A Review of Child Care Books

Pregnancy, Birth and the Newborn Baby, by The Boston Children’s Medical Center. 

I'm Running Away from Home, But I'm Not Allowed to Cross the Street, by Gabrielle Burton.
Pittsburgh: Know, 1972. 206 pp. $4.50.

The Magic Years, by Selma H. Fradberg.

The Emerging Personality, by George E. Gardner.

Have You Had It in the Kitchen?, by Teddi Levison and Mickie Silverstein.
New York: Grosset and Dunlop, 1971. 149 pp. $5.95.

The Growth and Development of Mothers, by Angela Barron McBride.


Baby and Child Care, by Benjamin Spock.


Experience and Environment, by Burton L. White and Jean Carew Watts.

Fifty-nine million copies of the government's pamphlet on Infant Care have been distributed since its first printing in 1916. Twenty-two million copies of Dr. Benjamin Spock's Baby and Child Care have been sold since it was written in 1946. In other words, one copy of each book has been sold for almost every first child born to an American family during the relevant time period. No other child care books have been nearly so popular, although the sheer volume of published titles on the subject is imposing. Bookstores are filled with books on pregnancy and birth; physi-
for Justinian's law. Like the Academy, the Athenian Peripatos fell victim to Sulla's assault on Athens in 86 B.C. The transport of its library to Rome resulted in significant Peripatetic activity there; it was at Rome that Tyrannion and Andronicus of Rhodes prepared a new edition of Aristotle's writings. From the third century of our era on, Alexandria became an important center of Aristotelian studies, and only in the fifth and sixth centuries was the study of Aristotle resumed at Athens, independent of an educational institution at the Lyceum.

Thus ends the story of the Peripatetic school at Athens. Two appendices treat the technical problems of interpreting inscriptions relative to the location of the Lyceum, unfortunately without citing the Greek texts (pp. 209-12), and the purported list of Peripatetic scholarchs in the early post-Christian centuries (pp. 213-16), respectively. Lynch has earned himself the gratitude of classical scholars as well as of historians of education by an informative, well-reasoned, and in many ways original piece of work.

MARTIN OSTWALD Swarthmore College and The University of Pennsylvania

HUMAN HOPE AND THE DEATH INSTINCT: AN EXPLORATION OF PSYCHOANALYTICAL THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR CULTURE AND EDUCATION.

by David Holbrook.


In the opening chapter of his report on the Dartmouth Seminar, John Dixon singles out three models of English teaching: one centering on skills, a second stressing the cultural heritage, and a third focusing on personal growth. Advocates of this last and most recent model of English education, which emphasizes "the need to re-examine the learning processes and the meaning to the individual of what he is doing in English lessons," have substantially altered what they see as the function of literature and consequently this has led to a change in how they perceive their own roles and responsibilities as teachers.

David Holbrook's career represents one teacher's struggle to answer some of the questions which underlie the personal growth model of English education: How might literature be integrally connected with the ongoing lives of children? How can teachers, through literature, reaffirm positive social values, yet at the same time arm and defend their charges against the more pernicious manifestations of modern culture? And, since values and rules of conduct cannot simply be imposed, what strategies should teachers employ in attempting to reach such human goals in the English classroom? Furthermore, although the reading of literature will presumably yield certain of the positive social

and personal standards or values, who is to say finally that one person's intuition, judgment, or sensibility is better than another's? Human Hope and the Death Instinct is the first of two books that Holbrook has written in order to present the findings and conclusions of the intellectual quest he undertook during the past decade in hopes of finding some rationale for the values he was affirming both privately in his literary works and publicly in his educational work with children.

Writing has always been for Holbrook, as it has for many others, a primary way of examining and understanding his personal experience. As a teacher he "developed a belief in individual capacities to develop towards integration and maturity" (p. 1). From experience he "knew . . . that such positive dynamics emerge in children where they were given the right kind of opportunity to grow through creativity," and that the reading and writing of literature was one important way of fostering this growth (p. 1). Increasingly, Holbrook has used psychoanalytical findings to support his position that the discipline of English must be directed toward the child's need "to work symbolically with great energy on 'inward' problems, to develop his capacities to deal with the world, to get on with other people, and to establish his identity."  

Reading literature, Holbrook argues, "engages children with great subtlety in psychic problems which are eminently theirs." Charlotte's Web by E. B. White, for example, offers in manageable form the important themes of death and continuity. Referring to Fern's identification with a runt pig about to be slaughtered, Holbrook remarks:

We can see why children are at once gripped by such an opening: they too are small and weak. They know too well what lurks behind the phrase 'do away with it,' because they have known how in phantasy 'the object disappears when not wanted.' They know, in phantasy, a terrible talion father who threatens to do away with them. Will they 'amount' to 'anything'? Are they good enough to survive?: the problem now is to persuade the father to be far more human than the talion one—which Fern manages to do.  

Just as Fern with the help of Charlotte the spider saves the pig (the weak self threatened with extinction), so the child who can identify with the experience of these characters has the opportunity of symbolically facing the guilt and anxiety associated with death. Such a reading experience might be one of many tenuous steps toward maturity and one's realized humanity:

Such a really creative book helps the child, by its symbolism, to feel greater inward strength—to overcome the feelings of fear associated with the destructiveness of the father and the fear of death of the mother. It is 'real,' and so brings relief. It humanizes (as Batman doesn't) and reassures, leads toward a sense of continuity, and gives a feeling of resources and strength of identity.


4 Holbrook, p. 481 (Talion is from the Latin lex talionis: retributory, revengeful, of an "eye for an eye" kind [Holbrook's note]).
despite the destructiveness in the world and in oneself.\(^5\)

Similarly, the creative work done by children in writing, art, and drama aids them in their basic struggle for identity. A poem by twelve-year-old Florence provides an example:

The lilac tree stood over the gate
Its young leaves moved in the breeze
The little green flowers not probably out
Heafely laden it sways this way and theat
Soon my little lilac tree we'll be out
Each day it gets whiter and whiter
Very soon it's like a crown
A crown worn by an angle
And angle in white the best to be seen.\(^6\)

This poem can be analyzed in terms of the symbolic significance of the tree for this young girl; her aspirations are expressed more metaphorically and less self-consciously here than in a bald utterance such as, "I hope I grow into a beautiful woman." We would not, of course, want to second-guess the child on such a matter; rather, we should be attempting to see what the poem, in fact, signifies to the child in order that we might encourage experiences of equal importance to her. If children are going to write creative poems such as Florence's in the classroom, their feelings must be allowed to be expressed naturally. Any adult who has worked openly with children understands that such creative work will be produced endlessly even though it may not all be of the same quality or significance.

\(^7\) Holbrook, p. 482.

\(^8\) The Exploring Word, p. 131. For a seminar discussion of this poem see pp. 216-232 in the same book.

The process of creative reading and writing that Holbrook elaborates is essentially intuitive. The child, of course, never says, "Now, I'll work through my death anxiety," or "Now, I'll imagine myself a successful adult!" Still, the danger of such explicitness exists when adults misconstrue the true methods of creativity. Things must be allowed to be worked through in a stimulating environment; they should not be forced or compelled. If left solely to their own devices, children will not reach maturity in life (or in the English classroom); however, neither will the positive values of personal symbolism affect the child's growth if creativity becomes translated into dominance, regulation, and rational consciousness. As Holbrook, in Human Hope, warns, "the worst thing it is possible to do to a child is to seek to force it to comply so that it fails to discover its True Self" (p. 209). The creative work advocated here, "can only be spontaneous, and the teacher works best when he works with opportunities as they arise."\(^7\)

Symbolic processes of communication with oneself, whereby a person seeks order in and comes to terms with dynamics in his personality, lie at the core of the personal growth model Holbrook is proposing for English. He finds support for this position in a variety of sources from Marian Milner's On Not Being Able to Paint to the work of Suzanne Langer, which is quoted in Human Hope:


\(^8\) (London: Heinemann, 1950).
... I believe there is a primary need in man ... which actuates all his apparently unzoological aims, his wistful fancies, his consciousness of values, his utterly impractical enthusiasms. ... This basic need, which certainly is obvious only in man, is the need of symbolisation. The symbol-making function is one of man's primary activities, like eating, looking, or moving about. (p. 225)

The chief theoretical construct, however, that Holbrook uses to substantiate and clarify his earlier intuitive judgments is Object Relations Theory, which he discovered while studying psychoanalysis during the sixties. This important but little known development in British psychoanalytic circles strongly influenced the majority of the articles Holbrook published during this period, yet he began to realize that his audience needed to become more familiar with this crucial discipline if they were to begin to accept his proposals. Consequently, Human Hope is intended to provide a comprehensive introduction to Object Relations Theory and the various other related writings which contribute significant new answers to the continuing question of what it means to be human.

At this point a bit of background might be helpful. Object Relations Theory gradually emerged as a reaction to the inability of Freudian thought to account adequately for psychoses, specifically schizophrenic reactions, in terms of either theory or therapy. The central figures in this reaction—W.R.D. Fairbairn, W.D. Winnicott, and Harry Guntrip—entered the field of psychoanalysis with essentially non-psychological training: philosophy and classics, pediatrics, and religion, respectively. Their humanistic and therapeutic concerns determined the nature of their challenge to the limitations of traditional Freudian psychology.

At the risk of grossly oversimplifying an extremely intricate and complex conceptual model, one might distinguish two fundamental tenets of Object Relations Theory. First is the claim that the libido is basically object-seeking (person seeking), not pleasure-seeking or, as Fairbairn states: "It is the individual in his libidinal capacity (and not libido) that is object-seeking." The distinction here is that, instead of centering on instincts and the isolated individual ego as in traditional psychoanalysis, the chief goal now is the identification of how object relationships, both internal and external, aid in forming the personality.

Second, in contrast to Freud's emphasis on the Oedipal stage and Melanie Klein's emphasis on the "depressive position," Object Relations Theory emphasizes the schizoid stage as the most crucial phase in the development of the human personality. At the late oral stage of what corresponds to the depressive position, the problem faced by the ego, according to Object Relations Theory, is one of love versus hate. In the presence of the rejecting object the ego can direct its own aggression (biting) and thus associate the "bad object" with the ego's own hate; in other words blame his own capacity for hate as being the source that initiated the hurt received from the "bad" parent. The


schizoid position (early oral stage occurring during the initial phases of infancy) is seen as being much more devastating, however, because in dealing with "bad objects" the only alternatives the ego has at its disposal are "to love or not to love." Consequently, the infant who is rejected by his environment is left with only his love to blame, and this leads to the profound disturbance in the individual who, unable to trust love in both himself and others, cannot admit mature dependence on other people.

Fairbairn's reformulation of the Freudian structure grew out of his increasing awareness that "the basic problem in psychopathology" is "the schizoid problem of feeling a nobody, of never having grown an adequate feeling of a real self." As he began to understand the deeper origins of the neuroses and the psychoses, Fairbairn saw that the individual's fear of losing his ego itself was at the core of these psychic problems. It was this fear which led to depersonalization and the loss of a sense of reality. This meant that there was a more fundamental stage of development before the "depressive position," namely the "schizoid position" where initial ego formation began. This stage had been ignored (and, as Guntrip suggests, denied) because of "mankind's universal preference for feeling bad but strong, rather than weak and afraid. The 'depressive' diagnosis fixes our attention on our badness, the 'schizoid' diagnosis fixes it on our weakness; a frightening change of emphasis, and the more we explore it, the more far reaching it appears to be."13

Fairbairn's model of psychic structure assumes the concept of the child within all men. It is man's weakness and dependence at the schizoid position which is never perfectly worked through that leads to Guntrip's conclusion: "Men have not wanted to see the truth that we distort our instincts into anti-social drives in our struggle to suppress the fact that deep within our make-up we are tied to a weak, fear-ridden infantile ego that we never completely outgrow."14 The non-resolution of these early object-relationships is manifested, on the one hand, in a wide spectrum of aggressive anti-social behaviors, and on the other, in the phenomena of schizoid symptoms (lacking the emotional capacity to give oneself fully to both someone and something) that plague all men to varying degrees.

Finally, Object Relations Theory views therapy as a process "whereby repressed relationship-systems are brought back within the organizing system of the central ego so that they can be subjected to learning and adaptation."15 For heuristic purposes Guntrip divides this process into three stages.16 First, the period of classical Oedipal analysis, underlying conflicts over sex, aggression, and guilt are dealt with, but final results are illusive because defenses, not causes, represent the content of analysis. Secondly, there is the "Schizoid Com-  

13 Ibid., pp. 99-100.
promise” stage where the patient is marking time and effecting a partial cure as he gains more rational control over his behavior. Though some stability is possible, complete involvement in personal relationships is still not attained at this stage because “exorcism” is needed, not simple therapeutic reinforcement of instinct control. Lastly, comes the most difficult stage, “Regression and Regrowth,” where at last the “terrified infant” is laid bare, the “false self” is abandoned in favor of the “true self” (Winnicott’s terms), and the ego is allowed to begin a new journey out of infant dependence. This stage of therapy is the most difficult because all of the patient’s psychic strategies are directed at any outside interference with those survival patterns which are being employed to “protect” the hidden inner self. As Guntrip states, throughout therapy—if the patient is to return to this deepest level—the special kind of good object he needs to find in the analyst “is best defined as the mature, non-possessive, non-dominating parent who approves and helps the child’s development towards adult independence, self-reliance, and libidinal spontaneity, free from anxiety and guilt. The child can then grow up to the parent’s level of maturity and become capable of adult love, friendship, and creativity.”

Object Relations Theory thus moves full circle from a definition of a facilitating environment for the growing infant to assuming the responsibility for creating this environment for those patients who were denied it in the first place.

Object Relations Theory is clearly important to personality development and therapy, but what is its relevance to education? This is precisely the question that David Holbrook brings to our attention. Holbrook views this theory as being fundamental to the personal growth model of English because it supports the notion of creativity which he defines as “the approach to inner dynamics through symbolism, as a primary preoccupation of human beings in the preservation of identity.” Holbrook develops this notion in an essay on the work of D. W. Winnicott.

For Winnicott “moral education is not a substitute for love.” Winnicott is emphasizing here that the first stage in developing a moral sense is “proper mothering”—the facilitating environment that allows the child to gain a feeling of reliability and consistency. This feeling is not implanted, however, but developed dynamically as the self grows amid the stimuli of inherited cultural surroundings. Winnicott tells, for example, of a father who refused to allow his daughter to meet any fairy story, or any idea such as that of a witch or a fairy, or of a prince, because he wanted his child to have only a personal personality; the poor child was being asked to start again with the building up of the ideas

and the artistic achievement of the centuries. This scheme did not work.\textsuperscript{22}

And he generalizes from his example, at the end of his lecture:

By the time the child is growing up towards an adult state the accent is no longer on the moral code that we hand on; the accent has passed over to that more positive thing, the storehouse of man’s cultural achievement. And, instead of moral education we introduce to the child the opportunity for being creative that the practice of the arts and the practice of living offers to all those who do not copy and comply but who genuinely grow to a way of personal self-expression.\textsuperscript{23}

Creativity, in Winnicott’s terms, acknowledges that children are “going concerns,” that moral development, with its goal of mature adult dependency, only occurs when the child’s inner world is permitted to interact with “the storehouse of man’s cultural achievement.”\textsuperscript{24}

Holbrook extends this central insight of Winnicott’s to the realm of education:

We do not have to ‘form’ children, or ‘make’ them; they are burning with their own impulses to become human. Our role is that of fostering a life flame which is already going, and this we can do by offering the child all kinds of cultural resources which are ‘lying around’ in our civilization. These he will make use of as he chooses, as he finds them relevant or not, to take into his personal culture and employ them there, in the quest for an identity. Many of these artifacts will be the products of man’s reason: but many will be symbolic and mythological expressions of ‘inner reality,’ including both bodily existence, and the signs and meanings of emotion. of meeting, and relationship, to use Buber’s terms.\textsuperscript{24}

As the child grows within the family and outward from it, he experiences a primary need to participate in these creative acts of the imagination. These processes allow him to accept the hate and destructiveness within himself and thus make “reparation in such a way as to embrace and modify these,” for as Melanie Klein conclusively established,\textsuperscript{25} the child’s inner world continually uses fantasies in positive ways and not, as Freud would have it, only in terms of deprivation and wish-fulfilment. This reparation makes the child feel more “integrated” and is “the basis of personal richness and fulfillment.”\textsuperscript{26} Furthermore, as Holbrook continues, this “reparation” should be an integral part of the child’s schooling:

In the school situation in which a sympathetic adult is being ‘given’ reparative creative effort by the child, the essence of what is happening is a symbolic engagement with ‘destructive impulses and ideas’ within. Creativity belongs to the effort to exert love over hate, by coming to terms with one’s own human nature, including its weaknesses . . . creativity reduces the likelihood of aggression being used at the expense of others as a means to establish identity.

\textsuperscript{22} Winnicott, p. 101.
\textsuperscript{23} Winnicott, p. 105.
\textsuperscript{24} “The Wizard and the Critical Flame,” p. 23.
\textsuperscript{25} See, for instance, J. D. Sutherland, “Object Relations Theory,” p. 113.
\textsuperscript{26} “The Wizard and the Critical Flame,” p. 29.
when the individual feels weak and threatened with annihilation, depersonalization or inanition. The individual who has found satisfaction in creativity has learnt that gains over these fears can be achieved by exploring the ‘inner space’ of his own humanness.27

The process we have been considering here of identity development through symbolization and contact with a facilitating environment is central to the personal growth model of English. Were we to live in a culture where these processes occurred naturally and positively, studying such theories of personality would probably not be an urgent matter; however, it is precisely the fact that we are surrounded by instances where these processes have been turned on their heads for negative and destructive ends that makes Object Relations Theory interesting and relevant to those dissatisfied with the contemporary scene. In Human Hope, Holbrook calls attention to this problem: “What happens if, in his cultural environment, the child comes upon symbolic manifestations which seem not to humanize but to dehumanize his experience, or to thrust it back into the ‘subhuman’?” (p. 208).

Such a concern leads directly to Holbrook’s powerful critique of society, a critique that parallels the discontents of those English teachers so involved in working for the personal growth of their students:

The ‘schizoid diagnosis’ reveals that such inversions ['evil be thou my good' and 'good be thou my evil'] are a false solution to problems of weakness of identity. Ours is a world which gives too little support for the sense of being by a cultural atmosphere which fosters creativity. . . . On the contrary false solutions, based on hate and the reversal of human values, are everywhere at a premium—and commercially most successful. (p. 155)

Such an analysis of modern culture does not rely on mere moralizing; rather, it is logically connected to a developmental model which demonstrates how an “inverted” culture can operate to disconfirm one’s true self while reinforcing the desire to feel bad but strong, confirming primitive fears, and inculcating primitive solutions—all of which, of course, make the teacher’s positive efforts just that much more difficult.

Holbrook uses this critique to attack a number of modern phenomena from James Bond to the Masters and Johnson Sex Clinic:

Nowadays the astonishing inversions in our cultural life and our attitudes to morality have gone so far that here and there we are boldly offered such false solutions as a ‘new sensibility’: cruelty, hate, the depersonalization of sex, the derangement of the senses, and the undermining of conscience are proclaimed high values.

The avant-garde seems committed to the ‘solutions’ of ruthless egocentricity, violence, and anti-social anarchy, rather than creative effort toward fostering healthy moral development and the ‘capacity to be depressed.’ Many in the world of modish culture would no doubt reject with some heat that they should concern themselves with the ‘ordinary good home’—or anything so ideologically conformist. (p. 223)

27 Holbrook, p. 29.
Although we may not agree at all points, Holbrook's arguments are persuasive. We learn, for instance, that the schizoid mechanism whereby certain kinds of regression, which can be described as the "Depersonalization of the Object," might be offered as evidence to challenge "our complacency about the effects of pornography"—sexuality being "torn from the larger human context... involves a reduction of human values to the level of that desired by... a schizophrenic patient" (p. 149). Presumably we do not meekly acquiesce to the easy but false solutions of sex and power that are typified in the James Bond syndrome, nor if we did would censorship necessarily solve anything, for as Holbrook cautions:

A lack of tenderness can only be made worse by moralising about the need for tenderness. You cannot make anybody tender: you cannot export tenderness.

(p. 57)

Still, we can support positive instances of cultural symbolism and not merely end our societal analysis in despair:

But society does not directly cause our problems of identity. Culture and social conditions can, however, foster growth or inhibit it. But in all these complex processes there is always hope because negative forces are but distortions which arise when positive forces are thwarted. There is no need for a death instinct to explain ego-weakness or even the most terrible suicidal or destructive human manifestations. Where these appear there has been a failure of love and growth: and it is within human power to make it possible to make these failures good.

The problem of life is thus not that we have to accept that man is instinctively violent, destructive, and death-seeking. The problem is how we can help to foster sufficient strength of identity in ourselves to bear to be able to be. (p. 175)

Although the charged content of Human Hope and the Death Instinct is bound to excite the most inert reader, the course Holbrook has established is not always easy to follow, nor are all the conclusions easy to accept. Sartre and R.D. Laing, for instance, come under heavy criticism ("Sartre's heroism is the heroism of False Self solutions," p. 257); and Freud, despite Holbrook's recognition of his primary contributions, frequently appears to be the root cause of many of our contemporary cultural maladies. Furthermore, Human Hope suffers from not ever having come under the pen of a decisive editor. Holbrook's discursive prose is personal and engaging, but it all too often slips into idiosyncratic monologue (and psychological jargon) that will surely bewilder the uninitiated reader. We get, for example, a number of remarks on D. H. Lawrence which while interesting in themselves distract us from Holbrook's main argument.

But these are quarrels with Holbrook's style and presentation, not with the substance of his message. Criticizing his excesses will hopefully guide readers on to the essence of what he has achieved here in conveying the significance of Object Relations Theory for the personal growth model of English both in terms of fostering the development of identity and attacking the disconfirming elements of modern culture. Yet despite the richness of these theories, the real value of Holbrook's
contribution is his recognition that we must not simply succumb to the establishment of a new orthodoxy:

In conclusion to a book like this one is drawn to utter some kind of manifesto. Yet, surely, the book itself indicates well enough, I trust, that to do so would only show up in its own light as another delusion. No intellectual theory is going to solve the kind of problems indicated by our exploration of this realm of human experience, and as we have seen with Sartre and Laing, to erect a dogma from a psychology can become itself a false form of strength that weighs down the potentialities of fresh insights. (p. 295)

Such a qualification, it seems to me, allows us to exhibit confidence in what David Holbrook has unfailingly championed for almost two decades: personal growth through English.

GORDON MORRELL PRADL
New York University