal autonomy and negative freedom may be a more contingent matter as I aim to show below. And although the educational considerations in what follows do have some curricular implications, it is not my remit to examine the case for any particular curriculum by which to develop autonomy; the educational implications discussed in Part 3 centre on practices, procedures, skills and dispositions rather than on defining any specific content of knowledge for a curriculum - the intention of J. P. White, for example, some of whose views are referred to below.

Dearden holds the view that negative freedom and personal autonomy complement each other:

"... a person could have an autonomous character but not be free to exercise any autonomy, though this would be a highly frustrating condition to be in ... For a man might have highly developed capacities for autonomy, but yet be imprisoned, or be conscripted as a private into a Guards regiment, or be subjected to the dictate of an enemy occupation." Dearden emphasises that, "... freedom is normally a necessary condition of the exercise of autonomy ... but not a sufficient condition for the exercise of autonomy. Opportunity there must be, but whether a given individual is able to rise to it is another matter." 45

The exercise of autonomy is, in Dearden's view above, only possible in a condition of negative freedom; the individual may not be able to rise to the opportunity afforded by negative freedom because of inner constraints, perhaps, but freedom is required for the exercise of autonomy on the assumption that the person in a condition of negative freedom is autonomous. It seems, then, that a person in the compulsory years of schooling and receiving an education intended to develop personal autonomy, should not be permitted to exercise that autonomy. The individual in compulsory school is denied negative freedom; he must receive an education and he cannot legally elect not to be educated. Therefore, Dearden envisages a situation in which anyone below the present school leaving age of some sixteen years should receive an education to develop autonomy which cannot be exercised until later; autonomy's exercise can only be switched on when autonomy has been, adequately, developed:

"What is more interesting from the point of view of autonomy as an educational ideal is the question of whether freedom is a necessary condition for the development, as opposed to the exercise, of autonomy. Being a necessary condition for the latter by no means logically implies being a necessary condition for the former." 46

Dearden further argues that a very strict upbringing with little scope for the exercise of autonomy may effectively develop autonomy - perhaps by an "inward rebellion" against the discipline imposed from outside. And he is sceptical that de-schoolers like Illich<sup>47</sup>, who wish all persons to be put into a state of negative freedom on the assumption that their autonomy will flower, are mistaken in their assumptions: "The de-schoolers assume autonomy to be a natural development, whereas what seems altogether more natural is to act on impulse and to yield to group pressure."<sup>48</sup> Dearden is surely

right in this case. The exposure of the young to the pressures of commercialism with an accompanying termination of compulsory schooling seems to present highly unpredictable outcomes which could be harmful to the young.

However, Dearden does not show that the denial of negative freedom expressed in compulsory schooling will lead to autonomy; he claims that, "logically", there is no reason to suppose that a strict schooling will prevent the development of autonomy, but that is hardly a positive argument for compulsory schooling. Such schooling may be justifiable on grounds of prevention of harm to the young etc.; worse things could befall a child than compulsory school experience were this to be eliminated and negative freedom made the norm for children. But if autonomy as an educational ideal is to justify compulsory schooling, it is necessary to show how the education involved is a means to develop autonomy. Dearden has outlined various solutions to this problem and he has attempted to distinguish a particular curriculum from his analysis of autonomy. In his thesis<sup>49</sup>, he presents a general education which is akin to a liberal education outlined by Hirst<sup>50</sup> coupled with the process of learning how to learn as an educational means to develop autonomy. Latterly<sup>51</sup> Dearden has changed his views and he has decided that it may not be possible to distinguish the development of autonomy within and out of a general education, but he has argued that an "intellectual education" is able to assist the development of autonomy. Dearden makes little reference to content in his case for an intellectual education's contribution to the development of autonomy, but he, presumably, still intends the learner to pursue some components of a liberal education.

However, it is not clear from Dearden's account of an intellectual education's association with autonomy how such an education can have a practical value for the individual in his life as a whole. And if autonomy is held to be an educational ideal, it is still necessary to show some instrumental value for autonomy when an education is intended to uphold autonomy as one, if not, the key principle upon which that education is based. The exercise of autonomy in practical life outside schooling and in the longer term of an individual's life is crucial to any instrumental justification of education for autonomy. And without some exercise of autonomy within the practice of education and within those constraints described in Section 1 above, it may be that an autonomous disposition will not develop in the individual. An education for autonomy may be more likely to move the individual towards realising the power which autonomy is when scope exists within that education for the exercise of autonomy. Such an education should, then, instantiate personal autonomy and recognise that a development of autonomy in the individual requires the practising and exercise of an autonomy which may carry over into practical life outside education.

(Consideration is given to Dearden's views concerning an intellectual education and autonomy in Chapter 2, Section 4. The argument in Part 3 aims to show how autonomy can be exercised in education by the learner's engagement directly in practices and his development of the skills and dispositions of learning how to learn.) If an education can be shown both to develop autonomy, and allow for its exercise within the operation of an educational practice, the case for the individual's loss of negative freedom - by compulsory attendance at school, for example - is more justifiable.

J. P. White argues his case for a compulsory curriculum arising from a withholding of liberty from children on grounds that the development of autonomy in the individual justifies this. He starts from a libertarian argument that any restriction upon negative, individual freedom is, "... prima facie morally unjustifiable."<sup>52</sup> However, restricting a child's freedom to ensure that he receives the kind of compulsory education White believes appropriate, claims as its justification bringing a child to an "ideal" situation from which he can make autonomous choices:

"... we must ensure (a) that he knows about as many activities or ways of life as possible which he may want to choose for their own sake, and (b) that he is able to reflect upon priorities among them from the point of view not only of the present moment but as far as possible of his life as a whole. We are justified, therefore, in restricting his liberty as far as is necessary to ensure (a) and (b): we are right to make him unfree now so as to give him as much autonomy as possible later on." <sup>53</sup> (My emphases.)

White seems to give virtually unlimited scope to restricting freedom and with it, autonomy's exercise, in the above statement because he is prepared to restrict freedom, "as far as is necessary" to ensure the given objectives. The libertarian starting point for this argument for a compulsory curriculum White has latterly reconsidered and now holds that paternalism may have been a preferable starting point.<sup>54</sup> And there seems little justification for a denial of negative freedom for those who may not be compensated by a gain of autonomy but a recognition of the extent to which autonomy figures is acknowledged, by Dearden, to be sometimes difficult to identify in individual decisions and choices. Any calculus by which loss of negative freedom is balanced by gain of autonomy appears an unlikely measure to adopt and White's purpose above, "... to give him as much



autonomy as possible later on," may be little consolation for that person whose education does not develop his autonomy and whose negative freedom is lost in a vain search for autonomy.

To defer exercise of autonomy until after compulsory education ends seems to infer that adults, having left compulsory education, should be by then more autonomous than children who are still of an age requiring compulsory education. But this presumption may be false; it could be that some children or young adults required to receive elements of a compulsory education are more autonomous than some adults. However, considerable difficulties may be anticipated were some individuals to be accorded legal rights at an earlier age than their peers were it possible to assess autonomy in the individual and were this to be accepted as a determinant of adult status. If some persons were regarded as legally liable at age fourteen years, for example, in a society using capital punishment for murder and yet others were not regarded as legally liable until age sixteen, two fifteen-year-olds (one legally liable for a crime and the other not so regarded) would be treated in a very different way in that one might die for his crime and the other live. To infringe a principle of equality between persons of the same age would require very strong grounds for discrimination. Society does discriminate between its members and treats them differently if it thinks it has good reasons for so doing - thus the insane and children are discriminated against by loss of negative freedom. However, further consideration of this issue will be reserved to Chapter 6.

The denial of negative freedom to the young does seem justifiable if the result is to safeguard them from harm. Mill is reluctant to interfere with an individual's freedom in the case of an adult on the grounds that:

"... the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant ... The only part of the conduct of anyone, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute." 55

Although Mill emphasises that the prevention of harm to others is the only adequate criterion for restricting an individual's negative freedom, he does exempt children and certain other categories from this statement, "... This doctrine is meant to apply to human beings in the maturity of their faculties. We are not speaking of children, or of young persons below the age the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood."<sup>56</sup> Children or young persons are exceptions from the right to an equal measure of negative freedom with adults in Mill's view which represents present practice with regard to the young.

White (considering a compulsory curriculum) has argued for a stronger claim to interference than that of Mill by claiming that: "Considerations of a person's own good as well as that of others may justify interference."<sup>57</sup> But his argument commences with a Millian position of prevention of harm and then switches this to considerations of a person's good: "... it would be right to constrain a child to learn such and such only if (a) he is likely to be harmed if he does not do so, or (b) other people are likely to be harmed ... To put the same point positively: a curriculum course is justified under (a) if it is good for the pupil. It is justified under (b) if it is good for others as well."<sup>58</sup> Gardner<sup>59</sup> has pointed out the illegitimate move from harm to good in White's argument which is actually a move from "likely" harm to actual good and White<sup>60</sup> has conceded this objection.

Two questions may be addressed:

1. If unequal treatment of adults and children and young persons is justifiable on the grounds that children may be harmed if exposed to the full consequences of competition with adults, is it possible to determine an age or stage at which the young person should be permitted a more equal measure of negative freedom and given scope to exercise the developing personal autonomy which White considers grounds for compulsory education and even for a compulsory curriculum?
2. Why should White or any other curriculum prescriber be confident that his curriculum will develop autonomy and enable the adult to exercise this when the exercise of autonomy is not explicitly stipulated within the curriculum?

1. In answer to the first question of establishing an age at which negative freedom should give scope to the individual's exercise of autonomy, Mill has no doubt that, "... young persons below the age the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood" should not acquire an equal measure with adults of negative freedom. The criterion used is that of age. Age imposes a fixed standard and only, "human beings in the maturity of their faculties", in Mill's words, may have the opportunity of freedom in order to exercise autonomy. However, a person whose faculties are mature at an age below that imposed by the machinery of the law and who is barred from the exercise of autonomy by absence of a state of negative freedom could claim injustice on Mill's description. Mill wrote before the advent of compulsory schooling or of any particular curriculum and a "discovery" of adolescence, subsequently, making a nice divide of child,

adolescent, adult is a more recent state of affairs. The Crowther Report asserts that:

"A boy or girl of 15 is not sufficiently mature to be exposed to the pressures of the world of industry or commerce." But, "... by 15, and still more by 16, they have already acquired a good deal of independence." 61

And in the light of the perspective the makers of the Report had upon young persons, they tried to find in a transitional phase between 15 and 18, more freedom for 'young adults'. Hours of part-time employment, school conditions brought nearer to work conditions, leisure activities, money in the pocket were all considerations of the framers of the Report. But even with more negative freedom provided for the young, the authors had little doubt that fifteen year olds were not in the "maturity" of their "faculties".

However, to attribute maturity of faculties to an individual is not necessarily an easy matter. Physical, intellectual, emotional development would be involved and development of some or all faculties could be at differing rates in different persons of similar age. If change is gradual and does not necessarily embrace all facets of maturity at the same time within the individual, response to recognition of adulthood should, perhaps, also be gradual, as the Crowther Report suggests. A claim to recognise the negative freedom of a young adult in some spheres and allow potential exercise of autonomy by an individual need not, necessarily, entail a completion of formal education. However, more option with regard to content of learning seems appropriate. White's approach to a compulsory curriculum seems to have no clear concluding point and whether a learner not achieving some benchmarks in, for example, White's Category 1 activities would be expected to continue his education until he

achieved the designated standard, is not clear from Towards a Compulsory Curriculum.

Adulthood is certainly not a simple empirical concept which can reveal when a "young person" becomes "adult". It is a concept not altogether compatible with physical or intellectual development and both criteria may be complete in a young pre-adult whereas some adults may be physically stunted, intellectually limited or mentally defective. Neither the possession of a breadth of knowledge nor the capacity to make a valuable contribution to the community are distinguishing criteria; some children may outdo some adults in these respects. Lacking certain criteria to distinguish adults from non-adults leads to an assumption that adulthood may be only a status attributed to an individual and that status is picked out, simply, by age. Physical maturity comes with age and it seems only across passage of time that we find meaning in human endeavours and come to recognise that our being is inescapably rooted in time. Time allows the conscious awareness of the individual to mature into a condition of positive freedom and a release from inner constraints.

Given the absence of certain criteria to distinguish the adult and age alone recognised when adult status is attributed to a young person, it seems doubtful to presume that everyone achieving adult status and more negative freedom should have become autonomous to a significant degree. But there seems no workable alternative to the presumption that young individuals will have gained in autonomy and will be able to exercise autonomy as adults. And it may even be that without expectation on the part of the educator that autonomy will develop in the individual, autonomy may be less likely to develop. A presumption seems inescapable that autonomy exists in the individual who approaches adult status and scope for exercise of autonomy at

this stage seems appropriate to enable the "young adult" the opportunity increasingly to practise his autonomy in a widening context of negative freedom but still within an educational framework. As adult status approaches, Mill's perspective (for the individual) carries more weight in that: "... the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others..." And the opportunity to exercise autonomy within learning may be a way to ensure that the necessary presumption for autonomy in the person who gains adult status is a reasonable presumption. This issue is considered further below.

2. White has, himself, an answer to the second question concerning his curricular prescription for autonomy in Towards a Compulsory Curriculum. More recently, in The Aims of Education Restated, he argues, more directly than in his former work, that education should be a means of developing appropriate dispositions in the young. He maintains that the charge by Gardner that his interest in autonomy is merely to view this as "equipment" to choose a plan for one's life is mistaken. And White claims that if the curriculum he presents is able to develop the individual learner as an autonomous chooser, "... how can one fail to be developing a disposition towards autonomy."<sup>62</sup>

The importance of dispositions is recognised in Section (3) of the previous chapter and I agree with the emphasis White puts upon dispositions. He refers to developing a disposition towards autonomy in those who follow his curricular principles and acquire the knowledge and understanding he outlines. However, it remains uncertain in White's account just how the learning will occur; methods of

teaching and learning are not explored and are, therefore, left in a secondary role to that of the specific compulsory knowledge content. But if the person who is to be developed as an autonomous chooser is not permitted to exercise autonomous choice within (or because of) the confines of a compulsory curriculum, this may influence whatever disposition towards autonomy is being developed. If there is little allowance made for the exercise of a developing or well developed autonomy (particularly in the young adult) there may be less likelihood of an exercise of autonomy by that individual as an adult in situations in practical life not directly related to education; there seems no surety that the exercise of autonomy will follow from its development when during development, autonomy remains untried in practice by lack of the exercise of that autonomy.

It is my contention that within compulsory education, the successful development of autonomy can only be tested by some exercise of that autonomy. Even if White is correct about the priorities of knowledge and understanding required for autonomy's development (and it is not within my remit to explore this issue) how learning occurs will be of crucial significance also for teaching and learning because this lived experience will have influence upon the individual learner's dispositions. Unless the curriculum is considered a practical experience for the learner engaging him in direct and active practice of those educational practices to be addressed so that he must exercise a measure of personal autonomy within the process of learning, personal autonomy may not develop at all. The presumption that autonomy has developed when compulsory years of education come to an end may prove false.

In Part 3, further consideration is given to how autonomy should be exercised within education. The constraints operative within the

learning process must be recognised and experienced personally by the individual who is to develop in autonomy and only engagement in the practices of education, with some scope for the exercise of autonomy (albeit within the parameters of a compulsory education), is likely to ensure its certain development. The parameters of age in relation to compulsory education and other aspects of life is considered further in the following chapter.



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CHAPTER 6      PATERNALISM

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## Introduction

In this chapter clarification of a relationship between paternalism and personal autonomy is undertaken. Paternalist interventions are likely to restrict autonomy but may also be regarded as safeguards to autonomy. Section (1) considers the nature of paternalism as strong or weak in type and contrasts occurrent with global autonomy in relation to justification for paternalist intervention. Paternalism and the status of children is explored in Section (2). Rationality as justification for paternalism is the subject of Section (3) and although limits upon cognitive rationality are acknowledged and any distinction between children and adults seems an uncertain stipulation on this criterion, rationality is accepted as significant in assessing justification for paternalist intervention. Consent theory is the subject of Section (4) because consent is significant to autonomy in that a person's consent to paternalism in education and schooling may be argued to give subsequent consent and justification to interventions made on his behalf at an earlier point in time; the value of subsequent consent is questioned. Prior consent to paternalist intervention with regard to adolescents and young persons is argued to have significance for education. Hypothetical-rational consent is also considered as a less contentious area of consent theory concerning the young. Section (5) aims to clarify a stage or age in the development of the individual when autarchy (a preliminary status to autonomy) might be recognised and extended to the individual.

(1) Paternalism

Paternalism seems to sit uneasily with autonomy. Kleinig describes paternalism thus:

"... what I understand by 'paternalism' is conduct and policies required of or imposed on others, where this is motivated by a concern for their good." 1

His definition is, perhaps, more than simply stipulative. A measure of coercion or, at least, compulsion is involved in paternalist acts, therefore personal autonomy lacks a condition of negative freedom and liberals may then find the term, paternalism, offensive and undermining of individuality. There seems little point in using an alternative term to that of paternalism in the following discussion in spite of its sexist overtones; maternalism must be considered as part of its implications. Kleinig considers 'parentalism' may be a more meaningful term<sup>2</sup> and teachers, in English Common Law, are considered to be in loco parentis to their pupils within the context of compulsory schooling. 'Patriarchalism' may convey a further meaning within paternalism also. However, to employ an alternative term to that of paternalism is likely only to confuse and the derogatory overtones of the term will add to the demand for justification on behalf of liberty and autonomy.

Paternalism may be classified as strong or weak. Strong paternalism involves:

"... interventions to protect or benefit a person despite the person's informed voluntary consent to the contrary..." 3

Weak paternalism:

"... involves interference where there is (or believed to be) a defect in the decision-making capacities of the person interfered with (or to ascertain whether the person's behaviour is fully reflective). It is claimed to be justifiable insofar as consent to the interference would be forthcoming were these capacities restored." 4

It is weak paternalism which probably mainly concerns compulsory education and schools although young persons of age 14 or 15 who resent compulsory attendance at school may well consider themselves constrained by strong paternalism.

Liberals, along with Mill, have claimed a presumption in favour of the right of the individual to be free from both strong and weak paternalism. Paternalism should be severely constrained, in Mill's view:

"... the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant." 5

However, in his often cited example of the unsafe bridge, Mill considers it right for a person who unknowingly puts himself at risk, to be restrained against his will if necessary. This would be a case of weak paternalism according to the definition given above on the assumption that the person restrained would have consented to being so treated had he been aware of the peril. The restraint is to avoid possible harm to the individual, however, not to anyone-else, therefore, Mill seems to see this as an exception to his "preventing harm" principle stated above, since no other person's harm is in question. Indeed, the one who does the restraining of the other in danger, may be putting himself at risk not only in the physical sense of perhaps forcibly restraining another on the perilous edge of an unsafe route at some dizzy height, but he may also be in

danger of not receiving the later consent of the one who is 'saved'. If a shouted warning is heard and ignored by one about to put himself at risk, it is unlikely that he will thank another person for coercing him not to take the risk. Lively makes the point that:

"Broadly... an individual is more likely to know what is in his interests, than others, not because he will necessarily be better informed about the consequences of his actions, but because he will better know what his wants and preference orderings are." 6

Mill would agree that a person, himself, is best placed to decide what is the good for him and if he chooses to put himself at risk by refusing a blood transfusion on religious grounds, or he undertakes to row across the Atlantic or he chooses to spend a month on Rockall, he should be allowed to get on with it. The sense in which any action of a person may be said to affect others, short of actual harm, ought not to prevent the action, in Mill's view:

"I fully admit that the mischief which a person does to himself may seriously affect, both through their sympathies and their interests, those nearly connected with him and, in a minor degree, society at large." 7

However this circumstance is not adequate to justify interference in Mill's opinion.

If the action is self-regarding, the individual should not be restrained. However, in the unsafe bridge example, restraint is allowed by Mill, presumably on the grounds of ignorance on the part of the person planning to cross that he is in danger. Therefore, if a Sikh chooses not to wear a crash-helmet when riding a motor-cycle, and puts himself thus at risk, he ought to be permitted to do so. As long as a person knows that what he intends to do is likely to have grave consequences for him, and yet he still chooses to do it, he



should be allowed to get on with it because his reasons are so valued by him as to outweigh the risks. Jesus, criticising influential members of the Jewish community of Roman Palestine, took a risk, gained their hatred and was crucified as a result; neither God the Father nor Jesus's disciples acted as a paternalist in advising prudence in this instance. Mill considers paternalist intervention should be withheld in the interest of the individual's negative freedom to make an autonomous choice of what he thinks is in his interest; in the situation he describes, Mill seems more for liberty than utilitarianism. The individual is deemed best placed to know in what his good consists. Persons differ from each other; their projects vary in accordance with their attitudes, dispositions, abilities, values etc. Therefore, a prospective paternalist may conceive of the good in his own terms which may not necessarily be in the terms of those persons affected by paternalist interventions.

After all, the anti-paternalist may argue, persons should never be treated as the means to others' ends and only recognition of a person's autonomy in a situation of negative freedom gives him the scope for self-determination. And it may only be by making mistakes that we learn anything and even children learn to look after themselves by actually doing so. Parents may be over-protective of their children perhaps making them unnecessarily dependent because of the exercise of paternalism.

However, although the liberal will adhere to the right of an individual to exercise autonomy and make his own choices, it is not always the case that a person's choice is the best or even his best:

"... although some particular decision may be genuinely ours it may not be our best." In fact, "... where intervention is not likely to interfere with a person's

important and settled concerns, but only with the consequences of indiscipline, laziness, carelessness... then personal integrity is not likely to be at stake. The interferer will not subvert the person's major goals and life-plans, but rather help to secure them." 8

Such a view justifies seat-belt legislation in motor cars, crash-helmets for motor-cyclists and presumably supports the withdrawal of all cigarettes on sale to the public with tobacco provided only on a doctor's prescription.

Some have tried to justify such examples of paternalism on grounds that the intervention to prevent harm to the individual is not restrictive of that individual's freedom and autonomy because the individual is considered to be a different self after lapse of time. Parfit<sup>9</sup> considers that individual persons are not necessarily psychologically continuous in all respects; in one sense a person is continuous in that his life continues; in another sense a person's self is "connected" only to some degree with his self at an earlier point in time. A latter self exists after a lapse of time, hence the reluctance to mete out punishments to the person who has committed an offence much earlier but whose person has evidently changed in nature and character; to punish the individual for committing a crime long ago at a much later point in time would be to punish a person who had not committed the original offence.

Regan accepts, simply, the existence of a future self in respect of particular characteristics; someone who commits an "unrelated aggravated assault" at the same time as embezzlement may reform as a new self in honesty, but not restrain his temper, hence:

"In such a case, I think we might hold it inappropriate to punish the embezzler now for his embezzlement, but still appropriate to punish him for the assault..." 10

A motor-cyclist involved in an accident who survives even without wearing a crash-helmet, may develop a more prudent attitude to safety and have a different disposition in the future - a future self will have been realised. If the motor-cyclist does not change after his experience, he may, by his reckless behaviour, continue to threaten his future selves and justification may be offered to coerce him into protection of these selves. The issue is essentially that of preventing harm to a future person.

However, if this "future self" argument is accepted, it involves a considerable undermining of a person's autonomy because if he were to make an autonomous, rational choice at one point in time, it could well be annulled at a later point in time. Regan is reluctant to consider persons as different selves at successive instants in time so that each person is a successive present with a future self expressed in future instants because if a rational choice is made which requires reflection across time, it will never be concluded unless individual rationality is redefined to apply to a series of persons corresponding to what is considered now to be a person. But such difficulties are further compounded by the fact that the whole apparatus of contract and promise-keeping would be cancelled out by the adoption of a "future self" argument.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, paternalist intervention to prevent harm to possible future selves as distinct from actual persons also puts the argument into difficulties because to justify the obligatory crash-helmet by this argument requires the paternalist to be virtually certain the motor-cyclist will suffer injury if he does not wear his helmet, will survive his injuries and will become a different character as a result. This scenario hardly justifies general paternalist intervention because it may be that the majority may well wear their helmets voluntarily, out of good

sense, without paternalist coercion being at all necessary. On the other hand, Regan's justification of paternalism in obliging motorcyclists to wear crash-helmets by coercing those who will not voluntarily wear them, involves getting those persons to change their views and accept the need for personal safety before they suffer injury. Only a hypothetical person's future self is at risk - one created by the non-wearing of a helmet, a self requiring paternalist action. However, the argument becomes self-cancelling<sup>12</sup> because without autonomous choice the individual will be prevented from sustaining injury and the possible existence of a more prudent future self (if he survives), but if he is prevented from injuring himself, the more mindful future self will not come into existence, hence paternalist intervention on behalf of a future self cannot be justified.

Although this argument on behalf of a future self is intrinsically interesting in its attempt to justify paternalism to avoid harm to (another) self rather than to the present self, to use it in respect of the compulsory education of children may lack credibility. Regan's case in an example as specific as physical harm resulting from the omission of crash-helmet legislation is attended with difficulty, as described above. And although children and adolescents do change rapidly over the time they may be required to attend school, for example, and may be considered to become future selves, the complexity of social interaction involved in schooling and the multitude of influences affecting learning hardly yield a sufficiently controllable situation for one to be able to claim that paternalist compulsion will produce particular future selves. Attitudes and dispositions may be shaped, understanding may be achieved by children to the ends set by their teachers and schools. However, there can be no certainty that

teachers will achieve the understanding in their pupils that they aim for (a point which is explored below in connection with teaching); therefore paternalist compulsion to avoid possible harm to a child's hypothetical future self is an uncertain justification for compulsory education (in or out of compulsory school). Furthermore, if the future self to be aimed for is an autonomous one yet the educational means to achieve that self are most uncertain, paternalist compulsion of a present self is unlikely to find justification in pursuing no more than possible means to realise autonomy.

Nevertheless there may be a distinction in treatment of adults and children with respect to future selves. Feinberg argues that:

"When a mature adult has a conflict between getting what he wants and having his options left open in the future, we are bound by our respect for his autonomy not to force his present choice in order to protect his future 'liberty'. His present autonomy takes precedence even over his probable future good, and he may use it as he will, even at the expense of the future self he will one day become. Children are different. Respect for the child's future autonomy, as an adult, often requires preventing his free choice now. Thus the future self does not have as much moral weight in our treatment of adults as it does with children." 13

Feinberg considers that the adult's own concern for his future self is likely to be revealed by his prudence but that it would not be right to impose prudence, "from the outside on an autonomous adult". However, what is not clear from the above extract is what normative definitions Feinberg has in mind in describing "adult" and "child" - an issue raised in the previous chapter. Further, the denial of the child's, "free choice now", has to be shown to be contributive to the attainment of autonomy given that it is to be held as a, or even the, major aim of education.

The differences between the situations of children (or young persons) and those of adults may not be as clear cut as Feinberg suggests with respect to autonomy. Mill views with concern the danger to the individual who may voluntarily contract into slavery; such a person may deny his future self the opportunity to exercise autonomy in a situation of negative freedom. Paternalist intervention on behalf of a future self could prevent the fulfilling of the contract of slavery, hence 'strong' paternalism would safeguard the future autonomy of the individual. The person's immediate choice to become a slave would, presumably, be respected by Feinberg as long as the person was adult. It could be that the individual had very good reasons to adopt slavery - to 'buy' the release of his family from persecution or to obtain money to purchase life-saving drugs for an only child etc.,etc. Much would rest upon the reasons or motives for the decision to become a slave.

Young describes autonomy in two forms to help meet this problem. He describes one form as occurrent autonomy in which a person may be said to act autonomously in a particular situation; this he contrasts with general or global autonomy:

"... in the global sense of autonomy a person's career, life-style, dominant concerns and the like will be central to his (other) conception of his life. Autonomy as regards the important interests in a person's life must be of the global kind rather than the occurrent, because only in the former sense does the course of an individual's life enjoy a unified order and avoid self-defeating conflict in fundamentals." 14

Therefore, Young can argue that to overturn a particular choice or course of action by an adult on the basis of occurrent autonomy is right if that choice is contrary to the person's global autonomy. Thus strong paternalism is justified in the interest of preserving

an individual's global autonomy in overriding his stated wishes and occurrent autonomy. Thus a person's occurrent autonomy in choosing to enter into a contract of slavery should be prevented by strong paternalism so that his future negative freedom and global autonomy will be kept intact. However, if the person wishing to enter into slavery has, in his view, strong and compelling reasons associated with his own good or that of others in a way which make his decision critically important to his life-plan and thus link it to global autonomy, then the strong paternalist must demonstrate that this is not the case and that global autonomy is at risk in order to justify intervention. Therefore, when the Jehovah's Witness refuses the blood transfusion, the strong paternalist may force him to have it on the grounds that the person involved may well surrender his current religious convictions at some later stage in his life - which he may well lose without the transfusion. But the mature individual may argue that his religious convictions are central to his life-plan and his occurrent and global autonomies are at one in his decision to reject the offensive treatment.

A strong paternalist could make out a case to set aside occurrent autonomy in any instance of a person taking a risk by which harm likely to restrict global autonomy might befall him. The person who wishes to row the Atlantic, climb a dangerous rock-face, play a game of rugby football, cross the road - could all be said to be exercising occurrent autonomy which strong paternalism might claim justification for setting aside in the interest of the global autonomy of the individual. Feinberg would presumably, allow the informed adult to take the risk and would allow him full autonomy, but he would deny the child a free choice because his future global autonomy might well be at risk since his very life could be in danger. The

level of risk would be assessed dependent upon the age-status of the person involved. Therefore, for most children and young persons engaged in compulsory schooling, crossing the road may become an acceptable risk even though it remains a highly dangerous activity which can result in serious injury to future self and global autonomy. However, the extent to which the occurrent autonomy of a person in middle or later teenage who wants to make particular choices within education or who opts for a vocational training should be set aside (even though he might vehemently claim that his choice was a significant part of his life plan and an expression of his global autonomy) seems open to question. This question I shall address below.

## (2) Children and paternalism

Mill, the champion of personal liberty, has no reservation in excluding children, barbarians and those in their nonage from the right to freedom. However, as argued in the previous chapter, the definition of 'child' has much significance with respect to personal autonomy. In this section I shall consider the relationship between children and adults in order to determine the extent to which paternalism may be justified in ensuring the development of autonomy in the young in order that they may exercise it later as adults.

Schrag<sup>15</sup> describes the discovery by the explorer, Garhcs, of Namuh Society which consists of two main classes of persons, the Tluda and the Dlihc (T's and D's). The T's are, on average, "strong, intelligent, knowledgeable about the world"; the D's are generally, "weak, ignorant and dim-witted". The T's provide care and the essentials of life to the D's. The D's do as they are told and adopt the T's beliefs; the D's may only pursue their enjoyment within arbitrarily determined limits imposed by their protectors and such



limits vary from household to household and often "day to day within the same household". The T's have the right to punish the D's for breaking the rules and, "punishment is often meted out on the basis of the flimsiest and most circumstantial evidence". The D's may be allowed to explain themselves against accusations, but sometimes, "there is not even a semblance of due process". The T's handling of the D's is apparently barbaric and the whole regime is, "sometimes harsh and unpredictable". The reason for these social arrangements is explained by the T's because as the D's, "... are unable to choose what is best for themselves, we make their choices for them. The necessity for occasional infliction of pain and deprivation is a manifestation of our love and concern for the growth of the soul". In spite of the harshness which Garhcs observed in the relationships in this society, he recorded signs of affection displayed by T's and D's towards each other.

The picture of such a hierarchically ordered society would, perhaps, have been recognisable and acceptable to Plato and Aristotle, as Schrag points out, but to the modern philosophic tradition of Locke, Kant and Mill, such a society would be an anathema. However, when the Tluda turn out to be adult (by reversal of the letters) and the Dlihc, child, the Namuh, human, society becomes etched with its usual implications. Schrag's concealed exposé of human society is, however, open to question in the terms in which he presents it. The T's (adults) may be stronger than the D's (children) within certain age comparisons but certainly not within all age parameters. Adults, similarly, are not more intelligent, in general, than children if judged by modern intelligence testing. Perhaps adults are generally more knowledgeable about the world than most children, although, no doubt, exceptions could well be found. Children could hardly be

fairly described as, generally, "ignorant and dim-witted". The arbitrary treatment of children by adults and the basis upon which punishment is meted out on flimsy and circumstantial evidence is probably not the case in many, or even most, adult-child relationships. If such relationships were based on "harsh and unpredictable" actions, adults could hardly view Schrag's description of Namuh society with equanimity although some signs of affection are acknowledged between T's and D's. However, the inability of children to choose what is best for them requires that paternalism which usually attends adult-child relationships.

Schrag's description emphasises the worst features of a society of adults and children; little genuine love or concern seem likely to characterise the relationships which Schrag's description affords, as Scarre<sup>16</sup> indicates. The lack of consistency in adult treatment of children is significantly oppressive and the justification of caring seems out of place in such a situation. However, the criteria which Schrag uses for comparison between adults and children offers little justification for paternalism: locomotion and linguistic competence are achieved by most children by the age of six years; puberty and the growth of physical strength in adolescence are hardly justifications for continued paternalism and as girls and young women could be, relatively, weaker than men, invidious comparison to the detriment of the position of women might result. Further, the ability to be rational is a gradual development and many children may well be more rational than many adults whose fading powers in increasing age may make them increasingly less rational. Some adults may never reach Piaget's stage of formal operations in their thinking processes and as a result their lack of rationality could, by this criterion, never make them free from paternalism. A "capacity for self-

maintenance" Schrag attributes to Kant in distinguishing children from adults, but if this refers to maturity the concept remains vague, culture-conscious and virtually impossible to define in terms of minimum capacities expected of a full member of a society<sup>17</sup>; if such "capacity" is taken, literally, to mean a child's ability to pay his way, some, through stage careers, advertising, musical abilities, etc., would be able to do so more effectively than many adults. The task of specifying minimal qualifications for occupying various social roles such as husband, parent, voter is, in Schrag's analysis, essentially value-laden, hence the age criterion is resorted to so that subjective judgements of individuals or groups on what constitutes maturity can be avoided.

Indeed, Schrag favours maintenance of what Plato described as a "noble lie", expressing a distinction, based on age, between child and adult, although the distinction cannot be based upon defensible criteria of difference. He would not want children to have to compete with adults in general because children would be the losers, in his view, and if different criteria were used to mark the adult-child boundary, some adults would be subject to much more paternal interference than occurs at present. And Schrag cannot conceive that adults are not, in general, the best assessors of their own interests and, therefore, have the right to exercise personal autonomy.

However, while Schrag's motive of wishing to ensure paternalist protection of young children is laudable, the basis upon which it rests is admitted by him to be a "lie" - albeit a "noble lie":

"All I am arguing for here is maintaining the idea of a firm boundary between the two stages. Perhaps some will consider this a decision to support a kind of

'noble lie', but if so it is not one in which a few deceive the masses for their own good, but rather one in which we all believe for our own good." 18

The "good" of adult society, in Schrag's view, requires paternalism to be kept at bay; he sees inroads on adult liberty already at work: "For example, no adult is permitted to purchase powerful drugs without a physician's authorization."<sup>19</sup> But this example is hardly a good one of that "crack in the door" which threatens a flood of paternalist legislation which would probably be strongly resented by the community as a major infringement of liberty. Indeed, Schrag's threat of the shadow of some kind of paternalistic totalitarianism waiting in the wings hardly justifies the weight he places on it. And he is quite willing to adjust the,

"... particular age of majority recognised in our own society. A good case could be made for lowering the age to fourteen or fifteen." 20

Yet he considers that a fixed age, an imaginary horizontal line drawn across life, is an imperative, an arbitrary but necessary safeguard to avoid undermining adult autonomy. J. Fitzjames Stephen, a critic of Mill, agrees that the age line is arbitrary,

"... the power of society over people in their minority is and ought to be absolute, and minority and majority are matters of degree, and the line which separates them is arbitrary." 21

However, Stephen's priority was protection of children from harm rather than protection of adults from paternalist inroads on their freedom and autonomy:

"If children were regarded by law as the equal of adults, the result would be something infinitely worse than barbarism. It would involve a degree of cruelty to the young which can hardly be realized even in imagination." 22

Even so, Stephen does regard the minority - majority age line as "arbitrary". Below the line, character had to be moulded appropriately, but not necessarily by education which he regarded with scepticism:

"Society cannot make silk purses out of sows' ears, and there are plenty of ears in the world which no tanning can turn even into serviceable pigskin." 23

However, Schrag's "lie" puts more at stake than arbitrariness; it is held to be the basis of the treatment of those persons whom we want to be personally autonomous beings throughout their adult lives. The treatment of children ought to be based on truth since to learn involves seeking for truth and yet compulsion to uphold a "lie" in order to enforce the relationship of adults and children would seem the antithesis of a concern for truth. The development of a child's reasoning capacity may well enable him or her to scrutinize the laws, the rules enforcing an unreal difference between child and adult status as Schrag acknowledges. In schooling, children in their teens may well see through this "lie", regard it as far less than "noble" and become influenced against the values of the education provided for them. Constraint which is based on falsehood and which very largely denies a young person the right to decide his own good is an unlikely basis for gaining knowledge which would otherwise no longer have been sought. Indeed, dispositions successfully developed in the young may be put at risk by continuation of a "lie" to uphold over young persons a paternalism which they may well choose to set aside.

If the "lie" is adhered to, it may then provide a basis for a whole range of treatments of children which would be difficult to justify without the protection of that "lie",

"... any such move is open to the standard objection that attempts to reduce any acceptable rule - utilitarianism to act - utilitarianism; which is to say, an objection that would at least move us towards more subtly organised discriminations." 24

Dearden considers that compulsion does not necessitate coercion but if coercion is required, the "lie" will provide for it and although in the case of compulsory schooling the coercion may fall more on parent than child, the child's attitude will hardly be uninfluenced by the coercion of the parent.

### (3) Reason as justification for paternalism

However, one major consideration providing possible grounds for the exercise of paternalism over children is lack of reason, an issue which Schrag rules out as indicated above. Nevertheless it is a critically important issue for the development and exercise of personal autonomy and it undoubtedly has powerful support; Locke grants that, with regard to children,

"Parents have a sort of rule and jurisdiction over them when they come into the world, and for some time after, but 'tis but a temporary one." Eventually, "Age and reason" leave the individual "at his own free disposal". 25

He is specific in placing the age of majority at twenty-one years when the young person is free to exercise personal autonomy:

"The freedom, then, of man, and liberty of acting according to his own will, is grounded in his having reason, which is able to instruct him in that law he is to govern himself by, ..." 26

Reason is held to guide the individual, therefore, and picks out rational criteria which constitute the nomos of autonomy, so that the "rule and jurisdiction" of the parent becomes that of the young

adult when he attains rationality. Mill's reference to governance of children until they are capable of being improved by free and equal discussion suggests he attaches similar importance to the development of rationality in the young.

Scarre presents an argument supporting paternalism over children in this tradition. He points out that Schrag dismisses rationality as unable to justify different treatment of children and adults, because, in Scarre's words:

"... there is no species of rationality which fulfils his (Schrag's) two conditions of being morally relevant to the issue of paternalism and of being something in respect of which adults and children differ qualitatively." Scarre agrees that adults and children do not "qualitatively" differ in respect of rational powers, "where rational powers are conceived of in a broad fashion, and difference in respect of rationality on some more technical conception, such as that of being able to perform certain types of logical operations as described by Piaget, ... is mostly irrelevant - but this only shows there is something wrong with his conditions." 27

The ability to reason in certain ways to a particular standard as Piaget and Kohlberg outline does have significant implications for personal moral judgement as outlined in Chapter 3. At issue is not simply the ability to be able to "perform certain types of logical operations", but to be able to reason in matters of morals ultimately to the stage of autonomy. Scarre should not rule out the significance of this major consideration in the development of children and young adults, but what he does is to set aside the evidence and conclude:

"Abandoning Schrag's problems by abandoning his qualitative difference condition, we can develop the notion, which has much commonsense backing, that a person's rationality or lack of it is a relevant factor in determining whether he is a suitable subject for paternalist intervention." 28

Scarre seems to imply here that adult persons as well as children might well be subject to paternalist intervention on the basis of their not having what Scarre understands to be rationality. Although this would be appropriate in the case of some adults, a significant expansion of paternalism would be resisted by many, Schrag among them. The view which Scarre offers of rationality has its own difficulties attached:

"... rational actions are those which are directed to maximising the expected utility of the agent. In addition, actions backed by rational decisions typically manifest themselves as elements of a systematic approach adopted by an agent for maximising his good." 29

These guidelines do not convey a great deal to one who wishes to ascertain whether a person's actions are rational or not. Scarre indicates that a person's actions illustrate his rationality, first on the evidence of "expected utility": Now utility covers an extremely wide field and to judge an action rational by the amount of utility it entails would be difficult; it would involve some assessment of what would be most pleasurable to the individual and to argue a case for 'higher' pleasures as better, more valuable, than 'lower' pleasures, as one philosopher of utilitarianism points out, is not altogether a convincing position:

"I shall therefore be arguing for a Benthamite position which involves denying that any pleasure can be judged to be in itself more valuable, more worthwhile or qualitatively superior to any other pleasure, assuming that they are quantitatively equal." 30

Scarre's emphasis upon utility may be made with thoughts of deferred gratification by children, but on his statement above, any pleasures, any extreme hedonistic pleasures, "maximising the expected utility of the agent" are directed by "rational actions". This may open up sweeping choice to children - another Tyndale, perhaps?



The second of Scarre's considerations, rational decisions expressed as "a systematic approach" to living, Scarre makes much of as the ultimate justification for imposing "a general paternalist regime on children" because:

"Most adults, because they have lived a long time, have this ability, but children, because their mental powers and experience are alike inadequate, do not." 31

This assertion is questionable. It suggests that the ability to plan ahead systematically is contingent upon having lived "a long time", but how long it is necessary to have lived is not clear. Scarre seems almost to infer that adulthood is a status he would attach to individuals well above the minimal age of majority. Now it may be that experience increases with age but many adults may never significantly enlarge the horizons of their experience much beyond popular T.V. programmes, the latest technologically obsolescent gadget or fish and chips on the Costa Brava. Children, dependent upon economic opportunity, may enlarge their experience rapidly through knowledge, understanding, travel etc. Scarre's further assertion that children's "mental powers" are inadequate to enable them to plan systematically seems to be quite contradictory to his previous statement that, "... adults and children do not differ qualitatively in respect of their rational powers where rational powers are conceived of in a broad fashion...". He concludes his article with the self-defeating statement that:

"... the restrictions on paternalist interventions should include a prohibition against interfering at all in the affairs of people who in general manifest the ability to consider their actions rationally." 32

If adults and children do not "qualitatively" differ in rational powers there seems no reason why children and young persons should

not "consider their action rationally" along with adults. And although it may well be justifiable to intervene when "irrationality threatens their well-being", how judgements justifying intervention may be made on Scarre's criteria is left unanswered. And Brandon makes the point that the threat of irrationality to the well-being of the child or young person,

"... is crucially ambiguous between the unproblematic cases of legitimate interference where ignorance or insouciance is going to lead to unforeseen and definitely unwanted disaster and cases where the person interfering decides for himself what is to count as well-being." 33

Brandon's criticism of the adult-child distinction maintained by Scarre on grounds that adults are regarded as rational and children as irrational, is that rationality is a device merely to justify a preconceived point of view. Brandon agrees with Pateman that, "The answers are known in advance; only the questions and arguments remain to be found."<sup>34</sup> He suggests that Scarre's argument for rationality is simply a device to insinuate values,

"... of A's regarding B as irrational because B fails to pursue some end, not because B fails to adopt B's maximal means to whatever ends B happens to have." 35

His charge is that Scarre in his claim that adult society is rational is adhering not to rationality, but to rationalization in Weber's sense. And Brandon then proceeds to criticise a view of rationality which, no doubt, Scarre would choose to refute. Brandon, himself, not only offers "answers", he also alters the "questions" of rationality to suit his argument and describes his concept of rationality, Zweckrationalität, after Weber.

Weber's view of society reduced rationality to rationalization and, as such, is removed from that concept of rationality which

provides substance to the nomos of autonomy as described in Chapter 2 Section (1). Original genuine rationality, in Weber, became expressed in the legal-rational authority of political bureaucracy and industrial organisation and in this means-end, economist's model, rationalization perverts the original nature of rationality,

"Rationalization of means results in the unintelligibility of ends which are no longer given by revelation or prophetic inspiration." 36

Rationality, as described in Chapter 2 may be taken to mean that a person gains access to some specific area of understanding which may then illuminate other areas of his life, but in Weber, rationality is a whole, an attitude to life, a mode of life, a norm of bourgeois, capitalist society; ultimately a universal rationalization takes place, "regimenting" persons and incarcerating them in an "iron cage" of the prevailing economic and social order. In spite of its appearance of rationality, bourgeois society becomes irrational in that the autonomy of man is lost sight of in a perspective disguising reality:

"The predominance and the autonomy of the conditions which have grown into an independent fact of life is what it is - namely irrational - under the presupposition that the 'rational' represents the independence and the autonomy of man - whether one determines his humanity in the horizon of his sociality, like Marx, or in the individuality of his self-responsibility, like Weber." 37

The question then arises as to what a person can do, within this Weberan concept of bourgeois society's rationalization process, to maintain personal autonomy - how is the child to become the autonomous adult? Weber has little to offer other than an attitude of,

"... presuppositionless determination of the self-responsible individual through himself. Placed into

this world of bondage, the individual as 'man' belongs to himself and relies totally upon himself alone." 38

The individual's search for autonomy is "presuppositionless" and, thus, is in opposition to the given rationalization of the world. To exercise autonomy, it is necessary to be within that world, but to find "freedom of movement" by opposition to it. There is no fixed escape from the "iron cage", but if he acts with "passion", a strength of will, the individual may realise himself. However, the individual cannot rely upon rationality to guide him as his nomos because, in Weber's view, reason will present only the false irrationality of rationalization. Man is left to make choices in "passion" but without other criteria to guide his choices.

Brandon's theme, following Weber, is then sceptical of rational decisions and systematic life-plans:

"Speaking as a would-be Parfit-type person, I can only testify to my marked reluctance to adopt any systematic approach to the good of my future selves, apart from laying down the odd case of wine." 39

Rationality to Brandon, like Weber, is value-laden and an imposition upon the individual whether child or adult.

However, this position is open to question. It is unlikely that educating or bringing up children can avoid insinuating values, indeed, part of the process is, consciously, to do so. The point is to establish which values are to be adhered to and developed in children. To promote dispositions in children (so that they acquire certain values) has been argued (particularly in Chapter 4) to be a significant part of educational activity. Personal autonomy in all its moral, cognitive and affective dimensions may be a major value arising from education, coupled as it is with respect for self and

for others. In fact, Brandon's own argument is itself value-conscious and expressed rationally. He is sceptical of the "systematic approach", referred to by Scarre, as a characteristic of adults but not of children. Where, he asks, is the "system of purpose" in

"... 'carpe diem!', or 'consider the lilies of the field!' or, as some members of my present culture-circle say, 'Jah Rastafari/the IMF will provide'?" 40

But the "system of purpose" to which Brandon refers is purely economic as he stipulates by use of the Weberan perspective which he embraces into his Zweckrationalität model. His examples above are, themselves, expressive of values and are not necessarily divorced from rational thought. If some members of Brandon's culture circle take a view expressing selfish irresponsibility, this may suggest weaknesses in the dispositions engendered in their education and upbringing; but if their view expresses genuine self-concern that the world's goods are unfairly distributed, their position may well be highly rational and moral. In fact, apart from his own admittedly limited systematic approach of "laying down the odd case of wine", which some of us will doubtless applaud, Brandon does involve himself in the intellectual and rational activity of presenting a critique of Scarre and Schrag's positions and inferring reasons for redrawing some aspects of current economic and social arrangements. Altogether, Brandon expresses an individual and autonomous view which seems, oddly, to have escaped the shackles of the "iron cage".

Nevertheless, there are limits to cognitive rationality (leaving aside a Weberan perspective) which should be acknowledged at this point, following Chapter 1, Section (3) and Chapter 2, Section (2).

Scarre places his major emphasis upon cognitive rationality and he seems thus in company with Peters, Dearden and others in the importance which they attach to the concept. Reason and the rational criteria it picks out largely shape the nomos of autonomy in Dearden's analysis. Without reason, choice is considered to be uninformed or criterionless and either an intellectual or liberal education is considered essential in enabling the learner to become initiated into rational processes of thought which the forms of understanding and the established disciplines may be held to provide. I do not wish to suggest that these considerations are unimportant, but on the other hand to argue that they are all important overlooks significant implications in the development of personal autonomy in young persons, particularly with respect to authenticity - as argued in Chapter 1, Section 3.

Dearden argues for the pre-eminence of cognitive rationality in the attitudes and activities of mind of the person who is autonomous or developing in autonomy. But this case may be misleading in some situations. The Marxist view of history may be a helpful analogy here. Marx (and some modern Marxists) would argue that economic considerations offer the primary reason to explain historical change. Although some weight may be given to non-economic considerations, economic ones will always be the prime movers in any explanation of past or future events. But this can be no more than an assertion based upon an all-embracing theory, and close inspection of actual events by historians may lead to different conclusions from those drawn by Marxists. Reason may have a significant place in judgement and the pre-eminence given by Dearden to reason in the development of autonomy may be valid in many or even most circumstances, but it can only be assertion, rather than

conclusive evidence, which claims reason's pre-eminence in all aspects of the developing autonomous judgement of young persons.

Some aspects of experience do seem to lean heavily upon the affective areas of human experience and these may not only be accessible by cognitive reason. (Chapter 2 Section (3) considers the place of feeling in reason.) Cooper<sup>41</sup> argues that an individual's personal ambition for honours or position cannot be adequately explained by the reasons which he may present; the reasons may only mask or rationalize a state of mind arrived at in ways which cannot be simply attributed to reason, as such. Aesthetic response, in some situations, may not simply be explained by the agency of cognitive reason. The enjoyment of music does not necessarily involve rational judgement of the particular technical merits of a score or the skills of the performers or the blend of various elements in an impressive performance; these components may be accessible to reason, but omitted from a judgement of what a piece of music means to a listener is the simple, genuine response (with affective associations perhaps) which is just genuine enjoyment of the aesthetic beauty of what is experienced on that particular occasion in an individual's life. Many persons may well recall such occasions and although reasons for the pleasure experienced can be offered, cognitive reason may not adequately express the quality of the experience and the amount of response occasioned in the individual. These situations are not accessible to the rational criteria of judgement that many other situations are and it may be that psychologists will eventually map out this area with some clarity when the contrasts and interactions generated by both hemispheres of the brain are more fully understood. At present we may do more

murder by attempts at rational dissection of such experiences than we can possibly gain by so doing.

There are, further, the situations of those who hold beliefs which cannot be rationally explained as ones which are surely based upon true belief in that convictions may just go against the weight of evidence opposed to those convictions:

"A person will not always be tempted to surrender a religious conviction by his judgement that, of the arguments he has encountered, those which militate against his belief are the stronger." 42

It may, of course, be argued that Cooper's example above of religious convictions is poorly chosen because it may be as irrational to argue a person out of his religious convictions as to argue him into them. The evidence would, presumably, not be adequately conclusive in any objectively, rational sense. But, the point ought to be, perhaps, that the weight given to reasons and evidence by individuals will differ from person to person. Persons differ from each other and communication of rational argument and anticipated response in others is an unpredictable situation. Many effective teachers may recall situations in which rational argument, instruction or exposition - suitably presented to the age and ability of the pupils - proves ineffective not because the pupils are not on the inside of some area of knowledge, but because reasons and evidence which they cognitively grasp just do not seem to reach them.

It may also be the case that the holder of the belief can rarely be sure that he has attained knowledge (true belief) and in schools it may be quite inappropriate to argue someone out of a conviction concerning, for instance, a particular piece of historical evidence. An historian will re-interpret the shifting sands of the few fragments



of written evidence surviving on an historical issue by, perhaps, viewing it, as far as he can, through the eyes of the original writer; he may try to empathise with the thinking of the person of the past in the Idealist sense.<sup>43</sup> His account may well place different emphasis on evidence, previously considered by others; he will offer reasons for his view, but ultimately why he holds particular views is simply because, with the greatest honesty and sincerity within him, those views of the evidence strike chords within him different from the way the music previously sounded to others. (I am not suggesting all historians operate in this way.) Clearly much evidence of the past is lost and although what remains is subject to reason, that a student of history or an historian makes out a case on a basis of reason does not, necessarily, fully explain why that particular case is made. Two persons of similar training and capacity considering the same evidence may draw different conclusions.

In practical day to day life there are significant restrictions on the extent to which reason can effectively guide the individual. Cooper<sup>44</sup> points out that the limits of logic, intellectual capacity and energy must exist and for the person committed to reason, it is only rational to accept the point to which logic may be taken. If the same person reaches such limits, he accepts them as the best he can do in the circumstances, but:

"What disturbs many people, surely, is not that justifications, a chain of reasons, must come to an end, but that they hardly travel more than a few links upon it. Others may have gone further, but the rest of us must rely on hearsay and authority, neither of which are we able to validate for ourselves. This worry is then compounded by fear about the possible parochialism of the chains of reasons offered and the final stands taken at their ends." 45

Furthermore our acceptance of good reasons and the conclusions drawn may be,

"... a function of upbringing, fashion, social conditions and trends which can and do vary in other times and climes." 46

The point at issue is not that of the sociological perspective of the relativist that there are no objective means for resolving the validity of beliefs,

"Rather it is one about the individual's power to recognise these if there are any." 47

The kind of issues Cooper has in mind include:

"... discourse about health, intelligence, criminality, grammaticality, insanity or love. Questions like, 'Has there been a decline in mental health?' 'Are blacks as intelligent as whites?', 'Do Harlem blacks speak ungrammatical English?', 'Can there be asexual love?', have no true or false answers except relative to contested choice of concepts serving contested purposes of classification, ordering, treating, controlling, appraising, and policy." 48

A theory of grammar ought to be able to enable us to determine how to speak correctly, but language is a dynamic and its capacity to change denies us rational, objective criteria to apply. And of all the capacities developed in schools, language is, perhaps, the most important:

"We act as if we thought this tool of language were perfect, and children had only to learn to use it correctly, i.e. as we do. In fact, it is in many ways an imperfect tool. If we were more aware of its imperfections, of the many ways it does not fit the universe it attempts to describe, of the paradoxes and contradictions built into it, then we could warn the children, help them see where words and experience did not fit together, and perhaps show them ways of using language that would to some extent rise above its limitations." 49

Language may carry different meanings over time, yet words are essentially the atoms of language expressing reason. However, words carry implications beyond reason and only in reflection at, perhaps, a later time might it become apparent that particular terms and forms of expression have, while ostensibly expressing rational utterances, actually expressed irrationality and bias. E. H. Dance lists terms drawn from history textbooks which reveal much more than word-meanings, terms such as: tyranny, native, coloured, black, democracy, murder, execution, martyrdom, Reformation, ancient/mediaeval/modern ...<sup>50</sup> There seems little reason to suppose that rational discourse should be unattended by unintended meanings and implications. Philosophical discourse searches for meaning in language in rational fashion, but the ultimate rationality may involve acknowledgement of the limits of critical reason. Cooper, commenting on the Dearden-Peters concept of autonomy sums up the situation:

"... the current concept of autonomy leaves out too much that men should concern themselves with. When yoked to critical rationality, the concept has no place for those concerns where the giving and criticising of reasons is only modestly engaged, or for the importance, in the case of some individual convictions, of not being bowled over on the weight of evidence." <sup>51</sup>

The importance of cognitive rationality is of significance, however, and I do not wish to devalue its function in helping to inform the nomos of personal autonomy. Nevertheless, I do maintain that there is an area of experience beyond that of reason as such and this issue is addressed in Chapter 1 in which authenticity's place as part of autonomy is explored. And as Cooper indicates, if the case made out above holds by means of reason and rational argument, this does not alter the fact that a case for the limits of reason has been made.

To summarize, then: in the argument concerning the significance of reason as justification for paternalism over children, I first considered Scarre's case that adults are rational and children generally less so, pointing out the limitations of this position. Brandon's consideration of rationality and his approach to Scarre's case was presented and found to offer an argument against rationality on the basis of a different interpretation of the concept from that of Scarre. However, Brandon's theme of the inadequacy of reason in explaining or justifying the adult-child dichotomy was pursued but within the parameters of the meaning of rationality apparently used by Peters and Dearden and a tentative case was presented to reveal possible limits to that concept of reason, taking further the argument of Chapter 1, Section (3). It may be that further scientific research into the respective influences of the left and right hemispheres of the brain may lead to more certainty in revealing the limits of cognitive reason as the pineal gland's influence upon mapping out a relationship of adults and children through physical growth may be shown to do.<sup>52</sup> And it must be questioned whether the development of reason, even if it may be brought about in children, is sufficient justification for paternalist intervention over those who are statutorily defined as 'children' particularly when those who are thus defined may prove more 'rational' than many adults. However, given these reservations, a lack of rationality is still acknowledged as grounds for some paternalist interventions.

#### (4) Paternalism and consent

Consent theory seems to have considerable affinity to autonomy since it gives the individual the opportunity to assent to paternalist interventions arranged in his interest. The greater the

age of the child or young person who is subject to paternalism makes the need for consent the greater, given that the individual in question is not mentally handicapped to the extent that harm could well befall him without some interventions. Tacit or assumed consent of children and young persons to compulsory schooling is taken for granted, but the incidence of truancy, disruptive behaviour in schools and in classrooms created by older pupils in their later compulsory school days, implies a lack of consent. (Tacit or assumed consent may be thought of as that expressed by one who orders a meal in a restaurant with the implication that he will pay for it - but only when he has consumed it.) If pupils withdraw their actual consent to co-operate in a learning enterprise, neither learning nor understanding will be achieved. Greater independence will be sought with advancing age; after all, adult rights to consent in a democratic society should be considerable and the actual right to vote and choose a government is to express some consent to its enactments. Nevertheless, in Britain's democratically ordered society, voting is an all or nothing affair, a mandate for all a prospective government's policies; educational issues do not receive explicit consent from the electorate as education will be only one part of a party's prospective mandate. (Other democratic societies, the U.S.A. for example, have different arrangements by which consent to aspects of educational policy are handled separately from other governmental considerations.) In Britain, a situation is possible in which a parent (on behalf of a teenager) wishing to withdraw consent to compulsory schooling is not allowed to do so by government legislation unless the parent can prove that he or she is able to provide an adequate alternative education to that of compulsory schooling. And, in the case of some fifteen or sixteen year olds,

schools may, themselves, withdraw their consent to provide education for these individuals with the result that if other schools also refuse them, the local authority may have to resort to other means to provide some education as no legal opportunity to seek employment is open to persons under the age of sixteen years by current law.

Autonomy is closely related to consent because consent which is not constrained implies that a person may choose to consent to act in a certain way. Autonomy's relationship to consent is, then:

"... central to respect for persons, since it represents the level of personal development in which moral agency is fully exemplified. It is as the subject and object of morally significant determinations that the idea of a person, as someone to whom respect is due, gets its grip. The requirement that personal interactions be based on the consent of those involved, acknowledges and safeguards autonomy." 53

In order to clarify the relationship of autonomy and consent, I shall discuss below some main types of consent and endeavour to apply them to education; first, I shall consider subsequent consent and argue that it has little significance with respect to personal autonomy; second, I shall discuss the implications of prior consent, and although it is not usually regarded as of particular significance to education, I shall try to show that it does have importance for autonomy and education; finally, hypothetical-rational consent will be considered and related to prior consent and to choice.

#### (a) Subsequent consent and autonomy

It is sometimes argued that paternalist interventions are justifiable if the individual over whom the intervention is made comes to consent, subsequently, to the action. In the case of children, the exercise of paternalism by parents may be justified by the child,

"... eventually coming to see the correctness of his parent's interventions. Parental paternalism may be thought of as a wager by the parent on the child's subsequent recognition of the wisdom of the restrictions." 54

Similarly, compulsory schooling may be seen as a "wager", a gamble that the individual required to attend comes to approve of the original compulsion. However, there may well be circumstances which intervene to eliminate subsequent approval and, therefore, the autonomy of the child, preserved in theory by an assumption of future consent, is set aside. The child may die before he is free from paternalist interventions; a young adult, leaving school on the final day of compulsory attendance, who becomes a road accident victim as he leaves the school premises for the last time, hardly has opportunity, leaving aside inclination, to consent to having received a schooling. The question therefore arises as to whether parents or teachers would have acted differently towards that person had they known beforehand that he would die when he did. Children suffering from incurable diseases and whose lives it is known will be foreshortened, are likely to be treated differently from their healthier peers who, with luck, will reach adulthood and a presumed exercise of autonomy. However, without certain knowledge of future events and in expectation of a normal life-span, Dworkin's 'wager' centres on whether the paternalism is reasonable in the situation when it is applied. Subsequent consent can, at best, be a technical justification and probably largely irrelevant to the subject of it once he has escaped from it.

"The justification depends upon the assessment of whether, at the time the act is performed, it is reasonable to believe the child will come to consent." 55

The consent in this case may be thought of as hypothetical.

Carter describes the conditions for subsequent consent as:

"Subsequent to the interference the subject  
 (i) explicitly consents to the action; or  
 (ii) is disposed to consent either upon request, or upon receipt of a relevant piece of information." 56

She also adds further qualifications, summarised by Van DeVeer, thus:

"None of the following are true  
 (a) the act requiring justification by consent is causally sufficient for that consent;  
 (b) the consent would have been withdrawn if the subject's desires, preferences or beliefs had not been distorted;  
 (c) the consent would have been withheld or would be withdrawn upon the receipt of relevant information." 57

Carter regards the above issues as exceptions to her support for subsequent consent. (a) refers to direct interference with the individual such as conditioning or brainwashing and this may, perhaps, conceivably apply only to a limited number of cases, but (b) opens the door to a very wide field of exceptions. No adequate description of "distorted" preferences or beliefs is evident. Subsequent consent could be manipulated, however, to ensure that it was eventually forthcoming especially, perhaps, from children. Hence there is abiding interest in any charges of indoctrination of children. Adults may define what they view as the good for children and young persons and impose this model upon all. The good may not be their good in their own estimation and their good may not be his or her or mine in some respects at least. Berlin's fears that the 'real will' of the individual may, by external influence, be made into a distortion of the individual's personal autonomy to ensure he follows some creed or political belief is, perhaps, a similar situation to that referred to by Carter as "distortion".



The range of guidelines offered by Carter to ensure subsequent consent to paternalist action is wide ranging. It is advocated: that intervention should have the long-term aims and preferences of the person in mind; that he will be supplied with necessary information; that some assessment of the pros and cons of the intervention are weighed; that there are no irreversible consequences of the intervention; that the person's competence is assessed etc. But few of these can be controlled with certainty, even if an early death is eliminated from the argument. A person, for example, may not necessarily obtain and digest particular knowledge and reach understanding however vigorous the approach of his teachers; the consequences of the paternalism may not be adequately assessable etc. Essentially it is probably not feasible to ascertain how a person will react to paternalist action, in the long term. And whatever precautions are taken of the kind Carter advocates, no certainty of subsequent consent can be brought about, without overt distortion of the individual's thought and feelings which Carter, formally, rules out. (A suitable example of a distortion effect upon children may be that of the old Amish of Wisconsin who successfully resisted compulsory education in the courts for children of 14 or 15 years of age. The court would probably have ruled against the sect had the children been younger.)

Without such means of controlling for the effects of distortion, subsequent consent can only be guessed at; it would become a complete gamble. Gardner<sup>58</sup> outlines the kind of distortions and the controls necessary to ensure that subsequent consent would be meaningful arising from education. He distinguishes "approval" from "thankful" consent and points out the problems of ensuring that the assessment of the

experience brought about under paternalism is competent and fair. Pupils may be unable to judge the experience adequately at the time it occurred:

"Take the case of a teacher who, due to laziness or general lack of interest, failed to keep up with the latest teaching aids and methods ... If those taught are ignorant about these matters, they may, as mature, sane and sensible adults, subsequently approve of what their teacher did, but we, knowing what we do, may have reservations about their appraisal." 59

Assuming "the latest teaching aids and methods" would have markedly improved the teacher's performance - and there may well be some reservation on this point - Carter's withholding of consent on lack of relevant information, (c) above, will be no safeguard since the pupil, as an adult later, will still remain in ignorance of how to make a fair assessment of the teacher. Many parents may assess teacher performance and worth in the light of their own ever-dimming schoolday recollections since they have very limited access to the expertise to make a more accurate assessment and, indeed, teacher-parents holding some measure of professional expertise may still form judgements of their children's teachers on inadequate or misinformation resulting in their exaggerated criticism of their own children's teachers.

Gardner regards subsequent, thankful consent from the person who has experienced paternalism as unreliable as justification because many other factors would have to be weighed alongside the thanks, such as: the quality of any educational gain, the extent of compulsion used and justification for particular courses of action. He further warns of the "nostalgia effect" - that individuals may tend to forget the worst and recall only the best parts of their experiences and the "dismissive effect" by which people dismiss the

difficulties of particular occasions in the past as transient however important they seemed to be at the time. The "moral sensitivity" of the assessor, he also regards as crucial. He concludes:

"... consent can justify a paternalistic interference providing it comes from someone who is sincere, unencumbered, informed about the relevant information, able to and does evaluate this information, is not suffering from the nostalgia effect or the dismissive effect, but who is morally sensitive, has not been indoctrinated or brainwashed into approving and who does not have distorted moral beliefs and preferences." 60

Such an ideal observer will have attained autonomy, but as subsequent observers who are to judge their own educational experiences were deemed in need of those experiences at that earlier time in their lives, they are unlikely to be able to meet Gardner's criteria. Her Majesty's Inspectorate, practising teachers and others might prove adequate to the onerous task of ideal observers but their observations would be paternalistic; only the individual himself (affected at the time by paternalist intervention) can give subsequent consent.

However, subsequent consent cannot be justified by a subsequently autonomous person because it is, at root, illogical. Subsequent consent is thought to be consent which, by stretch of the imagination, is given at an earlier point in time from when it is actually given. If an individual has the essential right to be free from paternalist interference, to be independent and even autonomous, that right cannot be removed without violation of it. No subsequent consent to that violation can change the fact that paternalism did violate that right at that earlier point in time. Carter would argue that subsequent consent waives the right to avoid paternalistic

interference, but an actual right to freedom from interference cannot be eliminated. It may be violated; it may be ignored; the person involved may say "thanks" afterwards - for what it is worth - but no subsequent consent can change the fact that the right existed and still exists, whether, in practice, it is recognised all the time, some of the time or never. Therefore, if paternalist interference occurred at time, T1, and subsequent consent occurred at T2, the time lapse from T1 to T2 would be a phase of violation of freedom, independence and the right to exercise autonomy; the person involved cannot, at T2, logically consent to what has already happened. If a woman was raped at T1 but subsequently at T2, in court, say, stated that she now had no objection to what had occurred, her later consent would not justify the rape; however, the court would have the difficult task of ascertaining when the woman's feelings leading to subsequent consent occurred since this would determine whether she had suffered rape or something else and investigation of why she made a consent statement subsequently would be critically important to the courts in ruling on the offence. Only if a person were to be in some way a different self at T2 from what she was at T1 might subsequent consent hold, but even then, the T2 (consenting) self could hardly speak for the T1 (interfered with) self if they were then different selves. If paternalistic interference was, certainly, for the individual's good and met Gardner's criteria stated above, there would be justification for paternalism perhaps, but the justification could still not arise from the subsequent consent. And to find that a person at T2 did not consent to interference at T1 might be used to justify even more paternalistic interference extending to times T3, T4, T5 etc. Further, those who favour a compulsory, centrally imposed curriculum on schools<sup>61</sup> could argue, indefinitely, for

unlimited paternalist interference to ensure understanding was attained and consent gained.

Subsequent consent, therefore, does not justify the loss to the individual of the right to exercise autonomy. Prior consent will now be explored in connection with autonomy.

(b) Prior consent and autonomy

Prior consent is distinct from subsequent consent partly because of the time at which the consent is given; for prior consent to operate, the consent must be given before any paternalist intervention is undertaken. It involves an individual putting himself willingly into others' hands, accepting their direction and guidance so that other choices and distractions are ruled out while the consent holds. Prior consent to paternalist intervention on behalf of an individual seems inappropriate for some persons; the very young, the mentally disabled and the senile would all seem to lack the capacity to give prior consent to paternalist action other than a consent which would be no more than a meaningless form of words to the consentee. Some criteria would be appropriate to establish an individual's 'right' to give informed prior consent: ability to reason, not to be suffering apparent distortion of beliefs (as was considered in subsequent consent), to be of an adequate age, to have some degree of experience by way of education and life etc. The person involved would need to be able to judge the methods and routes adopted to achieve some end by the aid of paternalistic interventions which he would endeavour to assess, in advance, as the least restrictive to his freedom and autonomy. Dworkin refers to,

"... a principle of the least restrictive alternative. If there is an alternative way of accomplishing the desired end without restricting liberty then although it may involve great expense, inconvenience, etc. the society must adopt it." 62

This principle applied to prior consent, would necessitate some judgement considered to be not only within the competence of the individual, therefore, but judged also to be the "least restrictive alternative" method of achieving the end. Nevertheless, if an individual of adequate age and likely competence is involved, it would be undermining to that person's individuality and autonomy to deny him the right to give prior consent to an intervention which should be in his interest, which is, after all, the intention of the paternalist because paternalism involves interference with,

"... a person's liberty of action justified by reasons referring exclusively to the welfare, good, happiness, needs, interests or values of the person being coerced." 63

Although the consentee ought to make assessment of the alternatives to seek out the least restrictive, the good of the consentee should also be that of the individual exercising the paternalism. (The issue of coercion, stated in Dworkin's definition, will be explored below.)

In what follows I shall examine the place of prior consent in connection with persons in their middle teens and above, whose education and experience have reached a stage of autarchy if not of full personal autonomy.

Carter considers prior consent a relatively straight-forward matter and rules out any difficulties attaching to it by asserting justification for intervention is,

"Prior to the interference the subject explicitly consents to the paternalistic intervention ..." 64

The prior consent envisaged needs to be "explicit", from Carter's definition; word or gesture would presumably suffice. However, (as suggested above) some standard ought to be expected of the consentee or anyone, however ill-fitted to be able to choose to consent in advance, might do so. Such a situation could lead to the exploitation of adults who, for example, lack even the most limited rationality with which to give informed consent. But even with this reservation for some minimal qualification to be required of the consentee, prior consent still may not solve the problem of justifying intervention, perhaps, as Carter would have it.

Some have argued that prior consent to paternalism is not consent at all. Dworkin's example of prior consent is that of Odysseus and the Sirens. In this classical tale, Odysseus is informed by Circe of the means by which he and his ship's crew can escape the beguiling song of the Sirens which will lead to their destruction if they allow themselves to be lured off course by the entrancing sounds they will hear when passing the Sirens' isle. Circe directs that Odysseus orders his men to bind him to the mast and not to release him, even when he calls for them to do so should he hear the Sirens' song. The crew are to stop their ears with wax so that they will not be distracted. The crew act in a strongly paternalistic way towards Odysseus by coercing him; Odysseus is presumably indulged by Circe's plan so that he gains the pleasure of the singing without the harm of shipwreck and death. Likewise those who smoke low tar cigarettes (with filters attached) also seek pleasure whilst hoping to minimise the risk to their health, setting aside the weak paternalist interference of the government health warning on the packet in order

to take the risk; Odysseus consents to strong, coercive paternalism in advance to avoid the risk. Kleinig gives the example of smoker Neville who recognises his own weakness of will to ensure that he will successfully stop smoking and so asks others to prevent him from buying cigarettes so that he will be obliged not to smoke since he will have no temptation.<sup>65</sup>

However, it is not clear that the examples given above are actual instances of prior consent:

"What is not clear is that these are instances of paternalist intervention, rather than self-limitation of choices to prevent self-harm or to further one's interests." 66

Lively suggests that Odysseus simply directs his men to disobey his subsequent demands to be untied so that he will be prevented from harming himself, therefore,

"Paternalist intervention seems no more involved here than if I bought a house far distant from a pub because I feared becoming an alcoholic." 67

Gardner agrees with Lively's perspective on prior consent in urging that,

"Where we have paternalism, the initiative and responsibility rest with those who encroach... if the consent of the agent could be appealed to as justification, then we are not dealing with a case of paternalist intervention." 68

The Lively-Gardner stance on prior consent is not altogether satisfactory, partly because it describes situations and events as ones which may be explained as wholly paternalist or wholly self-directing. And, in fact, I would venture to argue that very few situations exist which should be described in such black and white



terms; most situations may be best depicted in shades of grey. Undoubtedly Odysseus plays a major part in organising events to avoid the danger of the Sirens and in this sense he is acting in a self-determining, autonomous way. But, even though he is the leader of a classical, hierarchically ordered society of a ship's company, his subordinates have a major responsibility to ensure that the event passes off successfully; they stick to Odysseus's rules (endorsed by the magical authority of Circe) and their part in coercing Odysseus is critically important. The actual sequence of events from the time Odysseus gave the plan to the successful outcome would reveal occasions when Odysseus's autonomy was dominant and others when the crew's paternalism was dominant. It may only be argued convincingly that autonomous self direction is the only consideration in a situation were the individual to be quite isolated from all others. If Lively buys a house distant from a pub because he fears becoming an alcoholic he cannot have, for example, a family's wishes to take account of. A wife and children may strongly endorse his reason for keeping clear of pubs, not only for their own prudential reasons, like preventing him from wasting the family income on drink or having to carry him upstairs each evening, but also because they love him and urge the purchase of the house distant from the pub out of paternalism (looking after pater) realising as they do his addiction to the bottle. Gardner considers, "the initiative and responsibility rest with those who encroach ..." but in the case of weak paternalism the encroachment may be put by way of guidance or information rather than in stronger form; Lively's family may, at least, advise vigorously. If a wife controls half the finance needed to purchase a house, her husband may be coerced into a 'choice' of location and thus be subject to a stronger paternalism.

Most situations may be best viewed from this more refined perspective - some way between total self-direction and strong paternalism on a kind of scale of escalating paternalism out of consent. The Odysseus example is, certainly, nearer to self direction than strong paternalism on the grounds that Odysseus, acting on advice, prescribes the nature and extent of the paternalism his crew should provide. Nevertheless they must still be relied upon to choose to obey orders to disobey orders and to impose a coercive paternalism over Odysseus.

However, although it may not be necessary for strong paternalism to follow from prior consent, some define paternalism as entailing coercion. Carter states that:

"A paternalistic act is one in which the protection or promotion of a subject's welfare is the primary reason for attempted or successful coercive interference with an action or state of that person." 69

Dworkin's definition given earlier also refers to the issue of coercion. But weak paternalism which Dworkin seems to argue for elsewhere in his article need not involve coercion. Van DeVeer goes so far as to deny that prior consent can justify interference at all because of the issue of coercion since Carter includes coercion within her definition of paternalism (as stated above):

"... prior consent may not justify paternalistic interference because actions restraining B in cases where B previously consents may not be cases of coercive interference and, hence, not paternalistic interference." 70

But coercion involves a specific kind of compulsion:

"What is important is that something is elicited that would not have been given in the absence of threat." 71

But there are many instances of paternalism which do not involve a threat of interference or a withholding of something one has reason to expect. Some of Kleinig's examples include: a town council sealing off a dangerous track used by motorists as a short cut (there is no coercion involved here but the motorists' liberty of action is limited); a court rules that a person must convince a judge that his compensation for injuries at work will be spent in his long-term interest not in short-term advantage; finance agreements in which the interest may not exceed an amount fixed by law. Indeed, it is possible to take the argument further into yet weaker paternalism by putting the case that paternalism need not, necessarily, restrict liberty of action: the cliff top sign that warns of danger but no land is even fenced off; the dying woman whose son's horrific misdemeanours are kept from her etc. There is paternalist intervention in all these instances, but coercion is absent although it may be the case that,

"The paternalist exercises some measure of control over some aspect of the life of another - be it a thwarting of the other's desires, a manipulation of the other's beliefs, or a channeling of the other's behaviour." 72

Although there must be some degree of independent guidance or activity to channel another's behaviour on the part of the paternalist, coercion in ensuring that the intervention has some ultimate effect on another person is not a necessary element in all situations of paternalistic action. In cases of prior consent, the scope and scale of the exercise of paternalist intervention should be clearly circumscribed and understood before the intervention is consented to and effected.

Since paternalism is directed at enlarging another's opportunities, it should be used most appropriately, perhaps, when the subject of the proposed intervention has had the opportunity to give prior consent to the action. The stronger the intervention, the greater the obligation upon the paternalist to be able to justify his actions. But very few situations of prior consent express choices which are completely voluntary. The voluntary assumption of risk by an individual is described by Feinberg as:

"... while fully informed of all relevant facts and contingencies, with one's eyes wide open, so to speak, and in the absence of all coercive pressure or compulsion... To whatever extent there is compulsion, misinformation, excitement or impetuosity, clouded judgement (as e.g. from alcohol) or immature or defective faculties of reasoning, to that extent the choice falls short of voluntariness." 73

Such a situation expresses an ideal, one for which to aim, perhaps, though it may be unlikely ever to be fully realised. Most persons consent and make choices from a less than 'voluntary' basis. The person consenting in advance to some degree of paternalism, even though non-coercive in nature, must, to some extent, wager that the exercise of paternalism will be as intended - for his benefit. A situation in which an individual gives prior consent to intervention recognises that individual's right to personal autonomy but, in consenting the individual accepts, at least some measure of weak paternalism restricting his autonomy. This is not, necessarily, a contradictory situation because,

"... paternalism can be recognised as one means among many by which agents may indicate serious concern for their future well-being. An indication of such concern may not represent a denial of one's autonomy so much as an expression of it." 74

Paternalism, particularly in situations of prior, voluntary consent approximating to Feinberg's ideal stated above, may well enable the individual to express his personal autonomy particularly in situations when he must anticipate, think ahead and make choices which are contingent upon his judgement of his long-term good. Therefore, a measure of paternalism may prove complementary to the individual's long term purposes:

"Recognition of the individuality of others, then, is not some respect for bare voluntary choices or rational choosers in an abstract sense, but for continuants whose capacities have formal concrete expression in ongoing projects, life-plans, etc. and who in day-to-day decision-making can be expected to work within the framework they provide. But as we know we are often disposed to act in ways that are perilous to our projects and plans that are partially constitutive of our identity. Where this is so, paternalism may not be violative of integrity." 75

The acceptance of the right of the autonomous person to give prior consent to paternalistic intervention on his behalf provides him, in recognition of his individuality and self-determination, with as much control as he chooses to exercise over interventions on his behalf. A situation of checks and balances is created for, and by, the individual so that on a scale of complete voluntariness to strong paternalism, the individual may consent to pass through a "threshold" accepting paternalist intervention even at the expense of his freedom because such intervention on his behalf is recognised by him as contributing to his long-term good and his acceptance of it is an expression of his autonomy.

In education and in schooling, an aspect of the exercise of paternalism is the nature of the relationships between teachers and students. These relationships should express mutual trust, respect and care. Excessive paternalism would lack respect for

individual autonomy and might destroy the proper relationship of student and teacher. The adoption of a careless voluntariness by the student calls for paternalistic guidance to ensure the student keeps sight of his long-term good. The prior consent of a student (in voluntarily choosing to follow a course of study at 16+, for example) to some degree of paternalist intervention on his behalf if deemed appropriate by his teachers, is essentially an unwritten contract between student and teacher based, fundamentally, upon the quality of the relationship which exists between them.

To summarise, then, I have argued that prior consent to paternalist interventions does exist since persons do not live as isolated entities (as Lively depicts) removed from actual personal relationships and committed to total self-direction or strong paternalism. Reality has more to do with a scale of complete voluntariness to full paternalism which the individual may enter at different points. Prior consent gives the individual consentee determination of the nature of the intervention he judges it prudent to subject himself to and, therefore, recognises the individual's right to personal autonomy. Prior consent, therefore, may be most appropriate when given by those who are not the very young nor those who suffer from mental infirmities.

#### (c) Hypothetical-rational consent

A further type of consent may be described as hypothetical-rational in that it is what a "fully rational" person would be expected to accept as a form of protection. The appeal to the consent of the individual subject to intervention is largely irrelevant in this instance since it is that aspect of consent theory

which provides justification for paternalism exercised over young children. Rationality is the key consideration:

"What is it that justifies us in interfering with children? The fact that they lack some of the emotional and cognitive capacities required in order to make fully rational decisions." 76

In the case of children, Mill's argument that it is wrong that an individual should be free to contract not to be free holds because it cannot be freedom, permanently to lose freedom.

Dworkin further considers that:

"... the main consideration for not allowing the contract is the need to preserve the liberty of the person to make future choices. This gives us a principle - a very narrow one - by which to justify paternalist interferences." 77

It was argued earlier in this chapter that individuals are not governed only by reason. Reason has its limits; thus the assessment of what is rational behaviour is likely to present considerable difficulty when persons, wittingly, take significant risks with their lives and health. However, this is not at issue in the case of young children for whom it is hypothesized that the opportunity to make future choices of their own concerning their own life-plans, as they attain the power of personal autonomy, is essential to preserve on their behalf.

A persuasive argument expressing the rational interests of children is that of Rawls's account of primary goods. The argument, very briefly, is that the less that is known about a person's rational preferences, the more the need to act on his behalf with respect to his primary goods. Interference is justified by what a group of rational, generally well informed individuals would adopt

as the good of another within the bounds of social order although judging from behind a "veil of ignorance" with regard to the characteristics of that other individual.<sup>78</sup> The case is that whatever the culture in which the individual is to be found, as long as he is rational and assumed able, eventually, to be able to develop to a stage of personal autonomy, he will have need to develop his primary goods: health, intellect, imagination, self-respect, rights, liberties, opportunities, etc. Rawls articulates two key principles upholding this case: (a) that each person should have the right to basic, personal liberty consistent with the same right for all, and, (b) social and economic inequalities should be so arranged that, (i) the least advantaged will benefit more from the system adopted than they would otherwise have done under any previous arrangement; (ii) positions and offices should be open to all on a basis of equal opportunity.<sup>79</sup> For children, then, it is right that they should be protected against their irrational impulses so that they can develop their rationality in order to advance their own good in due course. Education is to be regarded as a primary good,

"... an education adequate to choosing among available economic and social opportunities and to becoming informed, democratic citizens." 80

Education will convey values from person to person but it is,

"... not whose values but what values ought to be imposed upon children." 81

Gutman contends further that,

"We rank children's right to education above their rights to religious freedom because we believe that this restriction of their present liberty is necessary to create the conditions for future enjoyment of religious and other freedoms." 82



When a person approaches autonomy and adult status and is able to make rational choices, he should be allowed to replace the objective criteria of primary goods with his own criteria which, if authentic, rational and moral, (as described in Part 1) will be his own and representative of his life-plan. When the individual's choices are authentic, rational and moral his autonomy or at least a preliminary stage of autarchy should be recognised and paternalist interventions reduced in line with that scale of voluntariness to strong paternalism outlined in the previous section on prior consent. The judge's ruling in the case of the Amish of Wisconsin is instructive; the judgement concerning the non-attendance at school of Amish adolescents recognised their right to choose what they should do:

"1. that adolescents ought to be granted the full free exercise rights of adults in certain areas because they have the rational capacities of adults, or  
2. that adolescents must be granted some freedoms in order to help develop their capacities to exercise their freedoms as adults (or at least in order not to diminish those capacities)." 83

The Amish Yoder family won the case, although it seems from other aspects of the ruling that they may not have done so had the children involved been younger.

In conclusion, then, hypothetical-rational consent may be used to justify interventions on behalf of the young before they can effectively exercise their reason adequately. However, no actual appeal to consent is relevant in the case of hypothetical-rational interventions on behalf of children; the need to preserve primary goods on their behalf in order to keep open later choices and

opportunities when they do attain autonomy or autarchy justifies interventions. A status of autarchy recognises that the individual can make rational choices and from this stage the appeal to prior consent has some standing, as argued earlier, since prior consent to continued paternalist interventions does assume recognition of the individual's autonomy.

The point at which hypothetical consent gives way to autarchy may not be clearly definitive but an attempt to clarify this point will be made in Section (5) below.

#### (5) A status of autarchy

Kleinig likens autonomy to a piece of land which may either be permanently enclosed for others' purposes or secured by others under "temporary trespass" without permanent alienation by them.<sup>84</sup> When an individual reaches a stage of autarchy at which he can make rational choices for himself, he is in a position to claim the right that his growing personal autonomy should be afforded some measure of recognition and the paternalism exercised on his behalf when he was a young child should be limited. His prior consent should be sought to further paternalist intervention on his behalf and his consent given some degree of recognition once he attains a state of autarchy, therefore.

The present situation in Britain (and elsewhere) presents a person with the status of adulthood and an accompanying presumption of attainment of personal autonomy, somewhat abruptly, at the age of eighteen years. As indicated in Chapter 5, Section (3), some acknowledgement is legally accorded to young persons prior to the age of eighteen such as the right to marry at age sixteen, with parents' approval, or the right to ride a motor cycle (with its

accompanying dangers) at age sixteen or the right to drive a somewhat safer conveyance, a motor car, at age seventeen; limited hours of employment are permitted below the age of sixteen etc. In Britain, compulsory attendance at school is currently required until the last Friday in May in the year the person involved reaches sixteen, thus some may leave school, legally, at age sixteen years nine months and others aged fifteen years nine months, an anomaly created by the arbitrariness of age and the "school year". However, age is taken to be the general criterion applied in issues of majority rights and, therefore, it would lack credibility to advocate any change without reference to age. Nevertheless, the present situation with regard to legal recognition of persons below the age of eighteen seems to leave them more akin to infants in their legal status than to that of adults, the status to which they, as reasoning persons, naturally aspire since adulthood is to be seen as an essential part of their future.

In order to afford some recognition to the intermediate stage of rational autarchy in young persons in their middle teens, it seems necessary to provide institutions with the legal flexibility to respond to autarchy and, eventually, personal autonomy so as to be able, in Goodman's phrase, to multiply the paths of growing up. Opportunity for the exercise of rational choice by the young adult over his or her life with a corresponding limit on paternalist interventions which are made more subject to the prior consent of the young adult seem desirable developments.

It may be that a new status for those in middle teenage would recognise autarchy and enable young adults, below what is now compulsory school age, to become more related to the adult community

through activities in production or public or community services. Schrag<sup>85</sup> advocates a newly defined legal status for young adults and draws attention to the President's Science Advisory Committee, headed by J. S. Coleman, which reported the desirability of a separate minimum wage and revised labour standards in,

"... the interest of flexibility, individualization, and the opening of wider opportunities for work experience and employment." 86

Schrag's view of this report is that,

"... the authors of the report are conscious of the deleterious constraints which minority status places upon youth though they are justifiably unwilling to accord adolescents full adult status." 87

Such enlarged status might well be expressed in economics, family life and political participation and Schrag outlines how these categories might respond to the autarchy of young adults. Parental concern at such a change of status may be unfounded:

"First, the period in which the parents exert the greatest influence over their children, shaping their basic values and attitudes, is probably long over by the time they turn sixteen. Second, it is doubtful that parental coercion and blackmail are ever very successful where more benign forms of persuasion have failed ... Third, parents would retain considerable leverage over their adolescent children inasmuch as the latter, though not barred from employment, would not usually be economically self-sufficient." 88

The personal relationships between parents and their children would largely determine the influence to be wielded. However, Schrag's third point above, of economic dependence, would be a considerable sanction. And he is probably correct to describe the situation of young adults, thus:

"On the one hand they are exhorted to 'grow up' and to act as 'mature and responsible people'. On the other hand, they are denied any real independence or responsibility. Informally they are urged to act as adults while their legal status reflects the fact that society does not distinguish them from infants." 89

However, an educational input could still be required during autarchy yet a route to adulthood effected which both recognised the individual's right to exercise personal autarchy as a preliminary stage to autonomy (in that education and/or training could be shaped more by the individual's own choice) and at the same time a discreet paternalism could be maintained over his development.

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PART 3PERSONAL AUTONOMY AND CONSIDERATIONS WITHIN EDUCATION

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### Introduction to Part 3

The purpose of the final part of this thesis is to show how personal autonomy can be exercised and, thereby developed, within the practice of education. In the analysis of personal autonomy in Part I, the autos, the authentic self, was held to be able to empower the individual to deep, reflective evaluation of his motives with which the nomoi of the criteria picked out by reason coupled with the moral and social implications of personhood interact and from which the virtues are fostered. If the account of personal autonomy so far given holds, educational activities should aim to give opportunity for the exercise and development of personal autonomy in the learning process so that by exercising autonomy in learning, the person involved may be more likely to practise his autonomy after formal education ends. Education is, itself, a practical activity and if personal autonomy is to be successfully developed, it should also be exercised in educational practices giving opportunity for practical realisation of authenticity and practical reason. And it may only be by active engagement in educational practices that personal autonomy may be developed. The measure of an individual's gain in personal autonomy will then be his capacity for personal exercise of skills coupled with a complementary acquisition of relevant knowledge and understanding as he engages actively and directly in educational practices.

An appropriate definition of a practice apposite to personal autonomy and to educational practices could be the one below:

"By a 'practice' I am going to mean any coherent and complex form of socially established co-operative human activity through which goods internal to that form of

activity are realised in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partly definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended." 1

Applied to practices which comprise education, the "internal goods" partly comprise the knowledge and understanding which personal engagement in the practices only can yield. These "internal goods" can only be fully realised when the person's autonomy is exercised so that the virtues are called into play when that individual strives for excellence in the practice.

Personal autonomy is argued to be a power, in Chapter 5, and the "human powers" to which MacIntyre refers enabling a person to "achieve excellence" within his capacities in the practice must embrace autonomy for how otherwise can personal excellence be achieved in any practice? Individual participation in the practice is essential to enable individual achievement to occur; it is insufficient to claim understanding of a practice without personal engagement in it (as, for example, White<sup>2</sup> claims in respect of those activities he designates as Category II, in, Towards a Compulsory Curriculum) because only by engaging in a practice will a person be able to realise the power of his personal autonomy and possess the personal virtues which direct involvement can yield. Active personal engagement and commitment to a practice, as White has more recently indicated, is crucial:

"It is not enough to 'know about', say, playing football in an external way if one is to acquire the courage, cooperativeness, etc. which playing this game promotes. One has to play it - and not just once or twice or for a few weeks, but for as long as it takes for one to build up something of the relevant virtues." 3

Engagement in educational practices on this view enables moral and intellectual virtues to flower as part of the individual's personal autonomy in a socially established, co-operative set of human activities within a sense of community described in Chapter 3, Section (4) above.

The three chapters of this final part of the thesis each explore aspects of educational practices which hold significance for autonomy and for education considered as a set of worthwhile practices. Chapter 7 considers knowledge and educational practices. Chapter 8 deals with learning how to learn, as a kind of second order learning particularly relevant to autonomy and it also considers some implications for teaching and student autonomy. The final chapter explores some of the ideas and methods of Dewey with regard to practices and personal autonomy through education.

CHAPTER 7      PROCEDURAL KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

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(1) Procedural knowledge

An influential exponent of a liberal education based on an analysis of forms (and fields) of knowledge, Professor P. H. Hirst, describes three kinds of knowledge: (a) knowledge with the direct object (of persons, places, things) he subsumes under, (b) knowledge 'that' or propositional knowledge of true statements or propositions upon which the forms which he claims to be epistemologically basic rest. However, he describes, (c) knowledge 'how' or procedural knowledge as follows: "It may in fact always involve knowledge of the first two kinds, but it clearly picks out certain capacities over and above the cognitive understanding and mastery of which a person is capable."<sup>4</sup> Pring considers that the balance of what happens in school based education has to do with propositional knowledge, partly because this can be more easily examined than procedural knowledge and the emphasis he considers placed upon propositional knowledge ensures that, "... so much knowledge is taught in total disconnection from the practical world which gives it point."<sup>5</sup> And if the learner is not actively engaged in practising the educational practice in question the opportunity for the exercise of autonomy and for the development of the virtues implicit in that practice cannot flower.

Ryle's analysis of reason into the theoretical and the practical distinguishes the latter as that which enables the individual to engage in intelligent practices: "What distinguishes sensible from silly operations is not their parentage but their procedure, and this holds no less for intellectual than the practical performances."<sup>6</sup> Performances, procedures and practices illustrating knowing how as opposed to knowing that are used by Ryle to, "... rescue practice



from the intellectualist grip." However, Ryle then goes further and endeavours to show that practice is logically prior to and, therefore, superior to theory since; "It is therefore possible for people intelligently to perform some sorts of operations when they are not yet able to consider any propositions enjoining how they should be performed."<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Hartland-Swann has gone so far as to contend that if 'know' is to be adjudged a capacity verb and, therefore, dispositional in character, all instances of knowing that may be reduced to knowing how.<sup>8</sup> Thus to ask someone what propositions he knows about x is to ask the person the extent to which he knows how to state correctly those propositions. However, Roland-Martin<sup>9</sup> points out that 'know' must be made stipulatively dispositional in order to reduce knowing that to knowing how and points out that to know how x murdered y by witnessing the events is not the same as to know how to swim, tell jokes, speak foreign languages, show aesthetic taste, reveal tactful manners etc. - to borrow some of Ryle's examples. All the latter examples require practice and are practices (although not all may meet the definition of a worthwhile practice) yet the witness to the murder had to be aware of what occurred prior to knowing how to give an account of it. Nevertheless when practice and action are required, knowing how becomes imperative and knowing that acquires meaning only in that it may be embraced into practice.

Propositional knowledge is by no means discarded by Ryle who does not seek to deny the value of intellectual operations. Ryle's surgeon's skill is to be observed in the movements of his hands not in the stating of medical truths. Although the surgeon may well have learned by instruction, he will also have learned aptitudes and skills by practice and such practice requires a different intelligence

from that of propositional knowledge. Understanding must be part of knowing how and, "The knowledge that is required for understanding intelligent performances of a specific kind is some degree of competence in performances of that kind."<sup>10</sup> Indeed, Ryle argues that if all knowing how required prior theoretical knowledge an infinite regress would be entailed since all theoretical knowledge requires application and practice and this is knowing how.

The final step in Ryle's case for the importance of procedural knowledge is Chapter IX of The Concept of Mind where having a theory is considered to involve, "... being able to deliver lessons or refresher lessons in it."<sup>11</sup> But "building" a theory is not the same as having a theory and Kepler's and Galileo's efforts to arrive at a theory are practices and the use of knowing how. The theory once arrived at and formulated becomes separated from the efforts, frustrations, successes, failures and the whole emotional involvement which intellectual practices require. The justification for theory is stated thus: "The chief point of giving didactic exercises to oneself, and to other pupils, is to prepare them to use these lessons for other than further didactic ends. Columbus did not explore only to add to what was recited in geography lessons." In the same way, "To be a Newtonian was not just to say what Newton had said, but also to say and do what Newton would have said and done."<sup>12</sup> Ryle's view holds for school practice since it is by engagement in practices and the accompanying knowledge how by which the learner is directly involved in the exercise of autonomy and the virtues implicit in that involvement may be realised.

If, then, the propositional knowledge of a liberal education associated with theoretical reason dominates school learning, the opportunity for practice is lost:

"... the epistemology of ratiocination and of intellectual work in general continues to be told chiefly in the contemplative idiom, this is, in terms appropriate to classrooms furnished with blackboard, but no pens or paper, instead of in terms appropriate to classroom furnished with pens and paper, but not blackboard. We are given to understand that to 'cognise' is not to work something out, but to be shown something." 13

However, to rest the exercise of autonomy and the practice of the virtues upon the knowing how and knowing that distinction alone may be an inadequate foundation. Knowing how to do x is not necessarily the same as being able to do x. This distinction has been applied, perhaps misguidedly, to the nature of skills: "A skill is more than knowing, and more than knowing how. It is action too."<sup>14</sup> But the distinction between actually doing x and knowing how to do x is emphasised here. Animals do things by instinct and to effect, but it seems inappropriate to describe them as knowing how to do things since some knowledge of the principles involved in an activity seems to be implied by knowing how to do it. This may well apply to the person who cannot explain (say how) he does something, but, even so, he must have some grasp of the principles if he can actually do it. In this sense, knowing how is the knowledge of, perhaps, a technique which, in practice, can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. However: "It remains true that a man cannot be said to know how to do something unless he can do it, except in the sense that he knows in theory how to do it although he cannot do it in practice; he knows the principles but cannot apply them."<sup>15</sup> And it is crucial to the development of autonomy that practical engagement in activities enables the individual to share in the nature of the practice by having an understanding of the principles involved and being able to act in accord with the nature of the practice aiming for the highest standards possible.

An alternative perspective upon knowledge to that of Ryle but apparently holding significance for the direct engagement of the individual is Russell's distinction between knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description.<sup>16</sup> Russell distinguishes two sorts of knowledge: knowledge of truths (knowledge that) and knowledge of things of two kinds, knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge by description. Knowledge by acquaintance is direct awareness, in Russell's analysis; "We have acquaintance in sensation with the data of the outer senses, and in introspection of what may be called the inner sense - thoughts, feelings, desires, etc., we have acquaintance in memory with things which have been data either of the outer sense or the inner sense. Further, it is probable, though not certain, that we have acquaintance with Self, as that which is aware of things or has desires towards things."<sup>17</sup> Such direct awareness through the elements of sense data, memory, introspection and universals inform knowledge by description which is, then, propositional. But it is a "knowledge by acquaintance" which is an authentic awareness making directly present to the individual of what it is that he is aware. All knowledge is essentially this basic awareness in Russell's view. Thus, in his example, a hierarchy of removal from acquaintance to description might be:

- i. Bismarck to those who knew him = an acquaintance as near as is possible to know another person;
- ii. Bismarck to those who knew him through history = knowledge still of who Bismarck was;
- iii. The man in the iron mask = an unknown, but with propositions known about him;
- iv. The longest-lived of men = nothing known apart from what may be logically deduced from the definition of the man.

However, knowledge by acquaintance remains fundamentally private to the knower and communicable knowledge must be descriptive, "... since what one knows must always be identifiable under a description and this implies knowledge by description."<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, even though the very statement of Russell's knowledge by acquaintance is itself descriptive, it does describe the orientation of the self, authentically, towards acquiring knowledge and also the ordinary usage of knowledge by acquaintance (in the sense of lived, direct experience of engaging in practices) is made no less coherent.

However, the priority Ryle gives to procedural knowledge may be refined in some respects, perhaps. Scheffler<sup>19</sup> points to the fact that knowing how implies at least a minimal training since practice is relevant to performance and some measure of understanding is entailed. Ryle identifies knowing how with intelligent performance, but mere know-how seems to infer skills of a lower level than those intelligent activities required for such knowledge. Thus reading with understanding goes well beyond that mere decoding of symbols which may equate to know-how in this respect. "Routinizable competences", such as typing or computation Scheffler calls "faculties" and although an aspect of knowledge how requiring training and skill, they are not "intelligent" in Ryle's sense. "Propensities" are also excluded from knowing how since these comprise a range, chiefly of habits - such as smoking - although clearly a person could be said to know how to smoke. Scheffler therefore tightens Ryle's concept of knowing how by delineating critical skills as its essence and this element of procedural knowledge is of major importance in the exercise of autonomy in practice since these skills enable the learner to act with regard to the wider context of the practice in general. He is not confined only to the exercise of a specific skill.

Is theory then, banished from the intelligent practices of knowing how and the exercise of critical skills? Or, perhaps, is theory cast into a minor supporting role leaving autonomy to be exercised only in the practice of such skills (within those practices deemed to be worthwhile)? Is it that, "... we should substitute the 'I do' for the 'I think' as our starting point and centre of reference"?<sup>20</sup> However, to do something without thinking is not coherent and is not argued by Ryle. A spontaneous response to feeling is not the point, and it should be noted that, "... many activities are a complex in which theorizing, planning, reference to information and reflection upon the results of actions, all play a part along with overt physical performance itself."<sup>21</sup> Now this is certainly not to suggest that practice can be dispensed with but that there are theoretical aspects attaching particularly to situations or contexts for the exercise of intelligent practice. Thus the surgeon's skill in knowing how to perform the operation is exercised in a situation in which the actual decision to operate has been taken, knowledge of anatomy and physiology is implicit and examination and diagnosis have all contributed to that decision. The games player who has outstanding skills does best when he is aware of game tactics or strategy. And, as Entwistle points out, some theory in advance of practice may also be appropriate in situations such as safety procedures in laboratories, learning how to drive a car etc. It may be that, "... theorizing is most helpful to practice when it is an ad hoc kind of activity carried on in close association with practice."<sup>22</sup> It may be, then, that the relationship of theory to practice is contextual and an interaction of knowing how and knowing that occurs in learning which is complex and different dependent upon the educational practice involved. Nevertheless, unless the learner

personally engages in the procedures and processes of the practice in question and does not settle for knowing only that or about something in a largely theoretical sense, he is unlikely to have scope for the exercise of autonomy and an engagement of the virtues.

## (2) Practice

The connection between knowing that and knowing how is an intimate one but the significance of the latter in relation to practice and the individual's personal engagement in practices should be held central to the exercise and development of autonomy. Latterly, Hirst has observed the significance of practice but, as yet, is uncertain about its basis: "I must accept too that at present the logic of practical reasoning is unclear and that the structure of educational theory is therefore uncertain."<sup>23</sup> However Hirst is prepared to acknowledge the significance of the practical in spite of his uncertainties regarding practical reason and looks to action for an analysis: "... our understanding of action is in large measure necessarily derived from an analysis of what is judged to be successful action before we understand, let alone formulate explicitly, the rules or principles that it embodies."<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless the starting point must be the practice itself.

The adjective, 'practical', is somewhat misleading in its modern connotation with what may be considered to be anti-intellectual, 'down-to-earth', a collection of priorities for education determined by a Department of Employment 'to serve the needs of industrial production' perhaps? However, Aristotle distinguishes this aspect of activity as poiesis, concern with making or constructing things. The implications of the practical within practical reason, however, are more appropriately drawn to the concept of praxis which has to do

with doing particular activities as well as one can - eupraxia.

Praxis (as practice) describes the disciplines, the virtues and the activities required within an individual's life; reason and knowledge merge in praxis. Aristotle distinguishes reason into both the theoretical, theoria, the modern associations of which may, perhaps, be in a liberal education of propositional knowledge that, or knowledge pursued 'for its own sake' and the practical and instrumental.

If personal autonomy is to be fostered within education it is the aspect of practice which requires dominance in educational activities. Bernstein recognises the need to reinstate practice in life and learning:

"... the conception of man which we have inherited is a distorted one. It has been distorted not only by the preoccupation of man as knower, but by a certain view of what knowledge is or ought to be - one that is 'incorrigibly contemplative'. To correct this distortion, to achieve a better understanding of just what sort of creature man is and can be, we need to understand him as an agent, as an active being engaged in various forms of practice." 25

The phrase, 'incorrigibly contemplative', which Bernstein borrows from G. E. M. Anscombe, refers chiefly to theoretical reason and propositional knowledge. But MacIntyre, whose definition of a practice is given above, includes among his examples, "...the enquiries of physics, chemistry and biology, and so is the work of the historian, and so are painting and music "<sup>26</sup> as practices, emphasising, "enquiries", "the work of ..." and the activities of participation in painting and music. The practices of doctors and teachers involve education and training which are far removed from the 'contemplative'.

The apparent purity of motives of those urging engagement in a liberal education of knowledge 'for its own sake' is referred to



by Peters and Dearden who give the examples of Matthew Arnold and Cardinal Newman both of whom wanted to hold fast to a standard expressed by a liberal education at a time of rapid industrial and technological change.<sup>27</sup> However, Dearden's example of Newman as an advocate of liberal education, shows that Newman's own motives for promoting this kind of education were related to ensuring that Catholic gentlemen retained their faith. Newman believed that a liberal education would provide knowledge to combat new ideas connected with the development of science and technology; Newman's reasons for promoting a liberal education were, then, intimately associated with the society he knew and the changes of which he disapproved. For him a liberal education was a means of retaining a status quo in the values he rated so highly and which he could defend with an education which would stand as a bastion to change and act as a conservative force in learning. Newman's advocacy of a liberal education was, therefore, highly instrumental to specific social and moral ends; such an education was to be a motivator to these ends.

Knowledge 'for its own sake', as theoria to the Greeks, may be considered intrinsically valuable to the learner who intends his knowledge to have no purpose in terms of instrumental consequences. His intention resides in the intrinsic value of the knowledge alone. Practical or instrumental purposes are considered to be restrictive upon the creative thought processes of the learner; the clutter of practical ends has no place in knowledge 'for its own sake'. However, even though a learner may, by his intention, regard the knowledge within a liberal education as intrinsically motivating and distinguish it from any purpose outside the personal acquisition of that knowledge, some components of a liberal education have,

despite their intrinsic nature, relationship to contexts beyond themselves. Applied mathematics and applied physics relate to the natural world and the circumstance of its physical existence; history and the humanities in general relate to man's social existence. The enquiries of science, the work of the historian, referred to above as practices, develop practical ends and, indeed, generate problems as a focus of practical enquiry.

Practices may well be intrinsically motivating; a person engaged in making something in wood, metal, plastic, etc. may well feel a strong sense of satisfaction simply from the process and product irrespective of any instrumental purpose attaching to the construction. Indeed, it may be that "... the motivation to learn is not so dependent on external and variable interpersonal and institutional factors"<sup>28</sup> as in a liberal education. Peters points out that in schools praise, rewards, approval, competition, avoiding punishment, passing examinations, etc. are so linked to learning that such extrinsic motivation may well divert the learner from pursuit of knowledge 'for its own sake' as a pupil can gain praise, for example, from a teacher for a variety of reasons and certainly not all have connection with knowledge. The intrinsic motives of the learner are submerged in extrinsic motives which may well be ambition, greed and envy!

In practical activities the knowledge and skills required are evidently relevant to the end of the practice itself and, therefore, there may be less chance of the learner's being subverted from that end than in a school-based formal education following the maxim of knowledge 'for its own sake'. In some circumstances knowledge is gained in relation to situational considerations and Peters's example of the Schools Council Humanities Curriculum Project is

particularly apt. In such learning activities centering on issues of a, to some extent, controversial kind and ones of direct concern to the lives of young adults such as education, war and society, relations between the sexes, an expansion of knowledge and understanding from thought and discussion of situational circumstances outwards from those situations may be effected. Such knowledge has direct application to the lives of the learners enabling them, authentically, to orient themselves by practical reasoning to situations in the world affecting themselves. The Humanities Curriculum Project has been, "... one of the few attempts to connect the development of understanding in crucial areas such as those of violence, law and order, sex and personal relationships, with the development of autonomy."<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the Project's discussion methods must engage the learner in the practice of learning itself and in a similar way to the professional practitioners, the doctor, the lawyer, the teacher, they build: "... competences which require the continual exercise of strategic judgement concerning individual cases which they have never confronted before and for which there are no exhaustive rules dictating decisions to be made."<sup>30</sup>

As shown in the discussion of reason in Chapter 2, Section (3), emotion is an integral part of engaging in practices. MacMurray emphasises the operation of feeling in reasoning:

"It is not that our feelings have a secondary and subordinate capacity for being rational or irrational. It is that reason is primarily an affair of emotion, and that the rationality of thought is the derivative and secondary one. For if reason is the capacity to act in terms of the nature of the object, it is emotion which stands directly behind activity determining its substance and direction, while thought is related to action indirectly and through emotion, determining only its form, and that only partially." 31

In order to make sense of situations in education and the world in general, it seems necessary to acknowledge the significance of emotion in the act of engaging oneself in practices and the only understanding possible is by rational feeling, according to MacMurray. Even in the simple syllogism (as distinct from the practical syllogism) the conclusion is drawn from the premises; the thinker must feel that the conclusion is right: "That is, one does something. It is ultimately feeling that licenses the inference, in the sense that only if one feels the step to be right does one allow oneself to make the ultimate mental move, and only if this feeling is a rational feeling is one rationally motivated to make it."<sup>32</sup> Emotions can be motivating (as argued in Chapter 2) and White may be correct to distinguish emotion from motive by the strength of feeling involved. If, then, MacMurray is correct in claiming that, "... it is emotion which stands directly behind activity," engagement in practices should involve those emotions as motives and thereby involve the individual's reasons and emotions in commitment to the practice. Further, engagement in practices may well involve social or communal activities because; "We are social beings and although our personal life is in the end higher and deeper than our social life, we need to base it on communal life."<sup>33</sup> However, each individual who fully lends himself to a practice also finds himself, authentically, engaged in an "... empathetic challenging"... "to overcome timidity and take up the risk of his own life."<sup>34</sup> His care and concern in an orientation of himself towards priorities within the practice enable him to meet the standards implicit in the practice, standards of process more than product, and to experience enlightenment that knowledge of those standards brings. He also has the opportunity of authentically shaping those standards once he has got, "... the

grammar of the activity into his guts," not, "so that he can eventually (my emphasis) win through to the stage of autonomy "<sup>35</sup> - but by exercising personal autonomy in his thought and action by direct engagement in a practice. Autonomy is to be gained by practice and in practice; it is to be exercised within the means of achieving ends; it is not only a facet of an end product. (Discussion of reason and standards is presented in Chapter 2, Section (2).)

Hirst<sup>36</sup> considers that Peters's more recent support for practical activities in education still requires justification since the transcendental justification of a curriculum of knowledge 'for its own sake' (leaving aside its validity) is inappropriate for a practical curriculum. However, practice is justifiable on the grounds that autonomy could not be exercised in education which was not practical. Only by a direct personal involvement in practices and a teaching method giving scope to the exercise of personal autonomy is autonomy likely to be developed. (Illustration of a suitable approach to the exercise of autonomy by pupils in classrooms is included in Chapter 9 on aspects of Dewey's perspectives on educational practice.)

White, in Towards a Compulsory Curriculum, argues for putting a person in an ideal situation as a result of his education, so that knowing what is for his good, he can exercise informed choice between alternatives in his life as a whole; the individual, therefore, comes to exercise autonomy when his education has taken him at least, one presumes, beyond his compulsory school years. Latterly White has become dissatisfied with, "... the post-reflective-desire-satisfaction theory of the good" because, "... it is hard to see how the mature, autonomous chooser ever came to be what he is. If affective dispositions ... have been built into him from his early

years, he has been shaped by his educators and is not properly autonomous. But an education lacking the acquisition of such dispositions is, I now believe, inconceivable."<sup>37</sup> Now personal autonomy is a disposition (as argued particularly in Chapter 4) and only by encouraging its exercise in education is the individual likely to be able to exercise this disposition when formal education is ended. As a disposition autonomy is not only dependent upon breadth or volume of accumulated information; it requires a cast of mind developed in an education giving scope to the individual's autonomous development by centering education upon his direct engagement in worthwhile practices so that in the process of learning he comes, increasingly, to exercise judgement and critical skills as key parts of his exercise of personal autonomy.

One final issue remains; by engaging in practices, the individual is able to exercise autonomy, and, further, his personal engagement calls for the exercise of the virtues, both intellectual and moral. His authentic evaluation of himself within and towards the standards that the processes of a practice entail gives him opportunity for the exercise of the virtues. And, indeed, engagement in worthwhile practices towards the development and exercise of personal autonomy requires the exercise of the virtues. A person who lends himself, authentically, to a practice, and remains faithful to the nature of the standards he derives in that practice will evaluate himself in relation to the values of that practice. Therefore, a doctor will show care and concern in engaging in his practice of curing the sick. Although, prior to his training, the future doctor may have strong feelings to cure people, his virtues will not actually be engaged until he personally embarks on his practice.

In schools, educational practices should engage the learners who will be enabled to develop the virtues within those practices. An intellectual education will put considerable emphasis upon the intellectual virtues as Dearden demonstrates<sup>38</sup> but all educational practices will hold implicit moral virtues too because persons are involved in practices and justice and respect for others will be implicit. Much educational activity is communal; a school is a community and co-operation and sharing in social and intellectual ways give scope for the development and exercise of the virtues. The virtues thus become a part of the development of the disposition of autonomy through the medium of an active engagement by the individual in worthwhile practices.

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CHAPTER 8      LEARNING HOW AND LEARNING HOW TO LEARN

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(1) Learning how and learning how to learn distinguished

One implication of the phrase, learning how to learn x, is that what a person learns in this respect is less direct or immediate than simply learning x when x is the particular knowledge involved. To learn how (procedural knowledge) is to learn some means, methods, procedures or processes to achieve an end which is to learn x. So, in order to learn how to learn x involves an order of learning twice removed from x. Thus, in a learning situation:

- (i) x = propositional knowledge ("content");
- (ii) first order learning = how to learn x (procedural knowledge or the processes of learning how to do x);
- (iii) second order learning = to learn how to learn x (methods, means or procedures required in order to utilise first order procedural knowledge or the processes of learning x).

Second order learning must hold a high degree of transferability or generalizability since the implication of learning how to learn may be applied to learning how to learn not only x but also y or z etc.

Psychological research has explored transfer in learning and there is evidence showing some transfer is possible. In an article first published in 1949 and of seminal importance in this connection, H. F. Harlow describes a learning set, the acquisition of which is learning to learn or learning to think.<sup>1</sup> From experiments with higher primates, Harlow distinguished, "... learning how to learn a kind of problem"<sup>2</sup> as a learning set. Situations of a similar kind, frequently encountered enable the transfer of learning within the learning set to occur; hence, the acquisition of the learning set has the effect of, "... converting a problem which is initially difficult for a subject into a problem which is so simple as to be

immediately solvable."<sup>3</sup> Transfer could occur when controls over the experience and difficulty of problems were maintained. Gagné<sup>4</sup> has also demonstrated that learning involves the transfer of training from component learning sets to a new activity requiring the exercise of those capacities which the individual has previously acquired. Latterly, Pask<sup>5</sup>, in experiments involving sixth form students, has identified different student learning styles: 'serialist' or sequential, small-step acquisition of information and, 'holist', the acquisition of a global view of an area of information. Pask considers that differences in learning style may well have major implications for teaching methods and he has further tried to show that training in general learning habits enables students to learn more effectively.

The student who is able to exercise some measure of autonomy in his learning may well be most likely to enhance this developing autonomy if what he learns is judged high in transferability or generalizability. And a distinction may be made in this connection between learning how to practise as, for example, historian or mathematician and learning how to learn to practise as historian or mathematician, since the nature of learning how to do x (first order learning) is distinguishable from learning how to learn to do x (second order learning). The latter may be more transferable to different, but not necessarily all, disciplines of first order, procedural learning. However, both first and second order learning require practice on the learner's part; he, formally, cannot be a passive recipient of procedures and processes of first and second order kinds. To be said to have learned requires action on the learner's part; he may only reveal that he has learned by doing because his learning has been of a procedural nature.

The acquisition of the procedures and processes of first order learning how calls for the application of second order dispositions and skills of learning how to learn making the learner the key, active agent in his pursuit of knowledge within the practice in which he is engaged. Thus in arguing for the importance of knowledge and understanding, Bailey makes the point that neither may be gained without the exercise of the skills they entail:

"Not only can you not have skills, properly speaking, without knowledge and understanding ... but it is also nonsense to suppose there to be any knowledge and understanding that does not involve the appropriate exercise of skills ... To know and to understand ... is to be able to follow and to practise particular kinds of investigative procedures, weigh evidence, make judgements and decide what to believe and what not to believe." 6

Leaving aside here consideration of skills (to be explored in the next section) it is the engagement of the learner in the processes and procedures of learning how to do x (first order learning) to which Bailey refers above. And some have argued, further, that the process of learning may, itself, be considered, "... the highest form of content."<sup>7</sup> Knowledge and understanding remain crucial, but only first order, procedural knowledge how enables the learner, personally, to gain access to that knowledge; "knowledge becomes the vehicle rather than the destination."<sup>8</sup>

Choice of content for a curriculum and a concern for the relative importance of information within information is significant because appropriate selection might assist transferability or generalizability and Scheffler's view is pertinent here on the economy of subject-matter:

"... content should have maximum generalizability or transfer value. The notion of generalizability is, however, ambiguous. Accordingly, two types of subject-matter

economy need to be distinguished. First, is there an empirically ascertainable tendency for the learning of some content to facilitate other learning? Presumably, this sort of question was at issue in the controversy over classics, and it was discussed in terms of empirical studies. Second, is the content sufficiently central logically to apply to a wide range of problems? This is not a psychological question but one that concerns the structure of available knowledge. Nevertheless, it is through some such principle of economy, in the logical sense, that we decide to teach physics rather than meteorology, for instance, where other considerations are balanced." 9

It is not my intention to deny the significance of choice of content for a particular curriculum but this consideration is less central to the exercise of personal autonomy in learning than it is, for example, to the concept of autonomy which White in Towards a Compulsory Curriculum regards as dependent upon particular content giving a person breadth of knowledge from which to make autonomous choices later as an adult. However for the exercise of autonomy within the learning process, any worthwhile practice which admits of that exercise and its engagement of the virtues is to be considered appropriate. The essential is that learning how to do x involves the student in a process of learning enabling him to attain expertise in that practice:

"The predominant value of a subject lies not so much in its accumulated information or in its intellectual artifacts, but in its special way of looking at phenomena, in its methods of inquiry, its procedures for utilizing research, and its models for systematic thought." 10

The exercise of autonomy in the activity of learning is, perhaps, similar whatever the level of intellectual attainment of the learner:

"Intellectual activity anywhere is the same, whether at the frontier of knowledge or in the third-grade classroom. What a scientist does at his desk, or in the laboratory, what a literary critic does in reading a poem are of the

same order as what anybody else does when he is engaged in like activities - if he is to achieve understanding. The difference is in degree not in kind. The schoolboy learning physics is a physicist, and it is easier for him to learn physics behaving like a physicist than doing something else." 11

Therefore the exercise of autonomy in a school student's learning how to act as an historian might require an approach to history similar to the questions around which Parker and Rubin suggest a curriculum could be constructed -

- What is the discipline of history?
- What kinds of subject matter (or content) are found in history?
- What questions does history ask?
- What is the "structure" of history?
- How does the historian function?

Within such a framework, students should be actively engaged in assessing the reliability of evidence of various kinds for themselves; they must seek the truth, detect bias, sift evidence, ask questions, draw conclusions on the evidence - as an historian should. The student who may learn about the past largely from an account of conclusions determined and presented to him by his teacher, is removed from the potential development of judgement and criticism which are part of the exercise of autonomy in the practice of history.

An example of a classroom situation in which the exercise of autonomy in students is frustrated is that of Warnock who describes how, in her view, a teacher should teach his students the topic of the guilt or innocence of Mary Stuart concerning the death of her husband, Lord Darnley:

"Now one thing is certain. Pupils in an ordinary school class cannot examine any fresh evidence on this point. They cannot even read the secondary sources in detail,

still less can they go back to contemporary sources. They must use evidence which is merely described to them, rather than presented in detail." 12

Now leaving aside whatever is meant by an "ordinary school class", any evidence they consider will be "fresh" to them, at any rate. However, contrary to Warnock's assertion, there seems no reason why the individuals who comprise the class should not, themselves, consider primary and secondary sources of evidence, given that translation or transcription has made the language accessible. In Warnock's outline, the pupils eventually receive from their teacher a description of, "... what he thinks is the most likely account." Later, but when they are still in school, Warnock considers, "The more adult they become, and the better their earlier experience of arguments, the more capable they will be of weighing the probabilities differently." However, such a maturing of historical scholarship seems a doubtful prospect since these pupils are denied the opportunity to involve themselves in the processes of learning the practice of history and, therefore, of exercising autonomy; they are, by Warnock's account, only to be allowed to sit and listen to their teacher's conclusions. He denies his pupils the opportunity for exercising intellectual autonomy made possible by their own practice of this subject. Attentive listening to the end of absorbing their teacher's conclusions, perhaps fulfilling his expectations (or not) in repeating those conclusions in examinations are activities but they do not release autonomy within an intellectual practice of history since the lesson is merely about past events; the lesson does not engage the pupils in the practices of the historian. Unless the activity in which pupils are engaged can be shown to be a worthwhile practice (in the sense discussed in the previous



Chapter) and since the example above pertains to be the practice of what it is not, this seems doubtful, such activity would fail to instantiate autonomy in the pupils.

If autonomy is to be exercised in learning, a student should be involved in learning how to practise x; he should be less involved in learning about x. Bruner considers the process involved to be, essentially, a constant exercise in problem solving leading to learner competence: "... what seems to be at work in a good problem-solving 'performance' is some underlying competence in using the operations of physics or whatever, and the performance that emerges from this competence may never be the same on any two occasions. What is learned is competence, not particular performances."<sup>13</sup> And Bruner considers that what has distorted educational practice into little more than the passing of conclusions from teacher to student are, "... wrongly focused theories of learning that lost sight of the forest of skilled competence for the trees of perfected performances."<sup>14</sup>

Oakeshott's analogy of the 'literature' and 'language' of a subject,<sup>15</sup> referred to in Chapter 4, is a pertinent illustration in connection with learning how in that the 'language' of a practice may be considered to be that process of thought which a learner generates in his activity of learning the practice's 'literature' which are those propositions generally held to be true, constituting a body of knowledge. Procedural knowledge how embraces an understanding of propositional knowledge that within its procedures for without an active engagement of the learner in those processes and procedures of first order learning, the individual's opportunity to learn x, formally cannot occur, since to learn x is to learn how to do x. And I have, further, contended that engagement in the mastery of the 'language' or procedures of a practice is to enable the learner, in some measure, the exercise of personal autonomy in his learning.

(2) Learning how to learn

Learning how to learn  $x$  is that second order of learning which enables the student to access procedural learning how. Both first and second orders of learning enable the learner to practise those worthwhile practices which call for the exercise of autonomy and the engagement of the virtues.

Dearden points out that, in some sense, students have always had to learn how to learn. The traditional classroom in which the teacher instructs the pupils requires of them that they listen with attention to the teacher's accounts and put aside distractions; chastisement inflicted by cane or tawse reinforced pupils in learning how to learn. However, Dearden identifies four types of learning how to learn in a more current sense. First are information skills: use of libraries, classification, content lists, indexes, reference texts etc.; second he describes as the acquisition of general rules and principles; third is the "logic" of different forms of enquiry-method rather than "mass of facts"; fourth is self-management and personal organisation of time for learning.<sup>16</sup>

The third of Dearden's categories has been examined above and a distinction drawn between learning how and learning how to learn. Dearden's third category does not make this distinction, but I would agree that learning how to learn does have a close association with learning how. Learning how is the practice which the learner must actively engage in to gain understanding of what that practice is; learning how to learn to practise the procedures of different forms of enquiry is to be achieved by methods complementary to, but still distinguishable from learning how itself. Learning how to learn may, perhaps, then be restated as, (a) a group of particular skills and specific learning abilities, and, (b) appropriate dispositions.

(a), Skills and particular learning abilities would embrace Dearden's first category of information gathering skills and also some of his second category which applies to the use of the information gathered; thus the acquisition and practice of reading abilities (in Dearden's view) would be involved, for example. This element of learning how to learn I shall term, study skills, which is intended to mean a range of skills and abilities which may have limited transferability between practices (an issue explored below) but without which learning how in any particular practice just cannot occur. Therefore, in the context of classroom learning, the following would be examples of such study skills:

- reading for comprehension,
- notemaking from reading,
- notemaking from speech,
- writing essays,
- assessing the usefulness of texts,
- using reference texts,
- locating information,
- tackling assignments,
- using graphs and diagrams,
- revising and retaining information.

(b), Appropriate dispositions would include much of the implication of Dearden's fourth category with which some skills may be associated but which perhaps reflects the dispositions of the potential learner towards his learning. By his engagement, directly and actively, in the process of learning so that the practice is meaningful to him, dispositions appropriate in a successful learner should be developed. In Dearden's second category of learning how to learn he includes the example of moral principles and these would

apply to dispositions in the learner in which the virtues engage.

Learning how to learn, then -

"... serves to reflect two different sets of conceptions: on the one hand, as studying as the exercise of a collection of identifiable skills; on the other, of learning as an intensely personal activity characterised by a search for meaning and understanding. One conception tends to emphasise the acquisition of skills and is concerned with means, or techniques; the other tends to emphasise an awareness of purpose, and is concerned with ends, and the individual's relationship to those ends." 17

#### (a) Study skills

Skills in general are currently in vogue in education, perhaps partly, because they seem to express an activity or productive capacity of a type which some may see as analogous to that of industry and which is increasingly rated by some as important in schools in the state maintained sector. Skills may well be significant in all learning but they are inseparable from the knowledge and understanding of those practices of which first order procedural knowledge how and second order learning how to learn are a part. State education may, to some extent, have been born out of a nineteenth century utilitarianism which put emphasis upon the "three R's" as essential skills, the mastery of which by future employers of England's dark Satanic mills was regarded as vital to Britain's economic success, prosperity and expanding democracy. There may be fruitful parallels to be drawn by historians and sociologists between the nineteenth and latter twentieth centuries here. More recently, Bloom has restated the significance of psycho-motor skills in his taxonomy. And, currently, educational projects offer "social" skills and "life" skills which when explored may only approximate to their titles in a very limited way! The Hirstian "forms" of

knowledge and understanding (if Hirst's thesis that these are epistemologically basic is correct) embrace skills distinct to the form; Dearden's reference above to the "logic" of different forms of enquiry as a part of learning how to learn is reflective of skills attaching to Hirstian forms.

However, study (and information) skills are that part of second order learning how to learn which enable the learner to achieve competence in first order learning how in order to master a practice, the result of which is enhancement of understanding. And if study skills are divorced from first order learning how, they are divorced from the purposes of the learner. A skill may be considered to bring mastery, but some procedure must be the object of that mastery. Irving lists numerous study skills and seems to refer to these as separable from the "content" of knowledge:

"Of course, balancing subject content and study skills is difficult at first because it seems that one or other is unfairly dominant ... Classroom time devoted to the acquisition of study skills will appear to reduce the amount of subject coverage ..." 18

Although she regards study skills as means of learning how to learn "subject content", she appears to view means and ends of learning as separable. In her analysis study skills enable the individual to, "... acquire and process subject knowledge more efficiently and quickly than before."<sup>19</sup> But if study skills are taught, perhaps by direct instruction, to students as a separate entity in a curriculum, transfer into "subject" work may well be severely limited because students may simply fail to recognise their application in different contexts.

Transferability, referred to above in connection with the research of Harlow and others, is circumscribed by many factors.

Situations of a similar kind are required in which common factors operate, "... when the learner is made aware of the possibility of transfer ... The more thoroughly the first task is learned ... Intelligence ... because more intelligent children and adults are more likely to spot the relationship between tasks."<sup>20</sup> Foss like Scheffler (above) questions the transferability of some central concepts such as might be claimed for classics.<sup>21</sup> It does seem that, "... it looks as if normally, at any rate, it is only when there is a marked logical similarity between different contexts that transfer will take place."<sup>22</sup> Therefore, if study skills are taught separate from learning how and the context of the practice involved, the student is faced with an excessive problem of transfer in order to apply the skills in different contexts. And if Hirst is correct in identifying formally distinct areas of knowledge requiring different skills, transfer of skills between those areas is impossible.

Further, if a skill is isolated from those contexts and procedures for which it is developed, students may be left with the impression that their school curriculum is mainly concerned with particular isolated skills; therefore if memory skills are taught out of learning contexts, students may be led to regard learning to be chiefly concerned with remembering rather than concerned with active procedures for seeking understanding. Regular practice of study skills in context should make them effective instruments of learning how to learn; Biggs<sup>23</sup> found that students in faculties of arts and sciences in higher education when offered common study skills advice had very different perceptions of that advice and considerable difficulty in extracting relevance to themselves because they operated in different faculty contexts for learning.

In order, therefore, to avoid the difficulty of transfer of a study skill into a particular educational practice in the secondary school, it may require each teacher to teach for the link of skills to the educational practice he pursues with his students. Thus, it is for, "... teachers in individual subjects to orient part of their teaching towards the development of the study skills required by particular courses."<sup>24</sup> Reading may, then, be enhanced by activities attaching to the context of the reading and this skill attaches to a very wide range of procedural knowledge and "content". And much of such "content" is not easily acquired other than through this skill!<sup>25</sup> However, access, through reading, to a range of "cognitive content" should not be regarded as a means of learning simply by easy application of a universal study skill. Reading should be appropriate to the context in which it is used. Therefore, as Dearden indicates,<sup>26</sup> (accepting Hirst's distinctions in knowledge) effective reading implies different things in different modes of thought and cannot simply be expressed as a mastery of a technique such as SQ3R. (It should, however, be acknowledged that SQ3R may be an appropriate technique in a variety of situations.)

#### (b) Dispositions

Peters's view on the Schools Council Humanities Curriculum Project as one of the few attempts to devise a coherent curricular approach to linking understanding in crucial areas with autonomy was stated in Chapter 7. In this learning context, the student is enabled to make judgements and authentically evaluate and develop his perspectives on controversial issues. He may come to care about his activity of learning; it may be illuminated with meaning for him by his consciousness of himself as a being in a relationship to

the world. Peters, himself, is deeply concerned about the values within education in a way which distinguishes the essence of that care and concern from any analysis of knowing how or knowing that:

"It is, as Socrates and Plato argued, intimately connected with caring about something and does not seem to be a case either of 'knowing how' or 'knowing that' which are the usual alternatives offered." 27

Learning how to learn may well be meaningless if considered to be only a set of skills. It may well only be when the individual reaches a depth of understanding and a care to achieve such depths in sharpening his awareness of his relationship to learning that learning how to learn may be fully realised; only then will his disposition be influenced to ensure that he uses the skills to pursue the educational practice with which he is engaged.

Empirical research in Higher Education has identified students having "deep" or "surface" approaches to learning.<sup>28</sup> The former searches for meaning in learning, using study skills intelligently in the procedures of the practice with which he is engaged. The student having a "surface" approach operates more by rote-learning; memory has a high priority in a generally rigid and mechanical style. The student with a "deep" approach to learning may well question what he encounters and consider evidence in an open-minded way before drawing his own conclusions. The "surface" approach may be unduly examination conscious in its concentration on rote-learning and recall, without, perhaps, ever reaching full understanding.

The development of a "deep" approach to learning reflects the learner's disposition to his learning and the person who fully learns how to learn finds purpose and meaning in his learning as he controls the process. A learner's disposition to his learning and his



orientation of himself in finding a depth of meaning for him as distinct from meaning for any other individual has a likely bearing upon schools as well as in Higher Education. Schools give scope for feedback between teachers and particularly older students in a very direct and confined environment and it should be the purpose of all teachers to enable their students to develop the most suitable dispositions to learning and this may well require effort to inculcate that depth of awareness towards learning which enables the learner to come to care for his learning and learn, fully, how to learn.

### (3) Autonomy and learning how to learn

Within curriculum activities, learning how to learn may seem to have a particularly close connection with autonomy. The application of learning how to learn in schools recognises individual and social changes which spur the development of the individual child. Reference was made in Chapter 5 to the evidence of the Crowther Report concerning the acceleration of biological development of the young, attributed, increasingly, to dietary changes - sometimes expressed in the blunt economic determinist terms of Feuerbach as: man is what he eats. The young are described as more influenced by and responsive to immediate and often controversial issues such as sexual relationships and politics in a society of rapid change littered with uncertainties concerning employment and the future in general. In contrast to the 1930's and '40's, the '80's may be seen as a state of social and technological flux. And the implications of individual physiological changes and rapid technological change generate repercussions in society and in education where, "...the mobile and fluctuating nature of new knowledge and occupations has led to the idea that the methods of learning are more useful than

the content of knowledge (although of course there can be no methods without a minimum of content) ...<sup>29</sup>

A student who learns how to learn may also be engaged (within the same process) in the exercise of autonomy, albeit within the framework of a compulsory education. Indeed, if a student does not enjoy that scope in learning activities which learning how to learn affords so that the educational practice is closed to his exercise of autonomy, the result may be that, "... the pupil's intellectual and moral activity remains heteronomous because bound to uninterrupted stimulation by the teacher, which can itself become unconscious or, on the other hand, freely accepted."<sup>30</sup>

Autonomy's links with learning how to learn have been characterised as reflecting a relationship of means to ends. In an analysis of curriculum aims and objectives, Sockett describes different types of relationships of means to ends, two of which he describes as:

"logically constitutive where the means are a part of the end, logically constitutive where the means are an instantiation of the end." <sup>31</sup>

The former statement Sockett illustrates by the affirmative, 'I will', in the marriage service. This is not merely a statement of intention to marry but, also, and more significantly, a logically necessary statement which is, as a statement in context, actually to marry someone; it is a "logical constituent" of marrying. The latter statement is illustrated by Sockett in the example of one who seeks political power. By becoming a Cabinet Minister he attains such power and has it by the nature of that Cabinet post which is, in itself, an instantiation of power. Dearden<sup>32</sup> amalgamates Sockett's two statements, above, in indicating that learning how to learn is

a "partial instantiation" of autonomy. Autonomy may, then, be both exercised and developed by the activity of learning how to learn in educational practices involving the individual in acquisition of procedural knowledge and understanding of the propositions he integrates into his own learning.

Learning how to learn as an instantiation of autonomy in educational practices is unlikely to be easily achieved given the nature of it as a particular disposition towards learning underlying the range of skills entailed. Indeed, presenting learners with a model of the student who has, fully, learned how to learn may even deter actual students since they may feel inadequate in comparison with such a model. Gibbs<sup>33</sup> considers that students can only be brought to change their perspectives of learning activities slowly because fundamental purposes are at stake in learning. Therefore, he maintains that the individual student should be helped to re-appraise his own processes of learning so as to attain a clearer realisation of purpose and practice for only when he achieves such a perspective will he be able to reconstruct for himself his approach to learning. Gibbs draws upon Kelly<sup>34</sup> and Rogers<sup>35</sup> for his methodology:

Without labouring the point, I believe people construct their own worlds. New constructions, new understandings and ways of seeing things, are based on existing constructions and ways of seeing things. I do not see how a person's understanding can significantly develop without involving their existing conceptions ..." 36

The learner's autonomy is recognised by this approach involving a student-centred reappraisal of self in connection with purpose and practices of learning. In learning how he can learn, the student also learns, "... how to cope with change that requires new meanings

to be made."<sup>37</sup> Therefore, for the adolescent undergoing physiological change in a rapidly changing society, learning how to learn provides a flexible means of learning and also an instantiation of his autonomy.

(4) Learning how, learning how to learn and teaching

Learning how and learning how to learn have implications for teaching in, apparently, requiring a different function from a teacher than may other kinds of learning. One perspective on teaching in connection with learning how to learn is that of C. R. Rogers to whom Gibbs partly attributes the approach to learning which he has developed. Rogers's approach is discussed in (a) below. Section (b) describes other aspects of teaching and learning how to learn.

(a) C. R. Rogers's Freedom to Learn

C. R. Rogers's in Freedom to Learn<sup>38</sup> and more recently in Freedom to Learn for the '80's<sup>39</sup> expresses a major concern for what he describes as learning how to learn in a rapidly changing society in which knowledge is also changing:

"The one thing I can be sure of is that the physics which I taught to the present day student will be outdated in a decade ... The so-called 'facts of history' depend very largely upon the current mood and temper of the culture." <sup>40</sup>

Sociology, chemistry, biology, genetics will, "almost certainly be modified by the time the student gets around to using the knowledge." As a result, "teaching and the imparting of knowledge" are pointless because of such rapid change. Rogers's solution to this "state of flux" is to enable the individual to note the changes, thus:

"The only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn; the man who has learned how to adapt to change; the man who has realised that no knowledge is secure, that only the process of seeking knowledge gives a basis for security." 41

It is, then, crucial to rely on, "process rather than upon static knowledge".

Although Rogers does not altogether clarify what he understands by "process" and "learning how to learn", it is clear that he envisages a mode of active and, in some respects, self-directed learning, in which personal relationships between the learners and those who enable that learning to occur are considered fundamentally important. Rogers considers that "teacher" is a term synonymous with "instructor" or, "impartor of knowledge and skill" and this role is inadequate for the function of teaching which Rogers is seeking; therefore he scraps his definition of teacher as instructor and adopts instead "facilitator of learning". The personal qualities of the facilitator are immeasurably important in learning how to learn. These qualities comprise: "realness" when the facilitator comes, "... into a direct personal encounter with the learner, meeting him on a person-to-person basis. It means that he is being himself, not denying himself."<sup>42</sup> The facilitator also "prizes" the learner - "... his feelings, his opinions, his person. It is a caring for the learner ..."<sup>43</sup> There must also be "trust" and "empathic understanding" between teacher-facilitator and learner-

"When the teacher has the ability to understand the student's reactions from the inside, has a sensitive awareness of the way the process of education and learning seems to the student, then again the likelihood of significant learning is increased." 44

In order to achieve successful relationships with students, Rogers considers it necessary for the teacher to be "genuine", "honest" and

"real" about himself. He must expose and express his real feelings to his students in a natural, open and genuine manner.

### Comment

Rogers wants to bring about learning - by learning how to learn. His intention in this respect is, therefore, the same as that of any teacher who might be undertaking direct, formal instruction of a class. However if Rogers regards knowledge as so subject to change as he appears to do, there would seem little incentive to learn  $x$  when  $x$  may have become  $y$  or  $z$  when the learner gets round to using it. As R. S. Peters points out, "... what is the point ... of equipping people to seek knowledge, if no value is to be accorded to its acquisition?"<sup>45</sup> Rogers indicates that given the rapid changes in knowledge (and his examples above include social sciences and sciences, if not the arts) instruction into knowledge is almost sure to be redundant within a short space of time. However, if the acquisition of knowledge involves seeking to distinguish propositions which are held to be true at some point in time, such propositions must be distinguishable from those which may be shown to be false. There would be no point in seeking knowledge at all if the difference between propositions remained completely relative; students, teachers, facilitators of learning, schools, colleges, universities would lose all relevance.<sup>46</sup>

However, Rogers does intend learning to occur, but this is only possible, he infers, by the active engagement of freeing the student by learning how to learn. But learning how to learn does entail learning how to learn  $x$  and both first and second order learning is intended to facilitate learning  $x$  (as discussed above). Therefore, at the point in time at which it is learned, knowledge and under-

standing, which are a part of the process of learning as well as the product of that learning, must be held to be true or no propositions could be held to be true and no process of learning, entailing and representing the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, would be worthwhile. (There is no attempt to analyse knowledge by Rogers, who is obviously concerned principally with methods but his examples describe school or higher education situations of learning in subjects forming part of a, not unusual, curriculum.)<sup>47</sup>

I believe Rogers is correct to stress the importance of first order process of learning and second order learning how to learn and he is correct also to emphasise a link with student autonomy in relation to such learning. However, it may well not be certain that all knowledge can be acquired by the methods he advocates since this is an empirical matter and Rogers attempts no systematic analysis of differences in types of knowledge. It also remains uncertain as to the extent to which learning how and learning how to learn change over time in differing circumstances of social, intellectual or technological kinds. Nevertheless, Rogers, I believe, is correct in emphasising the importance of learning how to learn, but his method of achieving this in students requires further consideration.

"Teaching", in Rogers's account is regarded by him as "instruction" which, in turn, he considers synonymous with "to impart knowledge and skill"; he considers, "Teaching is, for me, a relatively unimportant and vastly overvalued activity."<sup>48</sup> R. S. Peters is sceptical of these unexplored dictionary terms as meaningful with regard to the nature of teaching and points out that Rogers's books are themselves instructing. Furthermore, if students are actively

and self-directedly engaged in the process of learning, they may be placing themselves under instruction by watching video film or following computer programmed learning and these activities are applauded by Rogers:

"When learning is being facilitated, the student will frequently come across gaps in his knowledge, tools which he lacks, information which he needs to meet the problem he is confronting. Here the flexibility of programmed instruction is invaluable. A pupil who needs to know how to use a microscope can find a programme covering this knowledge." 49

The French student can, similarly, have "programmed instruction in conversational French"; algebra can be learned along the same lines. What is not clear is why instruction by an expert in a branch of knowledge to induct individuals or groups into these activities is taboo when programmed, machine-learning is sound because although Rogers's examples are of self-administered instruction, they are still instructional and someone has had to write these programmes. And although some learning may well be facilitated by the availability of programmed learning, to deny the usefulness of a living expert in what might be a one-to-one situation of instruction seems inconsistent.

Peters makes the point that instructing and imparting are regarded as in contrast to each other as Oakeshott maintains.<sup>50</sup> The information component of knowledge, in Oakeshott's analysis, requires instruction because facts are, "specific, impersonal and mostly to be taken on trust."<sup>51</sup> However, in order to be able to use information, judgement is required to apply the rule-like character of facts. This developing judgement in the learner is what can only be imparted by teacher to student. The imparting of judgement in the use of information is a subtle thing and Oakeshott writes



persuasively about the differences in the "style" of the imparter, "... not to detect a man's style ... is to have shut oneself off from the ability to convey any but the crudest meanings."<sup>52</sup> Imparting judgement may, indeed, be more important than the application of the rules of factual information because, as Oakeshott indicates, information may be applied without the implicit rules being known in some cases, so that in language or art the rules exist but they may not tell us how to do these things. Therefore, some aspects and areas of knowledge may not be accessible solely by student directed learning of first order, learning how or second order, learning how to learn kinds. Only the imparting of judgement in use of information may ultimately lead to knowledge and understanding in some areas of learning.

This imparting of judgement in the use of information can only be accomplished "obliquely", in Oakeshott's description. The style of the imparter and the, virtually, empathic awareness between learner and imparter is crucial in conveying judgement. The learner will only learn how to develop the skills and capacity for judgement when he has learned, "... to listen for them and to recognise them in the conduct and utterances of others."<sup>53</sup> The example of the thought, word and deed of the teacher as imparter of judgement is an intrinsic part of the relationship between teacher and student.

It is an empirical matter to determine whether the imparter function of Oakeshott's teacher could operate without many of the personal qualities of the facilitator of learning in evidence. Those personal qualities referred to above - realness, being himself with his students, prizing, trusting, having empathic understanding with them should be part of a facilitator-learner relationship and without these qualities, it may be impossible for that imparting of

judgement of which Oakeshott writes, to occur. It is true that Rogers has introduced a new name, facilitator of learning, but the complementary features of Oakeshott's awareness of the human qualities flowing when judgement in using knowledge is imparted by example are also apparent in the facilitator-learner relationship. Although Rogers may see the facilitator in a less active role in the learning relationship to that of Oakeshott's teacher-imparter (and this is by no means certain as the Barkham example below suggests) both give a human context for learning in which care, warmth and genuine respect flow.

Peters is critical of Rogers's view that the relationship between facilitator and learner should be a personal one because if the facilitator views the relationship as one which will facilitate learning, it ceases to be a personal relationship and becomes a role relationship as any teacher-student relationship would, in some measure, be. Rogers fails to grasp that:

"... being a facilitator of learning is just as much a role relationship as instructing and that what makes an action a performance of a role is the aspect under which it is viewed by the agent." 54

Undoubtedly the facilitator occupies a very positive role in the learning situation in Rogers's view. He certainly should not abandon his students to get on with their learning without him. Rogers describes Barkham's attempt at facilitating learning how to learn in a university science course.<sup>55</sup> This facilitator allowed a group of students a high degree of self-directed learning and left the group to make decisions without his leadership. One student duly took over the leader's role. Rogers criticises Barkham because he did not regard the course as his own as well as his students'

course. And Rogers recollects standing, metaphorically, aside in planning a course himself - with disappointing results; "... the error was made out of an excess of zeal in trusting others. What I failed to do was to trust myself to be a useful member of the group. Thus I cheated them of what I might have contributed."<sup>56</sup> Evidently a facilitator can have too much trust in his students' powers of, self-directedly, learning how to learn and Rogers sees the need for group leadership skills in the facilitator. Perhaps had a teacher taught (by the most appropriate methods) the curriculum processes of first order learning how, coupled with second order learning how to learn, the students might have fared much better. In Rogers's example, although he maintains that role relationships are misguided and personal relationships must exist between facilitator and learners, it does appear from the above example that the teacher involved did not exercise his role of facilitator - as group leader, effectively enough.

However, roles may only be of significance when the powers, duties and responsibilities of the role are exercised; these can only be exercised by a person and the manner and "style" in which they are exercised are measures of that person. Those who seek teaching posts in schools are interviewed by men and women who attempt to select the best fit of person to role - an immensely difficult task given the nature of the work involved. However, if the person and the role do not complement each other making the fit of person to role incompatible, the job is unlikely to be done well. Rogers stresses the vital importance of the personal qualities of the facilitator of learning. He must have genuine concern and regard for the learner and he must express care, trust and esteem in word and deed. No person is likely to be able to act out a role

expressing such care indefinitely; person and role must be as compatible as nature allows. And Peters agrees that the teacher-facilitator should, "... from time to time, just respond to his pupils as fellow human beings. This response is something that is valuable in its own right."<sup>57</sup>

Rogers describes the methods of enabling students to learn how to learn out of the facilitator-student relationship. These methods involve: organisation of resources for student use, student contracts, small group work, simulation, self-assessment and evaluation by students. And I would agree that much of this has a place in learning how to learn. However, a great deal of empirical evidence would be required to show that this approach might serve all requirements of learning given the great breadth of what could, and should be learned - which encompasses moral values as well as knowledge and understanding in general.

Essentially, it requires the judgement of the teacher to determine the most suitable approach to fit the circumstances of particular learning in particular intellectual and social contexts. Learning how to learn has a significant place, but it may well not be a cure-all! And as argued in Chapters 4 and 6 on authority and paternalism, the development of personal autonomy need not be considered incompatible with either of the concepts. However, throughout this thesis it has been maintained that the exercise and development of the right dispositions in the young are crucial to autonomy and Rogers's methods may, in some circumstances, prove effective in the development of these dispositions.

(b) Other considerations concerning learning how to learn and teaching

Chapter 9, following, illustrates the opportunity for the exercise of autonomy in classrooms. But external constraints in learning situations were outlined in Chapter 5 and only very limited possibilities for negative freedom in classrooms seem possible. However, learning how to learn should result in a greater competence in the learner to control his learning and although it is not my intention to undertake an excursus into teaching in general, some implications and qualifications for teaching in connection with learning how to learn, aside from the views of C. R. Rogers, are considered below.

Teaching may be described as task or achievement, following Ryle's distinction between task and achievement verbs.<sup>58</sup> In the task sense, teaching may be considered to have occurred when an activity is engaged in and an effort will be made to get A to learn x, but this task may fail for reasons, perhaps, beyond the control of the one attempting the teaching. Furthermore, A may learn y in spite of someone's efforts to teach him x. Thus reading what an author has written may teach x to A, although the efforts and ingenuity of A's class teacher may fail.

In the achievement sense, teaching requires that the teacher has an outcome of his teaching in mind before he undertakes the task: "A task is only understood by an agent in terms of what could count as a successful upshot for him."<sup>59</sup> Therefore, trying to teach x to A is not necessarily the same as to teach x to A in that an attempt to teach may fail in outcome. Similarly, by saying that, "I was selling cars all day but no one was buying them", I really mean, "I was trying to sell cars ... etc."<sup>60</sup>

Freeman argues for teaching to be regarded as a 'perficiency' (after J. L. Austin) since perficiency verbs may be used indicating intention or non-intention in the sense that:

"'By doing P, A was x-ing B' where B is a person, x is the perficient verb (as distinguished from an activity verb) and some condition in B is the perficient outcome. The criterion for judging the truth or falsity of a perficiency claim is whether or not the outcome implied in B has been brought about through A's action. Thus unlike actions, activities and performances, perficiencies may be intentional or unintentional." 61

It may be in this perficiency sense that teaching's relationship to learning how to learn must be regarded since the teacher will, apparently, have less control of student learning outcomes than he might have in other kinds of teaching. Nevertheless, I would agree that there should be the strongest intentions concerning learning outcomes on the teacher's part because they will involve first order learning how, second order learning how to learn and the knowledge and understanding entailed. The learning situation will involve much more than one of direct instruction alone. Rogers, himself, points out the danger of the teacher withdrawing from the learning situation (in the example of Barkham's science group). However, some qualifications on Rogers's enthusiasm are required.

In learning how to learn x, the student will be actively engaged in learning processes and be, himself, a practitioner of those processes; he may well, then, be interested and motivated to learn because he is actively committed. However, it may also be unlikely that any curriculum framework of knowledge in the secondary school will provide, in all circumstances, matter of intrinsic or instrumental interest to all. And it may be considered essential during at least some of the earlier years of secondary

education for a student's experience to be expanded by breadth of knowledge; a teacher's authority, control and direction are likely to be required to ensure this breadth of experience is able to help inform the student's later personal autonomy as an adult.

Furthermore, although students should learn more about using sources of information and also develop a wide range of transferable skills, understanding is the ultimate intention arising from the knowledge considered. Understanding required abilities of a subtle kind such as good judgement (referred to in Oakeshott's views above), criticism in handling information and awareness of the limits and implications of the medium employed. In order to facilitate understanding, the teacher may well need to reserve judgement and seek for an impartial style in his approach to questions of value in order that his students develop confidence to draw their own conclusions from the evidence and develop their critical faculties. He should then be an expert in a body of knowledge and be up-dated in his own research ensuring that students are aware that learning has its own disciplines of mind and that the acquisition of knowledge and understanding requires a mastery of these.

Learning with peers in small groups may be more apparent in learning how to learn situations, but it is also virtually certain that direct instruction and explanation will retain a function in the teacher's repertoire - dependent upon a topic's requirements.

Essentially, the teacher committed to learning how to learn wants students to develop a "deep" approach and a keen sense of purpose in their learning. Growing maturity of judgement and powers of criticism should arise and should be nurtured by him as his students involve themselves in processes of learning. Empirical investigation might find that left too much to themselves in learning

how to learn, the process may become monotonous for them in a never ending information search without the achievement of that depth of understanding which comprises the point of learning how to learn. The teacher, then, must give his students scope to learn and encourage them to draw conclusions with good judgement so that they become less dependent in learning upon the "authoritative utterance", and develop a "realisation that there is appropriate evidence and argument independent of the erstwhile authority, and which, indeed, can be turned against that authority."<sup>62</sup>



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<u>CHAPTER 9</u>	<u>A DEWEY PERSPECTIVE ON AUTONOMY THROUGH EDUCATION</u>	
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## Introduction

In the preceding two chapters it is argued that to engage in the kinds of practice there described involves the individual learner in a kind of practical education. One end of such direct individual engagement in these practices is the exercise of personal autonomy and development of that autonomy towards its greater expression in adulthood and practical life in general. In order for autonomy to be exercised in the learning process, an active, personal engagement in the practices described was argued to be an imperative, thereby according the learner a significant and even directing influence upon the learning which occurs. It may then seem that the exercise of autonomy by the individual learner leads to a "progressive" or child-centred perspective in education.

However, engagement in practices in which learner autonomy is exercised can be very different from the emphasis sometimes given to a learner's negative freedom in the classroom attributed to a child-centred perspective and criticised in Chapter 5. Of child-centred theorists, Dewey presents a perspective upon child-centredness only with considerable reservations concerning both knowledge, what is to be learned and the nature of the teaching to be employed. Dewey's emphasis upon the practical in education also, at least partly, accords with the emphasis upon the practices of education outlined in the previous two chapters. However, the nature of practice described there as practices embracing the exercise of autonomy in learning is broader than the emphasis upon the practical in Dewey where problem-solving on a scientific model predominates and other practices seem to be largely omitted such as literature and those practices which generally involve aesthetic considerations.<sup>1</sup>

This concluding chapter recognises the importance of knowledge but also aims to illustrate a via media of educational practice between a child-centredness in which the child figures as the agent of his own learning and a largely directed activity of education or training in which the individual is denied the exercise of autonomy and receives information from teacher or instructor leaving the learner a non-participant in those practices which comprise that education. Dewey presents some insights into a via media in which learner autonomy is exercised within educational practices but only within particular limits; Dewey resisted, "... external direction and imposition", but insisted on the importance of external approval and encouragement. He thus achieved some kind of reconciliation between the progressive and traditional views of teaching."<sup>2</sup>

Dearden's views on child-centred aims are shown largely in contrast to Dewey's in what follows.

The sections of this chapter comprise:

- (1) Dewey, Dearden and aims;
- (2) Process and content in learning practices;
- (3) Autonomy in the classroom.

(1) Dewey, Dearden and aims

To aim at a target literally involves a marksman sighting his weapon at a target, preparing that weapon to discharge in order to hit the target when the bullet is fired. The careful aim of the marksman should enable the process of firing to ensure the bullet hits the target accurately. But hitting the target is only likely if the process of firing is smoothly and expertly accomplished and a true aim established. And circumstances may well influence the end result: the marksman may be myopic; his hands may tremble at the prospect of splitting the apple; wind direction may affect the flight etc. with the result that however well sighted the original aim, the target is missed. Aim, process and end result require the closest continuity if the aim is to be accomplished.

In Dewey's view, aims in education may be meaningless because of the time lapse between establishing an aim and achieving the end. Means to the end and the end itself must be complementary and closely aligned if the aim is to be true:

"Given an activity having a time span and cumulative growth within the time succession, an aim means foresight in advance of the end or possible termination ... it is nonsense to talk about the aim of education - or any other undertaking where conditions do not permit of foresight of results, and do not stimulate a person to look ahead to see what the outcome of a given activity is to be." 3

Dewey's reference to foresight includes, "... careful observation of the given conditions to see what are the means available for reaching the end...", a proper order in the application of means and a choice of alternatives.<sup>4</sup> This emphasis upon a limited time span from aim to end with a proper sequence determining the means in the closest association with aims and ends is of educational significance.



Dewey disparages a distancing of means and ends so that, in his view, an aim is no more than a "... mere tentative sketch"; it cannot be externally applied and must grow out of actual, lived situations. The external imposition of an aim leaves it "fixed" with the means for its accomplishment regarded as no better than "unavoidable", a "necessary evil".

To hold personal autonomy (about which Dewey says virtually nothing directly) as an end of the educational process when learner autonomy is removed from the learning situation may be an aim unrealistic in practice. Only exercise of autonomy as part of the means of that situation by individual engagement in the practices involved may achieve the aim of developing autonomy in the learner. If autonomy is distanced from its exercise altogether there seems little likelihood of it ever gaining psychological reality in the individual.

However, aims in child-centred education are usually discussed in relation to young children (Dewey's chief, but not exclusive focus of interest) although Dearden and Wilson, from different viewpoints, have considered the extension of child-centred curricular practice into the secondary school age range.<sup>5</sup> Young children are a considerable distance in time from adulthood and, therefore, Dewey's reservations about the external imposition of aims by adults who express a model of adult life to which children should be made to conform, seem more justifiable. And his reservations about the feasibility of having foresight necessary to realise long-term aims distanced from means and ends may carry greater conviction when young persons are involved.

Nevertheless, Dewey, at least implicitly, does seem to have in mind some kind of long-term aim within the educational process. He

is directly concerned to avoid teaching which handles information in a way remote from the experience of the child but he is equally certain that a framework of "subject matter" should be constructed by the adult teacher for, "... The problem of teaching is to keep the experience of the student moving in the direction of what the expert already knows."<sup>6</sup> The perspective of the informed and broadly educated adult is what Dewey wants the child to acquire and the, "... larger range of perception of the adult is of great value in observing the abilities and weaknesses of the young."<sup>7</sup> A concept of a particular kind of adulthood appears to be held by Dewey. Since he is concerned for the child to expand his experience from the point he has reached by, to some extent, allowing him choice in his own learning, the result of enlarging his experience will culminate in adulthood where breadth of knowledge from his education should enable him to make choices of major significance to his life as a whole. Dewey seems, implicitly, to anticipate personal autonomy in the adult resulting from the educational process which he advocates, therefore.

However, he has considerable reservations about too rapid progress to force adult thinking and concepts in children before their experience enables them to understand these because:

"...it is one thing to use adult accomplishments as a context in which to place and survey the doings of childhood and youth; it is quite another to set them up as a fixed aim without regard to the concrete activities of those educated." <sup>8</sup>

But the activities of children within education must be directed by aims and purposes and Dewey is concerned to avoid unthinking, aimless activity because humans lack instinct for their activities unlike other creatures: "It is equally fatal to an aim to permit capricious

or discontinuous action in the name of spontaneous self-expression."<sup>9</sup> Foresight of the end, of hitting the target, in short-term aims is crucial to intelligent activity in the education of children, therefore. And Dewey writes disapprovingly of, "... cases in which children are surrounded with objects and materials and then left entirely to themselves."<sup>10</sup> He regards this as simply stupid.

Dewey, then, disapproves as strongly as Dearden of such practices described by the latter as an abstractionist model of discovery learning where children are left to explore materials which the teacher leaves available, such as Cuisenaire rods or Dienes blocks, on the assumption that the child will, somehow, abstract the concepts without further help using only the apparatus. Indeed, particularly in a later work, Experience and Education, Dewey roundly condemns teachers and schools which do not give purpose to the process of learning and which:

"... tend to make little or nothing of organised subject matter of study; to proceed as if any form of direction or guidance by adults were an invasion of individual freedom, and as if the idea that education should be concerned with the present and future meant that acquaintance with the past has little or no role to play in education." <sup>11</sup>

A breadth of awareness of the past cultural achievements of society is an important part of the purposes of education in the development of children who are future adults, although, as Dewey stipulates, they should not be treated as adults when they are still children. The selection of what experiences are desirable for the child is made by the adult on the child's behalf, in Dewey's view, because, "... The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative ... For some experiences are mis-educative."<sup>12</sup>

Concern for the long-term future of the child is paramount here. Any experience which arrests or distorts future experience making for "callousness", lack of sensitivity, automatic unthinking responses tending to reduce the individual's control over his own life and future choices, is to be avoided. And, as argued in Chapter 6, experience which may reduce future capacity for the exercise of personal autonomy by the adult should be proscribed by strong paternalist intervention in the interest of preserving the individual's future autonomy. Wilson also echoes the concern for assessing the merits of various kinds of experience for the child: "... a teacher who stands back and just allows children to pursue whatever interests come into their heads is practising ... a travesty of child-centredness."<sup>13</sup>

Dewey holds fast to aims and purposes - "an end view" of the process of learning - and he regards the child's wants, "impulse" and "desire" as matters to be held in check by adult foresight because if desire in the child is very strong it will remove the perspective of what consequences may follow: "The crucial educational problem is that of procuring the postponement of immediate action upon desire until observation and judgement have intervened."<sup>14</sup> Dewey places great importance upon the function of the teacher to determine that the purpose of the activity is suitable to the experience of his pupils; the teacher initiates purpose and activity because, "... the suggestion upon which pupils act must in any case come from somewhere. It is impossible to understand why a suggestion from one who has a larger experience and a wider horizon should not be at least as valid as a suggestion coming from some more or less accidental source."<sup>15</sup> The teacher must use the child's experience and develop from it more organised and enlarged perspectives because,

in Dewey's account, the teacher is the significant determiner of the direction of the child's learning activity and the teacher's adult perspective and breadth of knowledge enable him to form the concept of what the child should become. This concept must be that of the future adult chooser, the status which Dewey, implicitly, attributes to the teacher who acts on the child's behalf. It is the teacher who is, "... concerned to have a long look ahead ... obliged to see his present work in terms of what it accomplishes, or fails to accomplish, for a future whose objects are linked with those of the present."<sup>16</sup>

Given, then, Dewey's misgivings about disorganised, unintelligent activity and his emphasis upon the importance of using the teacher's longer-term perspective, authority and experience in ensuring both purpose in classroom learning and that the child's learning moves in the direction of what the expert knows, personal autonomy should be both a short-term and long-term aim of education and central to the teacher's perspective. In Dewey's account, the teacher is not only the stage-manager of his pupils' learning; he is more a producer, or, on occasions, a director of learning. A measure of autonomy is allowed the pupil in pursuit of learning and even, in some measure, in the choice of activity dependent upon the age of the child or young person. But the teacher's wider perspective and breadth of knowledge of the practices in which both he and the learner are involved are part of what the teacher represents to the learner and the teacher's task is to involve the learner in sharing his wider perspective. The nearer to adulthood the young person moves, the closer he ought to be to sharing the teacher's perspective in the practices in which both engage.

The methods of learning which Dewey advocates centre on a process model of scientific inquiry rooted in problem solving leading to research, hypothesis formation, testing the hypothesis and so on. The child is seen as the centre of the process of learning, as an active participant rather than as a passive recipient of a teacher's restatement of other conclusions or results. Dewey does not adhere solely to this scientific model (as indicated below) but he does seek to change the emphasis from the use of rote learning and drill in early twentieth century American schools to more intelligent, thinking and active participation in class practices. He wants to break from sole dependence upon, "... intellectual models and ideals that arose centuries before scientific method was developed."<sup>17</sup> No problem-solver can be intellectually passive!

Critics of child-centred education may agree with Dewey in his condemnation of a too rigid reliance upon an instructional model of teaching children. Such a model is inflexible and inappropriate if it is the sole method of teaching employed. And, as indicated above, Dewey also condemns lack of teacher direction in classroom practices and he regards this as an abuse of child-centred education.

Dearden expresses scepticism about aims of child-centredness aside from its methods which are so closely related to those aims which he terms, "... relational rather than prescriptive of content to be learned."<sup>18</sup> He groups relational aims under: (i) intrinsic interest, (ii) self-expression, and, (iii) autonomy and considers these aims to be "very important". However, he has reservations because, "... such relational, or attitudinal, aims leave undeclared the directions in which they will be pursued."<sup>19</sup>

A significant consideration in the development and exercise of personal autonomy (argued in Chapters 3 and 4) is that of the development of appropriate dispositions in the young informing the nature of personhood within the concept of personal autonomy; these dispositions sit well with the relational, or attitudinal aims of child-centredness referred to by Dearden. But Dearden is also concerned about a lack of direction within relational aims for he considers essential a curricular framework through which, for example, an intellectual education (revealing the forms of understanding described by Hirst) may be realised by pupil learners. Therefore, although a child-centred process of learning expressing relational aims is suitable, in Dearden's view, for the "youngest children", for older primary school pupils and secondary school pupils it is less suitable. Breadth and balance of knowledge through the medium of forms of understanding is considered increasingly necessary to achieve the long-term aim of enabling the individual as he attains adulthood to be able to exercise rational autonomy which Dearden assumes has, somehow, developed through the individual's growing experience across the forms of understanding.

However, Dearden's concern that child-centredness has aims which leave "undeclared the directions" of breadth in knowledge leading to adult exercise of autonomy is partly met by Dewey's urgency to move the student's experience "in the direction of what the expert already knows". There is direction in child-centredness, in Dewey's account, apart from any reference to relational aims. The teacher's directing influence does not leave the child's learning as a random enterprise. Dewey (and, latterly, also the Plowden Report) refer to the school curriculum in terms of conventional subject titles. And although Dewey is not prescriptive of curricular breadth, he has

direction in view. A more prescriptive statement of what knowledge a curriculum should cover may be inappropriate because children differ markedly in their capacity to learn. Although teachers should want children to go as far as they can in learning within a curriculum, children's intellectual development will vary and initiation into, for example, the forms of understanding described by Hirst, may provide little more guidance than to avoid undue specialisation in the curriculum. The minimum levels of thought and attainment may not be explicitly stated for all because whatever the stated minimum, some are most unlikely to attain it and some will far exceed it.

Dearden's view that in child-centred education aims are relational and inadequate reference is made to the knowledge content of a suitable curriculum leads him to conclude that the Hirstian forms of understanding should be that content comprising: "... an initiation, to whatever degree time and individual ability allow, into a selection of the main forms of knowledge or understanding which have historically developed."<sup>20</sup> But the content of the forms is, in Dearden's view, a means to the achievement of, at least, one of the relational aims which he regards as "very important" - that of autonomy. However, this autonomy is the end of the process of initiation into the forms; Dearden holds that the forms are most significant in serving this long term aim which is the individual's ability to exercise autonomy as an adult when his formal education is completed. The development of autonomy is to be distinguished from its exercise, in his opinion, when it is held as an educational aim. Autonomy is distanced from day to day educational practice, therefore, and becomes a very slippery, dimly discernable long term aim with the result that Dewey's reservations about long term aims



in education seem borne out by Dearden's difficulty in relating the means (forms of understanding) to the end (autonomy) in the educational process. Dearden accepts the difficulty of pinning down autonomy's development and points out that it is like happiness: "... that you do not achieve it by making it your primary objective. A decentred concern for appropriate standards would be the primary point. But the collateral effect on the person himself would be no less important for being indirect."<sup>21</sup> Even if this assertion of Dearden's is correct, the development of autonomy by the means Dearden advocates (and the maintenance of it as a meaningful educational aim) seems to raise a major difficulty because it evidently, on this account, cannot influence educational practice to the direct end of achieving it. Is it certain, or even likely, that one who successfully acquires knowledge and understanding within the forms will be autonomous at some, much later point in time? Limits of time, individual abilities and aptitudes are sure to influence initiation into learning within the forms and although proceeding some considerable way into the forms and fields of knowledge may increase the likelihood of an individual's potential for autonomy since he should be more informed in the choices he makes, there can be no surety. Knowledge and autonomy's development may be related, but Dearden cannot say just how.

In order to develop autonomy directly it seems more likely that it should be a short term aim infusing and influencing practice in day to day activities in classrooms. To accept the distancing of autonomy from its means of development (suggested by Dearden to be learning within the forms of understanding) seems a very doubtful procedure. The exercise (within limits) of some measure of

autonomy by pupils in schools seems the only sure way to both its development and its exercise in a fuller form later by the adult.

Both Dewey and Dearden would agree that knowledge is of major importance to the individual as its acquisition is an initiation into the culture of the individual's society, "... a selection from that culture made according to the best judgments available ought surely to complement child-centred 'relational' aims. We might even say that the latter can be realized only through the former."<sup>22</sup>

Dewey, while agreeing on the need to initiate the child into his society's culture, might, I venture to suggest, hold that the connection between knowledge and the relational aim of autonomy should be closer than Dearden advocates because if autonomy is an aim distanced from its means of achievement (which Dearden takes to be an intellectual education involving forms of understanding) it may not develop at all. Autonomy requires expression within the educational means if it is to be made a real aim of education. The learner's direct engagement in practices within education, as described in the previous two chapters, may be one way to realise autonomy both as a short and long term aim in education.

## (2) Process and content in learning practices

Dearden takes from Plowden the key axiom of a child-centred view of education to be, "start from the child":

"Rather than starting from the convenience of the adult world, or from logically ordered subject requirements, or from the future needs of society (or indeed of the child), we should 'start from the child'." <sup>23</sup>

The alternatives to starting from the child offered here seem inappropriate whatever process of learning is envisaged. The

"convenience of the adult world" is likely only to have meaning for a child whose understanding of the adult world is sufficient for the acquisition of such meaning and, therefore, the age of the child or young person is critically important in ensuring his experience approximates to that of adults. "Logically ordered subject requirements" may also prove an inappropriate starting point if adopted without respect to a child's abilities or aptitudes. "The future needs of society" or of the individual are also likely to be very difficult or impossible to define in a world of rapid change.

However, to start from recognition of the child as an individual person, although young, immature, uninformed, lacking critical capacities, downright naughty at times - yet quite individual and different from all other individuals - has perhaps to be the key claim in a democratic society prizing the individual. But it is only the starting point; the journey which follows is long and may be hazardous. Much knowledge, understanding and skills will be required if the journey is to be a rewarding experience resulting in adult autonomy. To "start from the child" as a maxim does not supply the route to be followed because one of the few certainties in the situation is that childhood is transient and the starting point rapidly vanishes from view as parents and teachers are doubtless well aware. And to embark upon a long journey across unfamiliar terrain without guide, knowledge or skills is less than prudent!

After the "start", Plowden considers that, "... the child is the agent of his own learning."<sup>24</sup> Unless a child actively lends his mind to the acquisition of knowledge to reach understanding he is unlikely to learn since teaching may be undertaken but a pupil may not learn what the teacher intends.<sup>25</sup> The child will, thus, remain the agent of his own learning whatever methods of teaching are

operative. Plowden considers that the child ought not to be regarded as a means to some external end, but as an agent he should control his learning and exercise some measure of personal autonomy.

The Plowden Report provides a very different perspective of the process of learning in a child-centred tradition from that of Dewey who, as indicated above, has little regard for a progressivism which left the child to learn with little or no adult guidance. Froebel is more the inspiration for Plowden's much used phrases which circumscribe the teacher's role. "Set lessons" are, generally, to be avoided, the "right environment" is to be selected, enquiry should lead to "useful discovery", the teacher should "lead from behind" and "collaborate with children". The teacher is to teach by example and, "... support apathetic children until they gain a momentum of their own. They must challenge and inspire children who are too readily satisfied."<sup>26</sup> He is, further, expected to be, "... a good man and to influence children more by what he is than by what he knows or by his methods."<sup>27</sup>

The Froebel ideal is alive in the Plowden Report and the child is expected to grow in harmony with coherent, natural laws so like the seed corn, a kernal, his life will unfold spontaneously according to natural growth for within the child is, "...the whole man and the whole life of humanity."<sup>28</sup> Froebel is concerned to release the individual child to natural growth and deprecates adult interventions:

"We give room and time to young plants and animals, well knowing that then they will develop and grow according to the laws inherent in them. We do not interfere because we know that this would disturb their healthy development. But the young child is treated as wax or clay which can be moulded into any form." <sup>29</sup>

The child should guide the educator who must start from him alone because, "The child sees very clearly whether the biddings of teacher

or parent are personal and arbitrary, or are the expressions of necessary and universal law. In this neither child, boy, nor youth easily errs."<sup>30</sup>

It may be that young children are perceptive, particularly with respect to adults they know well and they may have a well attuned moral sense of fairness from an early age, for example. But the natural sense which Froebel attributes to children, their natural growth, their essential goodness must be, empirically, doubtful as a universal claim for children. Children live in a social world (as Dewey is well aware) and Froebel's natural imagery of trees and plants is an uneasy parallel to situations of human interaction for even in the kindergarten, where Froebel's picture of the child may have greatest clarity, an adult referee may need to rule on children's selfish impulses. The law of nature for man and animals can be "red in tooth and claw" showing a very different face from the tradition of romanticism out of which Froebel's view of the child seems to be drawn.

The child, in Froebel's view, is virtually infallible, and he should determine the nature of school activities because, "... a clear realization of the true nature of the school makes it evident that the subject in which a boy needs instruction is also that about which he should receive instruction. Otherwise, instruction and learning is an idle game incapable of entering into the spiritual life."<sup>31</sup> The child's felt needs seem to determine school activities, therefore.

However, even Froebel assigns a role to parents and teachers as initiators of learning which appears to limit the determining force of the child's felt needs for: "The first and most important point in the education of children is to lead them early to think."<sup>32</sup>

The adult should encourage the child to be active in his learning, to think for himself and not to be only an acceptor of adult conclusions. Froebel describes the learning situation thus:

"A child finds a piece of chalk or rubble. He tries its nature by rubbing it on a board, and finds that it makes coloured marks. Delighted with this new discovery, he soon covers the whole surface of the board. Soon his delight extends from the colour to the shapes of the lines he has made - straight, winding and curved. Attention to these leads him to notice the outlines of surrounding objects. The head is seen as a circle; then a circular line is drawn to represent the head, and a lengthened circle joined on to it to represent the body; arms and legs are seen as lines, straight or broken, and by such lines are represented ..."33

In this example, the child's interest is taken up by the teacher who leads the child on towards new perspectives. It is the teacher (although unnamed) who draws the child's "attention" to the nature of lines and enables the child to perceive the meaningful shapes from these lines. This activity may, presumably, extend as long as the child's interest lasts and may, then, be contrasted with enforced instruction to the child by the adult.

However, even with very young children to whom Froebel refers in the above quotation, it may well be necessary for the teacher to intervene actively in the operation of a child's personal interests to ensure that he or she becomes habituated into the appropriate dispositions to act in moral and socially acceptable ways. The child will need to acquire such dispositions before his reasoning powers have greatly matured; teacher and parent must, therefore, habituate the child into cultivation of these dispositions. (The supporting argument for the inculcation of good habits and appropriate dispositions is put, chiefly, in chapters 3 and 4.)

Furthermore, the limits upon the child's exercise of his felt needs and interests are very considerable in the process of

learning; regulatory, custodial and disciplinary constraints in learning are considered in Chapter 5. Within formal learning situations, particularly, authority must limit the personal interests of the child because what he learns will largely be rule-governed:

"... to participate in rule-governed activities is, in a certain way, to accept authority. For to participate in such an activity is to accept that there is a right and wrong way of doing things, and the decision as to what is right and wrong in a given case can never depend completely on one's own caprice." 34

Language, for example, is a rule-governed activity and unilateral change in the rules is likely to lead only to chaos. Therefore, "...A relation of authority ... is an indirect relation between x and y involving as an intermediary the established way of performing the activity on which x and y are engaged."<sup>35</sup> Thus, to some extent, the relationship of teacher to pupil is mediated by the authority of the rules inherent in the activity; this situation also enables the teacher to learn within the activity as well as the pupil if the activity of learning develops sufficient intellectual scope. The child cannot exercise control, or even a measure of limited autonomy, in the learning activity without the acquisition of some awareness of the rules implicit in the activity. And to accept the authority of the rules in rule-governed activities is a prerequisite in enabling the person to exercise choice; he must enter, in some measure, into that knowledge and understanding and into those "modes of social life" (as Winch describes them) so that he achieves a position to exercise choice because, "A child is obviously not in a position to choose to do this or that until he has learned how to do this or that."<sup>36</sup>

A great deal of the knowledge acquired by children is likely to be acquired on the basis of testimony. Such knowledge is acquired from

other persons, particularly teachers and parents, as beliefs and as a child learns a language he identifies the sounds emitted by others as meaningful and accepts them as true. Later, as the child develops and gains a greater awareness of the rules of evidence, one is, "... in a position to achieve a measure of cognitive autonomy by using these acquisitions to criticise the authorities who present me with beliefs for acceptance."<sup>37</sup> However, this skill of criticism is a sophisticated one and a great deal of knowledge must, for the young, be accepted on trust or it is just not accessible at all and by teacher guidance, a child may expand his learning horizons and gain greater opportunity to exercise autonomy himself. When an individual's critical powers develop as he gains experience, autonomy becomes possible:

"Cognitive autonomy is achieved when the capacity for the criticism of authorities and of personally-formed beliefs ... has become an operative skill. Although the basic instruments of criticism are in fact causally dependent upon authority, since we do not invent our observation - language and logic for ourselves, they are not dependent for their acceptability on the particular credentials of the source from which they are acquired. Thus cognitive autonomy is genuine, despite an appearance of circularity." <sup>38</sup>

Within a system of communication, in Quinton's view above, the individual can still attain cognitive autonomy. And for the child or young person, growing critical powers enable him to test and assess those authorities to which he turns for knowledge.

Nevertheless, at first, the young person is highly dependent upon the adults about him and must simply accept their authority and guidance because he lacks any alternative. As he develops in experience he may come to perceive the source of his beliefs in others and develop a critical faculty with which to judge those whom he has accepted hitherto as authorities.



The teacher's function in the development of the individual's critical powers with which to assess authorities is of particular importance as Dewey is well aware. As the person in day to day communication with the child or young person and having authority as described in Chapter 4, the teacher, in particular, can enhance the individual's potential for autonomy by encouraging a considered criticism towards the content of learning. Dewey's concern to base education upon personal experience does not remove the influence of the teacher and, indeed, increases the effect, because, "... basing education upon personal experience may mean more multiplied and more intimate contacts between the mature and immature... and consequently more rather than less guidance ..."<sup>39</sup> But within this sphere of teacher guidance, the teacher should regard the child's development as a critical, autonomous thinker as of great importance to his intellectual progress because without active encouragement from the one in authority there seems little reason why critical thought should develop. Recent concern is expressed by H.M. Inspectorate that in primary schools children were not, "...learning to follow a sustained discussion and contribute appropriately and in fewer still were the children taught to follow the line of an argument."<sup>40</sup> The relative absence of such situations reduces the opportunities for critical thinking in children. Favourable pupil-teacher ratios may be considered essential for such activities and a teacher may choose to avoid situations in which pupils are encouraged to think critically, "... out of his fear, for example, that he may be unable to cope with a class in which the critical spirit has been aroused."<sup>41</sup>

A disposition embracing a critical frame of mind is essential if authority is to be regarded as rational. The give and take of critical discussion is a significant aid to the development of critical faculties in the young:

"The educator's problem is to break down the tendency to suppose that what is established by authority must be either accepted in toto or else merely evaded - a tendency to which, very probably, the child's early training will have inclined him. Once the teacher has done that, once he has aroused a critical attitude to any authority, he has made a major step forward." <sup>42</sup>

The capacity to consider authority and its accompanying rules, critically, reflectively and independently is to be achieved, in Passmore's view, by Dewey's approach to classroom activities which involve the substitution of problems and problem-solving for other activities. If problem situations are presented to pupils for resolution and it is unclear which rule to apply, more is required of the pupil learner than if he is only required to practise the application of a particular rule known in advance. Problems may be either those to which the teacher knows the answer but the pupil does not and those to which neither pupil nor teacher know the answer: "But the teacher should certainly place emphasis, as far as he can, on problems to which the answer is not known, or is a matter of controversy - only in that way can he prepare his pupils for the future."<sup>43</sup>

The ability to think critically has close affinity to the use of imagination. But imagination should not be mere fantasy; it requires care, precision and judgement. However, a disciplined use of the imagination is argued by Passmore to be complementary to critical thought in problem solving and he condemns those who, "... have condemned application, conscientiousness, carefulness, as obstacles to imaginativeness whereas in fact they are characteristics of which the imaginative person has particular need if he is not to collapse into fantasy."<sup>44</sup>

Critical imaginativeness should characterise the learner's activity but such a process can only operate upon problems confronting the learner. Critical thinking cannot operate in an intellectual vacuum but could be applied to those worthwhile practices in education considered in Chapters 7 and 8. The learner must actively engage in those practices using his critical imagination in searching for solutions or partial solutions to the issues confronting him. Knowledge and understanding result from that critical engagement in practices.

Dearden presents a classic literary example of the elimination of critical imagination from learning in a quotation from Charles Dickens's, Hard Times, in which Thomas Gradgrind takes great care that the 'education' provided in his school meets his demand for knowledge of "fact". A government officer (Dearden says Gradgrind) delivers the following statement:

"'You are to be in all things regulated and governed', said the gentleman, 'by fact. We hope to have, before long, a board of fact, composed of commissioners of fact, who will force the people to be a people of fact, and of nothing but fact. You must discard the word Fancy altogether.'" 45

But without critical imagination to play upon the "facts" and, therefore, without direct personal engagement in a practice encompassing particular factual knowledge, the "facts" in question would lack coherence and meaning.<sup>46</sup> Factual knowledge has little value in isolation from its practical use by the learner actively engaged in educational practices.

However, Bantock seems to echo the Dickensian preoccupation with factual knowledge for its own sake:

"... I fail to see how anyone could appreciate the idea that the 'facts of history' are only a selection made and interpreted etc. - in so far as they are - who has not already acquired a considerable number of such facts." 47

But to engage in the practice of history, although it clearly requires selection, organisation and understanding of factual evidence, does not necessarily require an amassing of facts in general. It is just such an approach to curriculum in schools which has led to 'clutter' in syllabuses - those facts which are not imperative to an understanding of the practice in question. In Dilemmas of the Curriculum, Bantock condemns child-centredness for its approach to curriculum content which he describes as incoherent, a "magpie" collection of "bits and pieces" since it lacks the coherence which only the disciplines can supply. But his advocacy of the acquisition of masses of historical facts seems equally haphazard and likely to be meaningless to the learner. He writes, further, of learning between the ages of five and ten, "... chunks of the Bible, gobbets of Shakespeare, fifty spelling words a week, the names of the kings and queens of England and the chief battles, the names of country towns, chief manufactures, capes, bays, isthmuses, rivers - sometimes in blank incomprehension."<sup>48</sup> Although Bantock accepts the unreality and meaninglessness of this rote learning removed as it is from understanding of the educational practice involved, he still maintains that this experience made him aware that the world in its many physical and cultural dimensions was an entity apart from himself. But, if such awareness should be acquired, the process of Bantock's learning seems singularly discouraging and ineffective in conveying such a message. Had the facts been acquired from the engagement of the individual in

actually practising the modes of those practices in question, meaning, coherence and inter-relatedness may be the more likely outcomes.

Dewey offers a more appropriate perspective on factual knowledge within a curriculum in relation to the individual learner who remains central to the practices of the educational process. His experience is enlarged by his direct involvement in practices which the teacher establishes around the learner in an intellectual environment. The teacher understands that there is, "... a culture to be perpetuated ..." and, as a teacher, he is able to, "... perceive the meaning of the seeming impulsive and aimless reactions of the young, and to provide the stimuli needed to direct them so that they will amount to something ..." <sup>49</sup> However, it is essential for the teacher to realise that the student is unfamiliar with the practice in question; meaningless rote learning of capes and bays removed from the context of the practice is pointless. Knowledge, subject-matter, is necessary, but, "Failure to bear in mind the different subject matter from the respective standpoints of teacher and student is responsible for most of the mistakes made in the use of texts and other expressions of pre-existent knowledge". <sup>50</sup> Dewey wants to spare young learners from a "gradgrind preoccupation with 'facts'", from, "wire-drawn distinctions and ill-understood rules and principles", from knowledge which is no more than, "mere words" divorced from practice and experience. The teacher's attention should focus upon, "... the attitude and response of the pupil. To understand the latter in its interplay with subject-matter is his task, while the pupil's mind, naturally, should be not on itself but on the topic in hand." <sup>51</sup>

The nature of learning is not then left to a "magpie" curriculum; its content is those valuable practices linked, at least in part, to the cultural inheritance of society and Dewey strongly endorses organised curricula:

"Organised subject-matter represents the ripe fruitage of experiences like theirs (children's), experiences involving the same world, and powers and needs similar to theirs. It does not represent perfection or infallible wisdom; but it is the best at command to further new experiences which may ... surpass the achievements embodied in existing knowledge and works of art." 52

And those who follow in the Dewey tradition of child-centredness echo his concern for meaningful, prescribed content in a curriculum:

"Adults and children ... can associate well only in worthy interests and pursuits, and through a community of subject-matter and engagement which extends beyond the circle of their intimacy.

The attitude of deprecating subject-matter, and of deprecating curriculum as a guide to the providing of worthy subject-matter, reflects therefore the half-truth badly used." 53

### (3) Autonomy in the classroom

Peters doubts that Dewey's 'model' of technological problem-solving man is adequate as an educational ideal.<sup>54</sup> And Peters points out, among other reservations, that Dewey nowhere emphasises the ideals of authenticity and autonomy which are ideals associated with the individual rather than the culture of a whole society which is more Dewey's priority. Peters may well be correct in this judgement of Dewey's emphasis in his literary work in general. But the process of learning which Dewey advocates (and which continues in the examples presented below) is, itself, an instantiation of autonomy in learning within the school classroom.

It is applied to the subject-matter of curriculum knowledge, as indicated above, but the process of learning requires an exercise of autonomous thought engaging the practices of education.

Essentially, use of methods of teaching and learning in practices within education not only convey a cultural heritage to the young but provide for the instantiation of autonomy by its exercise by learners in those practices.

The practices and perspectives which are considered below are a realisation of autonomy and have their philosophical origins in Dewey and, latterly, Hawkins who emphasises the importance of curriculum content alongside that of autonomy, referring to:

"... the necessary transmission of culture from one generation to the next; the other is the human causality of self-direction and of choice."<sup>55</sup> Methods of teaching and learning are crucial in problem solving by providing opportunity for self-directed learning which ought to be afforded the learner and Hawkins argues that it is indefensible that,

"... self-directed inquiry can be suspended for n years until a child has been 'properly equipped' For it by other-directed routines of 'teaching' and then, somehow, switched on." <sup>56</sup>

This is not to say that all learning should be problem-oriented, but that which should stimulate autonomy in the learner.

Comparatively little is known from empirical research how autonomy can be actively fostered in children because a strict or authoritarian regime rather than a liberal one may foster an autonomous disposition. However, lack of evidence is no argument in favour of adopting an authoritarian style in class activities. It may be that models of teaching which are offered

in official publications unwittingly mislead more than inform; for example, the significance H.M.I. attach to their description of primary school teachers (in the 1978 Primary Survey) describing a continuum 'didactic' to 'exploratory' in style is questionable and it may be that,

"A more fundamental dimension to this relationship is not so much the degree to which the students are left to find their own solutions, but the extent to which they exert a control over their work, the nature of the teacher's collaboration in this, and the ways in which the student influences this collaboration." 57

The control which the student exerts over his work enables him to realise autonomy in his learning. Autonomy is thus instantiated in the student's practice. But not all learning activities will give a high level of control to the student; formal instruction will be required in some measure; different activities will call for different responses and opportunity for control of the learning and the learning outcome from the student. The teacher's authority as expert is more than ever necessary when the student proceeds some way with a learning activity under his own control and there should remain the, "... adult feed-back loop ... the authority of the teacher who can meet an individual child on his own ground and invest it for him with the promise of growth."<sup>58</sup>

The teacher, in order to enhance an autonomous disposition in his students, must not stand between the student and the educational practice involved. He must help the learner to engage in the practice at whatever level is appropriate so that the learner gains experience of the rules implicit in educational practices. The teacher should not superimpose his adult perspective upon the child without the child's engaging in that particular



practice because the opportunity for autonomy would then be lost. The learner must exercise his critical and imaginative powers in the practice itself so that he gains at first hand an organisation of his experience and its extension from within the particular practice with which he is engaged. And a major aim of educational activity is, "... to lay such groundwork as will offer, through planning of environment and the strategy of teaching, the maximum informational match with evolved conceptual structures in the sciences, with the ways of the arts, with the logical schemata of historians and mathematicians ..." <sup>59</sup> The danger of the adult who externally superimposes his perspectives upon the child is that the real nature of the practice in question is obscured:

"The elementary abstractions - of discreteness and form in mathematics, of time and relation in history, of organisation in the arts - are taken for granted in those traditions by adults who have lost the pathways of their own learning..." <sup>60</sup>

That children do learn from a wide breadth of knowledge and attain understanding enables them to exercise choice and make decisions which are increasingly informed, in learning practices. As choice becomes informed, the child develops, in Hawkins's phrase, an "informed vision" and a growing potential to exercise autonomy. And if the means of developing autonomy in the young are connected with an expansion of the individual's knowledge and understanding, it seems indefensible not to ensure increasing exercise of autonomy as the individual develops both intellectually and in other ways. To assume that personal autonomy will follow in the subsequent adult life of the child and young person who may always have been denied exercise of autonomy in learning practices during his years of formal education seems to lack credibility:

"It is supposed, rather, that self-organisation will appear magically after years of schooling subordinated to a quite different principle, according to which children are deprived of autonomy. They are deprived in the interest of what is conceived to be an efficient imparting of information and guidance. During all this time, and in the interest of such efficiency, children are essentially deprived of any significant exercise of autonomy in choice, discrimination, and judgment ." 61

The limits to the exercise of personal autonomy by children and young persons are considerable, as indicated in many places in this thesis. A child's knowledge, understanding and experience expand gradually; his dispositions are not formed overnight, but if little recognition is taken of his centrality in learning practices, it may be that the opportunity to enhance his learning and experience is impeded and his development in personal autonomy unnecessarily delayed by lack of opportunity to exercise that autonomy. The methods adopted for children's learning ought, then, to include problem-solving activities as part of educational practices which require critical, imaginative thought from the learner when engaged in the practice itself.

Rowland's description of a research approach in the classroom gives some idea of the possibility of engaging children in the exercise of an intellectual measure of autonomy in a learning practice.<sup>62</sup> One example outlines the activity of a teacher and two boys of about twelve years of age who are introduced by the teacher to the rule for the Fibonacci series (Note 63). This example of pupils engaged in this learning practice (given by Rowland) involves a close interaction of a teacher exploring a problem in learning with two pupils. The teacher becomes a "collaborator" in the learning process in which the pupils require carefully judged teacher interventions and initiatives. However, as the pupils become

increasingly involved in the educational practice, they exercise increasing control in the activity and demonstrate initiative, independence and a measure of intellectual autonomy.

Many circumstances limit the autonomy of the pupils in this example. The teacher chooses a subject with mathematical content appropriate to the pupils; he suggests all initial phases and directions in the work undertaken; he intervenes and helps as the work evolves. Both pupils already have a good measure of mathematical skill and the considerable advantage of one-to-one interaction with the teacher when required. The assessment of their work will probably present difficulties eventually.

Nevertheless, this example is of an educational practice (in a form of understanding) and the pupils, with teacher assistance, do achieve understanding and gain a measure of autonomy in their engagement in this educational practice. They approach the open-ended problem imaginatively and thoughtfully and, on Rowland's account, do seem to gain, at least intellectually, from the experience. The wide-spread application of such methods would probably require resourcing beyond what is the current norm in maintained schools by way of teacher training for the development of suitable teacher skills and attitudes, pupil-teacher ratios and material support in general. However, if autonomy is held to be a major aim of educational activities, it should be worth the price.

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Note 63 The Fibonacci series is a number sequence beginning with 1; 1; 2; 3; 5; 8; 13 etc. When two digit numbers are added, e.g. 10 = 1; 12 = 3 etc., the sequence repeats itself.

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