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NEW PERSPECTIVES IN PSYCHOLOGY

THIS sampling of philosophical expressions in the field of psychology is intended to suggest the recent appearance of a temper of mind radically dissimilar to that of most psychological systems of the past fifty years. To say "new," however, is not to imply the emergence of a point of view which has never existed before. Rather, "new" means, here, the still-premonitory symptoms of a general turn against Determinism, in an effort to comprehend the nature of man. Ancient scriptures and philosophy have certainly affirmed—at least when divested of the stylized theological interpretations—that something called the "soul" is of primary significance. In reaction to theological oversimplifications and wishful thinking, the psychologists have, on the whole, been prejudiced against the word "soul," and the term itself is of course of minor importance. But if by "psychology" one means a study of the totality of man's inward being, some conception of a mind-entity with a nature and laws of its own must again be given appropriate attention. That such attention is now becoming more consistent, and its fruit being stated with increasing persuasiveness, constitutes our present thesis.

A few selected quotations from psychologist-philosophers will show why the didactic materialism once typical of most schools may soon become a matter of the past. Viktor Frankl, originator of the theory of psychiatric practice known as "Logotherapy," speaks to this point in the concluding chapter of *Man's Search for Meaning* (Beacon Press, 1963):

> For too long a time, for half a century in fact, psychiatry tried to interpret the human mind merely as a mechanism, and consequently the therapy of mental disease merely in terms of a technique. I believe this dream has been dreamt out. What now begins to loom on the horizon, are not the sketches of a psychologized medicine but rather those of a humanized psychiatry.
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> Man is *not* fully conditioned and determined but man ultimately transcends himself; a human being is a self-transcending being.

This expression comes close to the poetic language used by Joseph Campbell *(The Hero with a Thousand Faces)* in establishing an intimate link between psychology and some of the inspiring myths of the ancient world. Campbell writes:

> The hero-deed to be wrought is not today what it was in the century of Galileo. Where then there was darkness, now there is light; but also, where light was, there now is darkness. The modern hero-deed must be that of questing to bring to light again the lost Atlantis of the co-ordinated soul.
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> Not the animal world, not the plant world, not the miracle of the spheres but man himself is now the crucial mystery. Man is that alien presence with whom the forces of egoism must come to terms, through whom the ego is to be crucified and resurrected, and in whose image society is to be reformed.

Many men have "dreamed" of some sort of unified theory to explain the nature of man. The dream that has been "dreamt out" is that the mind must be defined as a product—never properly as an essence. The human being is, indeed, conditionable, but is there not also an aspect of man which cannot be managed or coerced, which is not simply the offprint of environment—something which defies comprehension in merely mechanistic terms?

The first dream of the twentieth century, in theoretical psychology, was a kind of test-tube distillation of the vague physicalist dogmas of the nineteenth. Harvard psychologist B. F. Skinner's portrayal of a Utopia (*Walden Two*) created by scientists who had at last mastered "the ability to control men's thoughts with precision" is the most recent apotheosis of Determinism. Prof. Skinner seems sure that benevolence and tolerance can be generated in the social laboratories—definitely

and irreversibly. But while many people may welcome the prospect of a beautifully-managed future for themselves and their heirs, a great many others will rebel against the notion of a life from which all choice has been removed, with independent search for meaning ended. Joseph Wood Krutch, for example, orients most of his discussion in *The Measure of Man* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1954) around a critical analysis of *Walden Two.* To illustrate:

> Mr. Skinner's Utopia is distinctly modern in that it puts its faith in the conditioned reflex and proposes to perfect mankind by making individual men incapable of anything except habit and prejudice. At Walden Two men behave in a fashion we are accustomed to call "reasonable," not because they reason, but because they do not; because "right responses" are automatic.
>
> The good life which most desire is a life warmed by passions. Who, even in his imagination, would like to live in a community where, instead of thinking part of the time, one never found it possible to think at all?
>
> Is it not meaningful to say that whereas Plato's Republic and Moore's Utopia are noble absurdities, Walden Two is an ignoble one; that the first two ask men to be more than human, while the second urges them to be less?

Erich Fromm, in "Man Is Not a Thing" *(Saturday Review,* March 15, 1957), carries the same critical evaluation into the field of psychoanalysis:

> Psychoanalysis can be most helpful in undoing the parataxic distortions within ourselves and about our fellow man. It can undo one illusion after another, and free the way to the decisive act, which we alone can perform: the "courage to be," the jump, the act of ultimate commitment.
>
> Psychology can show us what man is *not.* It cannot tell us what man, each one of us, *is.* The soul of man, the unique core of each individual, can never be grasped and described adequately. It can be "known" only inasmuch as it is not misconceived. The legitimate aim of psychology, as far as ultimate knowledge is concerned, is the *negative,* the removal of distortions and illusions, not the *positive,* full and complete knowledge of a human being.
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> If a man is to develop into what he potentially is as a human being, he must continue to be born. That is he must continue to dissolve the primary ties of soil and blood. He must proceed from one act of separation to the next. He must give up certainty and defenses and take the jump into the act of commitment, concern, and love.

This is what Abraham Maslow refers to as the hidden dynamics of the process of "self-actualization." In *Toward a Psychology of Being,* Dr. Maslow writes:

> Self-actualization does not mean a transcendence of all human problems. Conflict, anxiety frustration, sadness, hurt and guilt can all be found in healthy human beings. In general, the movement, with increasing maturity, is from neurotic pseudo-problems to the real, unavoidable, existential problems, inherent in the nature of man. Even though he has transcended the problems of Becoming, there remain the problems of Being. To be untroubled when one *should* be troubled can be a sign of sickness. . . .
>
> If our hope is to describe the world fully, a place is necessary for pre-verbal, ineffable, metaphorical, primary process, concrete-experience, intuitive and esthetic types of cognition, for there are certain aspects of reality which can be cognized in no other way. Even in science this is true, now that we know (1) that creativity has its roots in the non-rational, (2) that language is and must always be inadequate to describe total reality, (3) that any abstract concept leaves out much of reality, and (4) that what we call "knowledge" (which is usually highly abstract and verbal and sharply defined) often serves to blind us to those portions of reality not covered by the abstraction. That is, it makes us more able to see some things, but *less* able to see other things.
>
> The achievement of self-actualization (in the sense of autonomy) paradoxically makes *more* possible the transcendence of self, and of self-consciousness and of selfishness.

We have had occasion to discover, recently, that there are important neglected reasons for the generally-approved designation of William James as "the father of American psychology." If this title can be justified on the ground of James's importance to the sequential development of psychological thinking—as with a "father" in the hereditary sense—it can be even more significantly

vindicated on the ground that James possessed enough *wisdom* to be a parent to many of his psychologist progeny. Prof. James was by professional choice and definition a physiological psychologist, and his major work, *The Principles of Psychology,* expressed forthright dedication to the task of showing how many constituents of the mind are physically conditionable. But it was never James's intention to insist, nor his hope to demonstrate, that every component of the mind is reductively explainable by way of biological and chemical processes. That the "cerebral hemispheres" influence and produce "states of consciousness" was a truth, yet in James's opinion, only a partial truth. And James then went on to make some qualifications of crucial importance, as for example in his introduction to *The Principles of Psychology:*

> To work an hypothesis "for all it is worth" is the real, and often the only, way to prove its insufficiency. I shall therefore assume without scruple at the outset that the uniform correlation of brain-states with mind-states is a law of nature. The interpretation of the law in detail will best show where its facilities and where its difficulties lie. To some readers such an assumption will seem like the most unjustifiable *a priori* materialism. In one sense it doubtless is materialism: it puts the Higher at the mercy of the Lower. But although we affirm that the *coming to pass* of thought is a consequence of mechanical laws,—we do not in the least explain the *nature* of thought by affirming this dependence, and in that latter sense our proposition is not materialism.

In another portion of the same work, James concludes a discussion with these suggestive notes:

> When, then, we talk of "psychology as a natural science," we must not assume that that means a sort of psychology that stands at last on solid ground. It means just the reverse, it means a psychology particularly fragile, and into which the waters of metaphysical criticism leak at every joint, a psychology all of whose elementary assumptions and data must be reconsidered in wider connections and translated into other terms.
>
> At present psychology is in the condition of physics before Galileo and the laws of motion, of chemistry before Lavoisier and the notion that mass is preserved in all reactions. The Galileo and the Lavoisier of psychology will be famous men indeed when they come, as come they some day surely will, or past successes are no index to the future. When they do come, however, the necessities of the case will make them "metaphysical."

When James is now referred to as one who believed in a metaphysical dimension to man's consciousness, it is usually assumed that this is the "later" James—a man who developed an interest in "the varieties of religious experience." It is of some importance to point out, therefore, that the just-quoted passage presents us with James's thinking as a *physiological psychologist.* He did not arrive at the door of metaphysics by way of the fascinations of psychic or religious phenomena, but first found himself on this threshold as a consequence of a determined exploration of every attempt to account for the human being through biological conditioning. So it was because of the default of an adequate physiological explanation of mental phenomena that James sought another dimension of the human soul. However, his later interest in the possibility of human immortality and in varieties of psychic experience is also relevant here; likewise the contemporary studies of extrasensory perception, although these are still largely unrelated by present psychologists to their own field.

A quarter of a century ago, Dr. J. B. Rhine's experiments in ESP at Duke University were regarded by most psychologists with incredulity, when not with open hostility. The term "extra-sensory perception" seemed a contradiction, the notion of "realms beyond the senses," a palpable absurdity. But Rhine and his associates persevered, so that today ESP laboratories exist on the campuses of various outstanding universities—notably Cambridge and Utrecht as well as Duke. The all-denying skeptics have retreated in the face of evidence that some men at some times, at least, are able to practice telepathy, have various clairvoyant perceptions and demonstrate that it is *possible* for the mind to function outside the familiar limits of the spatial-

temporal continuum. The Rhine and Pratt volume, *Parapsychology* (Charles Thomas, 1957), summarizes some of the conclusions of the parapsychologists, and these have a manifest bearing on our subject. Drs. Rhine and Pratt conclude:

> The manifestation of psi through physical effects and records makes it necessary to assume interaction of psi and physical processes. In a word, science is closing in on a question on which much of the philosophic thought of the western world in recent centuries has been expended. The contrast between the physical and nonphysical, while very important and full of meaning for psychology and related fields, cannot be regarded as more than a relative one. Some degree of psycho-physical unity may at the same time be inferred in view of the evidence of interaction.
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> It seems safe to say that many formulations of philosophical theory based upon past conceptions of human nature will have to be recast in the light of the new facts on the presence of a non-physical element in the human makeup. There may be many consequences to the ethical, political, and religious thinking of men to follow from the altered picture of the nature of man which the new facts provide. The border, then, between parapsychology and philosophy will probably be one involved in active exchange and mutual stimulation for a long and indefinite future.

One need not become involved in the long and diverse history of psychical phenomena in order to agree that the ESP researchers have made a definite point—namely, that the human mind can act *as if* it were independent of a physical habitation in the brain, *as if* the mind were an entity, rather than an efflorescence of the organism. Even this tentative sort of formulation serves as an appropriate reminder that the psychologists can hardly rely upon simple theories of physical *conditioning* to account for the experiences of *transcendence* of the physical, either as associated with religion or with the arts. One of Dr. Maslow's chief enthusiasms is the demonstration that a special kind of cognition exists during "peak experiences." In other words, there is something mystical about the process of "self-actualization," the peak experience being "God-like," and "reacted to with awe, wonder, amazement, humility and even reverence, exaltation and piety; the word sacred is occasionally used to describe the person's reaction to it." Dr. Maslow says further:

> Normal experience is imbedded in history and in culture as well as in the shifting and relative needs of man. It is organized in time and in space. It is part of larger wholes and therefore is relative to these larger wholes and frames of reference. Since it is felt to depend upon man for whatever reality it has, then if man were to disappear, *it* also would disappear. Its organizing frames of reference shift from the interests of the person to the demands of the situation, from the immediate in time to the past and the future and from the here to the there. In these senses experience and behavior are relative.
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> *Peak experiences are from this point of view more absolute and less relative.* Not only are they timeless and spaceless in the senses which I have indicated above, not only are they detached from the interests of man, but they are also perceived and reacted to as if they were in themselves, "out there," as if they were perceptions of a reality independent of man and persisting beyond his life.

Let us come, then, to the vital question: How can we properly define man, if he is indeed capable of perceiving the reality of a metaphysical realm beyond the physical, capable of "self-actualization" through a kind of self-transcendence, capable of being a great deal more than physiological research can account for? The "new" definition of man need have little to do with religion in its conventional sense, but it may well recognize a kind of independent existence for the "soul"—at least a potential existence beyond the confines of conditioning. Prof. James spoke of George T. Ladd of Yale as the man who, in the latter years of the nineteenth century, had provided the most comprehensive definition of psychology. And Ladd, a philosopher as well as the author of *Elements of Physiological Psychology*, was given to making some of those necessary "metaphysical affirmations" of which James speaks. For example:

> The assumption that the *mind is a real being,* which can be acted upon by the brain and which can

act on the body through the brain, is the only one compatible with all the facts of experience.

The phenomenon of human consciousness must be regarded as activities of some other form of Real Being than the moving molecules of the brain.

On the whole, *the history of each individual's experiences is such as requires the assumption that a real unit-being (a Mind) is undergoing a process of development, in relation to the changing condition of evolution of the brain, and yet in accordance with a nature and laws of its own.*

This is truly the natural, the perennial language of a universal psychology; it is given clear enunciation, today, by Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning.* We shall let Dr. Frankl have a further word to serve as a synthesizing account of some of the new perspectives in psychology:

What is required is a psychotherapy focussing on man's search for a meaning to his existence, in other words, *logotherapy* (*"logos"* being the meaning—and, beyond that, something pertaining to the noëtic, and not the psychic, dimension of man), in contrast to psychotherapy in the narrower sense of the word.

What do I mean by the "noëtic"? The noëtic forms a specific class among the psychic processes, i.e., that class which is not accessible to animals, but only to man. Man is the only being which is able to transcend himself, to emerge above the level of his own psychic and physical conditions. Thus, man is also enabled to objectify and even to oppose himself. By this very fact man enters, nay, he even creates a new dimension, the dimension of noëtic processes—call them spiritual groping or moral decisions—in contrast to psychic processes in general.

The point of view illustrated by this quotation hardly represents a "school of thought." It is an expression which draws on many sources, unrelated by any formal ties, and is therefore truly an emergence rather than a statement of "doctrine." But powerful affirmations are implicit in this conception—above all the affirmation that man, as Man, has a potential life beyond the conditions which oppress and frighten him. Man, the merely "psychic" being, may be lost in a morass of his own making, but noëtic man can be regarded as still to be fully born. *If* he is born within the carapace of personal fears and ambitions, he can nonetheless come to exist beyond them. And if, in so gaining birth, he transforms his total being as an individual, he is also then on the way to transforming society—in the only way, we suspect, that society can be transformed.

REVIEW
IT'S HARD TO BE PRIVATE

WHILE an increasing number of people are musing on themes such as those in Clark Moustakas' *Loneliness* (see review in MANAS, March 14, 1969), it is nonetheless certain that the general trend is still very much toward the sort of "togetherness" which makes the finding of individual identity extraordinarily difficult. Evaluation of this situation proceeds at many levels of analysis. For example, an article by Bonaro Overstreet (in the *National Parent-Teacher,* June, 1959) reminds us that man has to be man before he can be a part of the good society. Mrs. Overstreet wrote:

> Our interest in group relations and the group process has just cumulatively become too much of a good thing. By carrying it too far we have skewed out of proper balance our appraisal of human nature and its needs. We have put such stress upon interpersonal and intergroup relations that we have almost lost sight of two vital facts.
>
> The first of these is that no one is equipped to enjoy such group relations unless he has within himself something to bring to them. The person best equipped to enjoy them is precisely the one who has rich, well-seasoned resources of mind and spirit to call his own.
>
> Without such resources he has nothing distinctive to contribute to the group. His opinions will not be uniquely his, nor will the arguments with which he defends them bear the stamp of *his* pursuit of truth, *his* grappling with perplexity, *his* approach to an earned conviction. His emotional contribution will likewise be stereotyped and uncreative. When, for example, tensions develop within the group, he may become a nervous bystander, an anxious placater, or a dogmatic partisan. He is not likely to be the person who renews within the group a sense of perspective and a functioning unity of purpose.
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> Without inner resources of his own, moreover, he is unable to give a distinctive welcome to what others have to contribute. For while he can hear their words and see their actions, he cannot, *by the quality of his understanding,* draw forth from them the best they have to offer. Wherever human beings impinge upon one another, it is profoundly true that "Deep calleth unto deep . . . ", and, unfortunately, no less true that shallow calls unto shallow.

Some of our more "affluent" corporations have lately had time to reflect upon the dearth of creative ability in their ranks, and it seems that the slightly off-beat executive is now prized, since the man wholly enmeshed in the System never gets sufficiently untangled to improve its functioning except for tinkering in minor repairs. This point is touched upon in Mrs. Overstreet's primer of "individualism":

> No one can be a top-level group member unless he has, as an individual, some top-level resources of mind and spirit. For one thing, he will tend to enter into groups simply to make up for what he lacks in himself. That is to say, instead of happily operating as an equal among equals, he will operate as a *dependent,* grasping for what he needs to make his empty life feel as though it were filled.
>
> For another thing, he will be almost helpless against the overt and covert pressures toward conformity that any group, with or without intending to do so, exerts upon its members. Many centuries have passed since the Stoic philosopher Marcus Aurelius observed, "Man must be arched and buttressed from within, else the temple wavers to the dust." But the truth of what he stated is being constantly underscored in our own age of crowds, committees; conventions, corporations, and multiplying institutions. Only the human being who is a *self* in his own right can thrive and grow as a group member—contributing his share, welcoming what others contribute, pooling his insight and effort with theirs, yet maintaining his uncoerced integrity as an individual.

Mrs. Overstreet's title is "The Discovery of the Private Self." She closes with this bit of philosophy:

> When it comes to the great "showdowns" of experience—those times when we find ourselves in the stark grip of loss and loneliness—it is deeply comforting to have beside us friends of the right sort. Yet they can only be beside us, and the task of emotional assimilation has to be carried through by ourselves and with whatever resources we have built into ourselves.
>
> By all means, then, let us become as wise as we possibly can become with regard to the group process.

> But let us also be too wise to neglect those aspects of ourselves that cannot be nourished on a concentrated diet of "groupness."

In a critique of the widespread use of hypnotism in therapy *(Psychiatry,* August, 1969), Rudolf Driekurs relates the demand for "instant cures" to a lack of faith in man's capacity to learn for himself. He writes:

> Western civilization is struggling at the present time to develop a new concept of man which is in line with the demands of a democratic society, a concept implying responsibility and self-determination. This concept is very difficult for members of a frightened generation to comprehend and accept they cannot believe in the tremendous strength and power which each individual possesses. Instead, they resign themselves to the impressive help which they can get from the outside. Instead of learning to take pain in their stride or perhaps even to avoid it through their own efforts and attitudes, they voluntarily abdicate their control.

A person can become lost in an institution because he fears that he will be lost without it—but he can also disappear into anonymity, despite even the most strenuous wishes to retain a "private self." This phenomenon is not only characteristic of the armed forces and the large corporations, but is also in evidence in a number of schools and most hospitals. A comment with an earthy touch appears in the Spring *Menninger Quarterly.* In an article titled, "Crises and Trends in Hospital Psychiatry," Dr. Bernard H. Hall writes:

> I am deeply concerned about something in our national life that is occurring ever so subtly and insidiously with the most devastating consequences—the tendency of our running increasingly larger and more complex institutions by procedural rules and regulations, and of losing sight of the individual human being as a result. We could find evidence of this in any of our social institutions, including hospitals.
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> Not long ago I visited a friend in a hospital. We were enjoying our visit when suddenly, without knocking, a young woman marched into the room with a pencil and a long sheet of paper clipped to a piece of cardboard. The young lady—whom my friend later told me she had never seen before—didn't say "excuse me," "pardon me," "good-day," or even "hi." As methodical as a steam roller and with equal crassness, the young woman immediately said to my friend, "Did you have a bowel movement today?" Neither my friend nor I had time to be concerned about the personal nature of the question. Both of us immediately felt caught up by the urgency of the young woman's brusk manner. We knew that we were involved in a major hospital procedure which we dared not interrupt. My friend blurted out, "Yes." The woman made a notation on her chart, turned and walked out. I can tell you now that the very perfunctoriness of my friend's bowel functioning cost her dearly as an individual. To have warranted concern, to have gained attention as an individual patient she would have had to have been less cooperative.

What is there to rebel against in this trivial situation? Not a great deal. The depersonalization of so many relationships is not a necessary development of large institutions. It is rather an attitude which has become an occupational hazard of living in the twentieth century. One is not likely to retain his sense of being a "private self" in a hospital, an army or in a large corporation unless he has learned to reconstruct his being in leisure hours. If he has become a television addict under the nefarious influence of his children, his chances are poor indeed.

COMMENTARY
MIRROR-IMAGE

RICHARD LLEWELLYN, author of *How Green Was my Valley*, has done a novel on the dilemmas of an African tribe which is being swept into the current of industrialism and modern "progress"—a story which mingles humor with pathos, and makes the reader feel the sheer bewilderment that must affect a proud people who are being pressed unwillingly along this course.

The story develops around the life of Nterenke, a young man who has both a European education and the trust of his tribe. He is given the task of representing the Masai people to the incoming flood of Europeans. This passage sets the problem:

> Thinking of all the generations of lion-killers while he crossed the plain, Nterenke began to realize with an increasing dismay which he found almost comical that the Masai intellect held not the least notion of physical science, no philosophy, or sense of ideas in the abstract, or any mathematical process higher that the use of the hands and fingers. He amused himself in trying to imagine how he might try to teach Olle Tselene the theory of the spectrum. Yet every tracker knew the value of sunlight in a dewdrop because the prism told where the track led and when it had been made. How the eye saw the colors or why the colors were supposed to exist was never mystery or problem. They had no place anywhere in thought. But all male Masai, from the time they were Ol Ayoni, had a sharp sense of color from living in the forest and choosing plumage for the cap. Color became a chief need in the weeks of shooting, and comparing, and taking out a smaller for a large bird, or throwing away a larger for the smaller, more colorful. He wondered where the idea of color began, or why a scholar should interest himself. Mr. James had taught that sound politics led to a rich economy where people earned more money for less hours of work, and so created a condition of leisure needed by inventors, whether mental or physical. The Masai had always enjoyed an ample economy, if it meant a complete filling of simple needs, and after the animals were tended, there was plenty of leisure. Yet there were no inventors of any sort. There was a father-to-son and mouth-to-mouth passing of small items that pretended to be history, and a large fund of forest lore that might pass as learning, but there were no scholars, no artists, no craftsmen in the European sense.
>
> The effect was to lock a growing mind in a wide prison of physical action and disciplined restriction that by habit became accepted as absolute liberty.

We have no sage comment to offer on this picture of the Masai culture, in contrast to the intellectualized and technologized West. Like most people, we feel the nostalgia which accounts of simple living inspire, yet we would not, if we could, give up our capacity to abstract and generalize, even though these functions of the mind have no doubt contributed to our alienation from nature and the organic rhythms of life.

What really caused us to quote this passage from Mr. Llewellyn was the last paragraph, which curiously parallels the following observation by a Soviet thinker, printed in the *Activist* (see the end of the "Children" article, p. 8):

> The average men no longer know that the state controls, structures their life; so far that one of their great corporations is not to be distinguished from the state or the state from the corporation.

So the question arises: What is the real difference, in terms of actual human experience, between the confinement of the Masai by their tribal *mores*, and the grooved careers of those whose lives are modelled by state decision?

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
NOTES FROM THE RADICALS

EDGAR Z. FRIEDENBERG, writing on The Image of the Adolescent Minority" (Spring *Dissent),* provides a basis for a number of discussions. Mr. Friedenberg points out the way in which the contemporary adolescent has been isolated—and thus partially alienated—by classification as a member of a "minority group," which is "a special American institution, created by the interaction between a history and an ideology which are not to be duplicated elsewhere." He continues:

> Minority status has little to do with size or proportion. In a democracy, a dominant social group is called a majority and a part of its dominance consists in the power to arrange appropriate manifestations of public support; while a subordinate group is, by the logic of political morality, a minority. The minority stereotype, though affected by the actual characteristics of the minority group, develops to fit the purposes and expresses the anxieties of the dominant social group. It serves as a slimy coating over the sharp realities of cultural difference, protecting the social organism until the irritant can be absorbed.
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> Now, when one is dealing with a group that actually is genetically or culturally different from the dominant social group, this is perhaps to be expected. It is neither desirable nor inevitable, for xenophobia is neither desirable nor inevitable; but it is not surprising.
>
> What is surprising is that the sons and daughters of the *dominant* adult group should be treated as a minority group merely because of their age. Their papers are in order and they speak the language adequately. In any society, to be sure, the young occupy a subordinate or probationary status while under tutelage for adult life. But a minority is not merely subordinate; it is not under tutelage. It is in the process of being denatured; of becoming, under social stress, something more acceptable to the dominant society, but essentially different from what its own growth and experience would lead to. Most beasts recognize their own kind. Primitive peoples may initiate their youth, we insist that ours be naturalized, though it is what is most natural about them that disturbs adults the most.
>
> The court of naturalization is the public school. A high school diploma is a certificate of legitimacy, not of competence. A youth needs one today in order to hold a job that will permit even minimal participation in the dominant society. Yet our laws governing school attendance do not deal with education. They are not *licensing* laws, requiring attendance until a certain defined minimum competence, presumed essential for adult life, has been demonstrated.
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> Legally, the adolescent comes pretty close to having no basic rights at all. The state generally retains the final right even to strip him of his minority status. He has no right to *demand* the particular protection of *either* due process or the juvenile administrative procedure—the state decides. We have had several cases in the past few years of boys sixteen and under being sentenced to death by the full apparatus of formal criminal law, who would not have been permitted to claim its protection had they been accused of theft or disorderly conduct. Each of these executions has so far been forestalled by various legal procedures, but none in such a way as to establish the right of a juvenile to be tried as a juvenile; though he long ago lost his claim to be treated as an adult.
>
> In the most formal sense, then, the adolescent is one of our second class citizens. But the informal aspects of minority status are also imputed to him. The "teen-ager," like the Latin or Negro, is seen as joyous, playful, lazy, and irresponsible, with brutality lurking just below the surface and ready to break out into violence.

Mr. Friedenberg is attempting to draw, from nebulous contemporary opinion and prejudice, the shape of an adolescent's stereotype. This image, in confusing yet logical manner, derives from an "adult's" view of the reactive responses of adolescents to adult society, which helps to explain why communication between the generations is so unlikely. This situation, a global one, is illustrated by the conventional attitudes generated by the English "public" schools, in contrast to those of the unprocessed "angry young men."

An article in the British publication *Anarchy*, for May, "Anarchism and the Public Schools," attempts some analysis on this subject. Mr. Charles Radcliffe, a graduate of the class-conscious British boarding school system (in England the "public school" is private and the State school is public), points out the psychological gulf between traditionally indoctrinated youth and an independent revolutionary. He writes:

> The public school is a symbol for our times. It is hopelessly inefficient at producing healthy, well balanced men, who do not wish to die for diaphanous abstractions hurled at them by the politicians but it is highly effective and efficient from the Establishment's point of view for exactly the same reasons.
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> The aim of the public school is to make leaders who believe they are servants. Thus ex-public school political leaders tend to think they are serving their followers, or the Queen's Peace or the Public Good. They often do not think of themselves as leaders, rather as servants. As Raymond Williams has pointed out this tends to ennoble the conception of leadership enormously and leads to such misnomers as the Civil *Service*, The Senior *Service,* the Armed *Services* (all of which are in fact *dis Services*).
>
> Other admirable assets of the public school system from the middle class parents' point of view are the constant knowledge that the boy is being "disciplined" ("for his own good"), and that he has little chance to get into real "trouble" unless he is singularly ingenious. The constant nagging discipline is, I think, the main thing behind the public school. Sir Harold Nicholson says of Wellington in his day words to the effect that the authorities proudly claimed not only to know where any boy was at any given time but where the same boy would be six months later. It is almost impossible for the child to escape from the system: if he does so at all it is usually because the system decrees he must. There is no respect for the child's essential personality, a constant feeling that the authorities believe implicitly in the doctrine of original sin. "If the child is left alone he will go off the rails (which are there for his convenience and guidance). Therefore he shall not be left alone."

A student article in the same issue of *Anarchy* suggests the temper of those who are intelligently opposed to the policy of the Establishment. Wynford Hicks, a student at Oxford, writes:

> Despite the economic and social factors which limit freedom within the parliamentary system, is it not possible to say that we are free to choose our own government? In a sense we are, but what we cannot do without smashing the state is choose our own *self*-government. To accept the electoral system and all it implies is to abandon the responsibility of decision—and this is made quite clear by the use of the word "representative" and not "delegate." However the system which exists in Britain came about (and the social contract theory is a historical curiosity nowadays) its essential deficiency is that it deprives us of the power to make our own decisions and gives our rulers the power to do things which nobody has the right to do. For instance, who decided that Britain should manufacture nuclear weapons and adopt a foreign policy based on the threat of genocide? The argument that in making this decision the government had to consider the will of the people because it had to fight an election is not only ludicrous in practice (since the major political parties agree in principle on foreign policy), it misses the point altogether, which is that the very existence of the state encourages irresponsibility in rulers and ruled alike. One of the lessons of the Cuban crisis is that hysteria is not confined to people living under what the liberal calls dictatorship. Acton's remark about power and corruption is incomplete: as power tends to corrupt, so too does the abandonment of power over one's life. To have this power taken away is unfortunate: to surrender it willingly while imagining that one still has it is dangerous.

Interesting indication that the tendency to voluntarily alienate one's self from the System, the Establishment, or the State, finds some expression in Soviet Russia appears in the winter *Activist.* Here is a report of some remarks which filtered out of Russia to the editors:

> The average men no longer know that the state controls structures their life, so far that one of their great corporations is not to be distinguished from the state or the state from the corporation. History may be inexorable; it is not welcome. You are always parading your poets and telling me that tomorrow will be better. Perhaps it will, it is better than it was yesterday; it is better in Poland than it is here; it may be better in the West. Such things may seem to make all the differences. But the "better" and "worse" are

always within the idiot channels constructed by the mute God, History.

Better fed; better clothed. In all "objective" respects. But yesterday the fact is that a man—in all his misery—was closer to knowing that he was a man—one, not four or five. I don't mean Stalin's yesterday; or God knows, the Czar's. Perhaps we have never known a yesterday. But they did once, I have seen Prague and Florence. I am perhaps a little tired of cant; I am glad to see the young feel the same. But there is a louder cant: that utter nonsense about actions and effectiveness and purpose that is almost as silly as being moonstruck by one's own tragedy, peering fascinated into the vastness of one's own eardrum. Perhaps it is too much to ask of any society

FRONTIERS

To See, or Not To See?

> . . . I think that there are important primordial mechanisms in individuals that "take over" when a threat to survival is clear and obvious. When psychological threats become as clear as the threat of a charging mastodon, when nuclear bombs are as clearly deadly as a leaping satire-toothed tiger; then man is liberated from inhibitions and acts to survive. The trick is to make new threats obvious to old nervous systems. . . . The single most important thing anyone can do is to point out, shout, illustrate, define, underline the rational and irrational threats manipulating mankind. Nuclear war must be seen as the same thing as personal annihilation. . . . We will have to see the mastodon charging." *

I AM not so sure about these "primordial mechanisms"; they are probably not primordial at all. They may not even exist. They certainly are not qualities of all, or even most, human beings: even clear threats can, and often do, inhibit and rigidify behavior. The deeper problem has to do with a series of questions waiting behind such postulations.

To what extent are seeing and functioning interdependent? Can we see if we cannot sustain the horror or pain of seeing, if seeing leaves us without enough leverage or energy to take appropriate action? Where is persistence, that is not a kind of hopeless masochism, learned or forged? Is it not becoming clear that old ways of surviving are now non-adaptive, that to be without seeing is finally to function in a world without human life? The yearned-for (as clear threats) charging mastodon and satire-toothed tiger are extinct: the point is, we are not, yet.

It may not be possible to communicate to others real and unreal objects of fear. Can a person be persuaded to see? Does he not see *if* he is able? Or see *when* he is able? Is not seeing something we try only when our blindness makes us stumble so often that it hurts? Do we ever give up one way if there seems to be no other? Do we ever try something new until the old way brings us to the foot of an open grave: our own?

I do not know! I know no one who does, nor have I heard these crucial dilemmas much discussed.

I do know that human beings can learn something from other human beings which will improve their sight, but this has more to do with "light" than "interior optics." The one imparts to the other (and augments his own) a sense of the possibility of seeing by joining with the other in a special relationship: one for its own sake, where one participates affirmatively in the existence of the other and is himself increased by his affirmation. The ability to see is based on an internal vantage-point, a viable personality, a core that can sustain the results of seeing. As complex and as rare as it is, love is the only thing I know that makes this possible: the love given the child, the love the adult gives, finally, to existence itself.

Developing an ability to love is the answer to problems and impending catastrophes found colliding and waiting at the intersection of politics, psychology, education, and war or peace. This traditionally most impractical of solutions is now—perhaps always has been—the most practical because it is the only one that fits the phenomena (human life), and it is the only one that has not been tried seriously. It is the only one that places all problems within a human context, and not within the dehumanized and needlessly limited scopes of nations, armies, bureaucracies, industries, etc.

A man who can think, but who cannot love is not a man. It is more difficult to move and be, in terms of love, but it is only then that one actually moves and is: less than love is not movement, not being. We must develop an ecology of love; we must become expert; we must educate to love.

* This is from a letter to Mr. Hallock Hoffman, portions of which were read by him on a KPFK Commentary for November 25, 1962: "The Uses of Crisis."

The rearing of infants and the young in this way will produce adults who can see; the adults will be choosing ways of being that move towards ramifications of love, instead of towards the omnipotent dreams of hate. The adults who will have to somehow manage this *ad hoc* education will have to sustain mutilations and deprivations as they go along. They will literally have to re-design their nervous systems: become strong enough to see for themselves. We will have to become ecologists of pain, as well as of love. The hate- and fear-producing congenital blindness has its sources in pain: a heritage of hate and fear growing out of pain: we are the inheritors of generations of that nefarious legacy. Perhaps the best we can do is not pass it on.

The answer to political questions and other abstractions is to be found in the nursery, and in the ways the mutilated find to love enough to change themselves and staff those nurseries. This is another kind of eugenics; one derived from human needs, potentialities, and capacities: all three in rhythms of change. This is the place of long-range changes. Here we will discover why—and be able to select from alternatives we cannot even imagine now—when some see the mastodon (or the spectre of the bomb), they shrink into a passive immobilization, while others are unable to bear the tension, and still others (a rarity, the ones who have known love and are now lovers) marshal their resources and take appropriate action.

The task of survival is a two-fold education: the radical re-evaluation of the rearing of the young, and the support of people who seem to have the ability and the guts to see, ultimately all of us. It is worth noting that people who can see make the best educators.

Sometimes I think that trying to persuade people to see the threat of a nuclear holocaust is approaching the problem from a false assumption: they probably already "see" the threat. They see it in a non-adaptive way. They see it from a position of emotional incompetence and a lifetime of planned acquiescence. They see it filtered through their unconscious fears and personal diaboliques: a real demon masked by structures of demonic symbols. They have to blind themselves in order to function at all. They have no reserve with which to sustain seeing, so they have to look away. They do not know how to look, sustain anxiety, marshal their resources, and take appropriate action. They have learned to look as if they were seeing, like a blind man with dark glasses who seems to see just fine—if he did not, how could he do all those things?

But the prerequisites of sight may be discovered and earned. It is better learned in the cradle; it is probably possible later only when one's blindness has led to a teetering balance at the foot of an open grave. If we are fortunate we will be able to be with others who can see, but if unfortunate enough to miss this contact, we will learn from our own creative resources because we do not want to die.

The task is difficult; it may be impossible. Are there in human existence qualities and potentialities sufficient for the task, and in the time we have, to find a way to persist and survive? It may be a leap of faith, but I keep feeling that if we continue with genuine searches, into causes and not descriptions of symptoms, we will find a solution (we do not know enough about love to call it a solution; we do know that the solution will take form within a context of what we call love). We may even be close now. The sometimes forgotten basis for hope is that human beings are, on occasion, capable of creative enterprises of unpredictable and wondrous proportions. I would guess that this new level of creation would have to do with a gathering together of a diversity of near misses, an integration of heroic proportions, the unification of multifarious ideas, already extant, by an idea that includes them all: a generalization for our time. The trouble is that there are so few minds that can manage prolonged sequential thought and intense creative activity. And to preserve a

democracy—which seems worth doing when compared with the alternatives—we must all eventually attain this ability to change and recreate ourselves and the world. Often the mass illness incapacitates those abilities from which a cure would most likely be forthcoming.

But no one would be well advised to underestimate the task of seeing and helping others become able to see. Oedipus, a man of considerable intelligence and skill, was so horrified by what he saw, when he finally looked, that he put out his own eyes. Blinded he became a soothsayer and a wandering wiseman. Because he suffered (and because he was blind?), he was beloved by mankind and received as a saint by the people of Colonus where he died. What sort of a reception would he have received in Colonus if he had been able to see? Would it be possible to re-write the myth, using a hero who looked and was able to refrain from blinding himself? This is one of the questions we will have to answer in our time.

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