

## VALUES CLARIFICATION: AN EVALUATION

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### ABSTRACT

The present paper traces the history of values clarification, showing its roots in the concept of social studies which focuses on the *process* of arriving at social values rather than the imparting of knowledge. It is shown to be alien to Christianity and Judeo-Christian tradition, and in perfect harmony with the tenets of secular humanism. Values clarification is ultimately an expression of the evolutionist/materialist understanding of reality, and particularly at odds with the biblical doctrine of Special Creation by an omniscient, omnipotent Creator.

### INTRODUCTION

In a general sense, Values Clarification may be understood as a "scientific" approach to questions of values and morals. More properly, it should be recognized as a form of scientism, the belief that the *only* source of truth is that which is obtained scientifically. Values Clarification is widely used in public schools throughout Canada and the U.S. Supposedly, by using this technique, one will become almost as "objective" in determining a value as a chemist is in determining the melting point of an element.

Values Clarification is customarily recognized as beginning with a work by Rath, Harmin, and Simon, which was published in the mid-1960s [12]. An alternative approach has been developed by Dr. Lawrence Kohlberg [7, especially pp. 86-87.]; however, as his theory of morals and moral growth is based on exactly the same philosophical assumptions as is Values Clarification, it will not be examined here. Nor has his approach been as widely adopted in public schools as has Values Clarification.

### WHAT IS SOCIAL STUDIES?

Values Clarification was first brought into the public schools as an improvement to their social studies programs. More recently, this approach to values has also been extended to other courses of study in many public schools, especially Sex Education and Language Arts. But to really understand Values Clarification, and why it entered by public education system, it is necessary to examine briefly the concept known commonly as Social Studies.

As the name implies, Social Studies is *the study of social problems*. Social Studies is *not* a mere general heading for the subjects of history, economics, civics, political science, and geography (though in practice it has often been that). "The ultimate goal of the social studies is to develop intelligent social actors" [1, p.13]. In social studies, "knowledge is an important component, to be used as needed when students engage in the valuing process. With this in mind, the social studies curriculum outlines major concepts and generalizations that are easily remembered, enduring, and transferable to a variety of life situations" [4, p.5].

"Concepts used in the social studies are drawn from history, geography, and the social sciences. Some social studies curricula are multi-disciplinary in that concepts from the various social disciplines remain distinct and separate. The Alberta curriculum is inter-disciplinary. Concepts from the social disciplines are integrated in such a way as to be indistinguishable as separate entities. It is our belief that man's behavior should not be compartmentalized for study" [4, p.25].

Imagine a scientist saying that scientific disciplines, such as entomology, astrophysics, and pharmacology should be "integrated in such a way as to be indistinguishable as separate entities" on the grounds that, as these disciplines are part of human behavior (which they are) they "should not be compartmentalized for study!" But based on this absurd line of reasoning, the disciplines of history and geography, for example, have practically disappeared from the Alberta school curriculum, swallowed up by what is known as "social studies."

If one wonders why students in today's public schools can graduate from high school largely ignorant of history and geography while at the same time getting high grades in "social studies," it is because progressive education theorists no longer view schooling "as purely an intellectual experience" [4, p.5]. Imparting knowledge is *not* the primary goal of "social studies." It is not the acquisition of knowledge but rather the acquisition of the valuing process that is the goal of the social studies. "In the decision-making process, knowledge in its various forms is essential but dependent for its existence, validity and application upon the skills used to obtain, organize and apply it, and the influence of pertinent values" [4, p.12]. More important than skills to the progressive educator is that students develop skills of a varied nature "to facilitate sound decision-making, for these are the vehicle by which knowledge is obtained" [4, p.12].

This, in a nutshell, is what is meant by the term "social studies." Once this is understood, it is easy to see Values Clarification as a logical and perhaps in some way inevitable development. For many modern educators, it is important that students adopt the Values Clarification approach to their entire lives. Much more important to them than knowledge are skills in social problem solving. This idea began long ago with such thinkers as John Dewey, who, when writing of history, for example, said, "Since the aim is not covering the ground, but knowledge of social processes used to secure social results, no attempt is made to go over the entire history, in a chronological order ... rather a series of types is taken up ... The aim is to present a variety of climatic and local conditions, to show the different sorts of obstacles and helps that people found" [2, p.419].

The Minority Report of the Alberta Royal Commission on Education for 1959 recommended that "social studies" in effect be abolished, and instead "require the course to be divided into its component elements to be taught separately with a view to giving the child a logical pattern of facts, leaving the critical thinking and evaluation to an age of maturity that is more competent to deal with it" [2 p.422]. It is certainly arguable that even high school graduates lack the maturity and knowledge base for the social studies idea of such progressivist education philosophers as Dewey and Kilpatrick. However, there has always been a great desire on the part of progressive educationists to indoctrinate (except in traditional religious catechism, which they detest), as education critic Hilda Neatby documented many years ago [11]. Indeed, they are very eager that students should adopt their ideas of "values clarification," "tolerance," "skills," "critical thinking," the "decision-making process," in short their entire Weltanschauung.

Sometimes social studies is defended on the ground that it makes students into "critical thinkers." There is little evidence for this claim (and were there no critical thinkers before social studies was invented?), but progressivist educators love to talk about "critical thinking." However,

in order to criticize something, you have to have something on which to base your criticism. Proper critical thinking presupposes having had a point of view on which to found a criticism. The progressivist appears to want only that the child develop a critical attitude without the necessary backlog of content. We are all too familiar with the common practice of having junior high school students comment on such things as the United Nations equipped with little or no knowledge of the historical, political, and economic background of the nations involved. It's a case of the little angels rushing in where even fools fear to tread.

Critical thinking as an aim in education is essential, but to the progressivist the concept operates in ignorance of an accumulation of facts. To him facts are needed only to discover the solution to a problem. Therefore, the learning experiences become a succession - and not necessarily a consecutive or logical succession - of problems. By the application of research, the necessary facts relevant to the problem are uncovered. This is followed by a process of critical thinking to appraise and resolve the problem in the light of the uncovered facts.

The essentialist ['traditionalist'] honors critical thinking as highly as the progressivist, but permits the child to indulge in it only after he has acquired and stored up a wide range of knowledge in a logical pattern upon which he will then draw to solve any number of problems. [2, p.388]

One sometimes suspects that the *real* purpose of "critical thinking," at least so far as progressivists are concerned, is to make students into cynical skeptics or agnostics, contemptuous of, for example, traditional sexual morality and religious beliefs. In fact, a good stiff course in logic, or even in logical fallacies, would certainly help make students into better, more critical thinkers, and do so without at the same time indoctrinating them in a secularist educational philosophy.

Values Clarification, then, is a child of the Social Studies. Even if at some point in the future the particular methodology known as "values clarification" is abolished, something similar to it will inevitably emerge as long as social studies and the underlying philosophy of progressivism remains part of the school curriculum. When in 1959 John S. Cormack, in his Minority Report as a member of the Royal Commission on Education, charged the public school system of Alberta with "unwarranted intrusion into the family circle" and of "driving a wedge between parent and child" [2, p.369], he was hotly denounced by the other members of the Commission in their Majority Report, who were quick to deny his charges [8, p.289]. Since then, of course, John Cormack's charges have been vindicated to a fabulous degree. Just one example of this vindication is the use of what is known as "values clarification" in the public schools. It is this particular methodology which shall now be examined.

## VALUES CLARIFICATION: A DEFINITION

In briefly defining Values Clarification (VC), one can do no better than to quote the promoters of it themselves: "Very generally VC is a set of related procedures designed to engage students and teachers in the active formulation and examination of values. It does not teach a particular set of values. There is no sermonizing or moralizing. The goal is to involve students in practical experiences, making them aware of *their own* feelings, *their own* ideas, *their own* beliefs, so that the choices and decisions they make are conscious and deliberate, based on their own value system" [13, p.18].

As can be seen from this quotation, Values Clarification (VC) "is a set of related procedures," a *process*. The claim is made here (and elsewhere) [4, p.12] that VC involves "no sermonizing"; in other words, VC is objective and neutral, in and of itself. This claim is absurd on its face, for already an implicit assumption has been made, namely, that there are NO absolute values, no moral absolutes, no permanent code of ethics, unalterable by time or circumstance. If moral absolutes exist, for example, there is no need to engage in the Values Clarification process.

To the promoters of VC, therefore, values have a definition alien to the centuries-old Judeo-Christian belief. "Values are those aspects of a culture to which the groups attach a high worth of regard. The norms and sanctions in a society are expressions of its values" [1, p.204]. Such a definition of values, palpably ridiculous, is not uncommon in Values Clarification texts. "Values" defined in this way are completely subjective, individualistic, and situational. Presumably the horrific Aztec rite of human sacrifice must be regarded as a true "value" under such a definition because it was an aspect of that culture "to which they attached a high worth or regard."

In fact, in the VC scheme of things, values do not exist outside of the individual; there is no external code of morals, no external absolute standard of any kind. The emphasis instead is on process, feelings, individual choices, etc. In the final analysis, values *do not exist at all* in the VC concept; what are called "values" are really subjective opinions freely examined and chosen by the individual (and, in a larger sense, by society).

The Christian understanding of a true value is poles apart from that of Values Clarification. Christianity understands values to be absolute irrespective of times or circumstances. Being absolute, they do not depend upon a particular culture or society, and are something to be learned and lived up to, not invented or chosen smorgasbord style from any number of alternatives. This is why Christian (and many other private) schools traditionally had, for example, catechism classes to teach values, NOT a "valuing process." This has always been justified by churches on the grounds that the teachings and the values are *true*, ultimately based on revelation from God Himself, and hence not open to debate or rejection. Moral relativists, because they reject the idea that there can be any such thing as truth or moral absolutes, detest the indoctrinatory (not brainwashing) approach to values and morals. The Christian justifies the traditional approach on the ground that his values are true, and to reject truth is to commit error.

## THE VALUING PROCESS

In Values Clarification there are three basic stages [12] to arriving at what is called a "value," namely, choosing, pricing, and acting. All VC educators clearly believe that one *should* engage in their VC process, that one *should* arrive at values by using their system. (Here their moral relativism and opposition to sermonizing conveniently disappears.)

**Stage One: CHOOSING** - First, the student is expected to identify all known alternatives, consider the consequences of each, and then make a free choice [4, p.9]. Consider carefully that in the VC scheme there are and can be no absolute values. Otherwise, they would have to be exempt from this choosing process. In the VC scheme, there is no right or wrong, good or evil. The child merely identifies all the alternatives and makes his choice. So, if a child decides to choose the homosexual lifestyle, after considering alternatives, such as heterosexual activity only within marriage, heterosexual promiscuity, abstinence, bestiality, among other choices, and has made his choice freely as an individual, he has completed the first part of the valuing process. What actual choice he makes in the VC system of thought is irrelevant; it can be neither "right" nor "wrong."

It should be emphasized here that nothing is in theory exempt from the valuing process. Since, to VC thinkers,

values are merely sophisticated opinions of accepted social norms or just of individual taste, any VC social studies program will sooner or later come into conflict with at least some parents. The Alberta Social Studies Handbook states: "Each student is subject to bombardment by many, often conflicting values - from the home, the church, the peer group, the mass media. He must process these many values, accepting some, rejecting some and modifying others. His unique behavior should reflect a synthesis, resulting in a set of values that are clear, consistent and defensible in terms of the life goals of the individual as a member of society" [4, p.23].

By now it should be clear that everything taught in the home or in the church is in principle open to challenge or rejection under the VC process. The student is assumed to be completely autonomous, responsible neither to God (whose revelation and very existence is rejected or simply ignored), nor to parents. Since there is no right or wrong, each student must "decide for himself" how he shall act and what he shall believe.

**Stage Two:** PRIZING - Having made his choice about what to value, the student is to prize that choice by being happy with the choice and affirming it, willingly and publicly [4, p.9]. No question can ever arise as to whether or not the "value" is worth prizing, for such a question assumes that some sort of moral absolute code exists which the VC system of thought dispenses with from the outset.

**Stage Three:** ACTING - Having prized the value freely chosen, the student then is to act upon the choice, repeating the action consistently in some pattern of life [4]. Here there seems to be some inconsistency, for VC theorists seem to be saying at this point that the student *should* act upon the choice made, lapsing again into some form of absolutism.

All of this assumes, in fact, that VC itself is *good*, that students *should* engage in the "valuing process." It also assumes that students are by nature good (not sinful or unclean), and will not make unfortunate (VC theorists cannot in all honesty use words like "good" or "evil") choices.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that in the VC program the concern is *not* the conclusions the students come to, but merely *how* they reach those conclusions. In this sense, what is known as "values education" in the public schools is the exact opposite to what many parents understand by the term, because for them it is precisely the conclusions the students come to, more than the "process" which is to them most important, as indeed it is.

So, in Values Clarification, what is important is not the choices the students make, but the valuing process itself. And this valuing process is never conclusive: "Values ... are explored, clarified, and assessed by the utilization of skills and in light of an ever-expanding knowledge base" [4, p.12a]. In other words, as mentioned previously, for VC theorists, values as such do not exist. What does exist is the valuing process - personal choices, judgments and feelings which, when chosen "scientifically" in accord with the VC scheme, and then prized and acted upon, become, for the individual person, his "values."

A further point needs to be made: No value not arrived at by the VC process can qualify as a true value, according to VC theorists [5, p.231-277]. Hence the Ten Commandments do not qualify as true values because they were not chosen freely from among other alternatives (they were imposed by God), nor are they often prized or acted upon, nor are they to be re-evaluated "in the light of an ever-expanding knowledge base."

## VALUES CLARIFICATION IN PRACTICE

It would seem that VC must lead logically if not inevitably either to antinomianism or to arbitrary authoritarianism. Given this choice, Raths et al. choose authoritarianism, perhaps realizing instinctively that no society can be constructed or sustained on the extreme antinomian and almost anarchic individualism VC would seem to lead to. That arbitrary authoritarianism is indeed the choice of VC theorists is strikingly illustrated by the following example [12, p.115], where honesty is the value under discussion:

Ginger: Does that mean we can decide for ourselves whether we should be honest on tests here?

Teacher: No, that means that you can decide on the value. I personally value honesty; and although you may choose to be dishonest, I shall insist that we be honest on our test here. In other areas of your life, you may have more freedom to be dishonest, but one can't do anything any time, and in this class I shall expect honesty on tests.

Ginger: But then how can we decide for ourselves? Aren't you telling us what to value?

Sam: Sure, you're telling us what we should do and believe in.

Teacher: Not exactly. I don't mean to tell you what you should value. That's up to you. But I do mean that in this class, not elsewhere necessarily, you have to be honest on tests or suffer certain consequences. I merely mean that I cannot give tests without the rule of honesty. All of you who may choose dishonesty as a value may not practice it here, that's all I'm saying. Further questions, anyone?

In other words, "you may choose to use profanity elsewhere, but not in my class," or, "all of you who choose

stealing as a value may not practice it in my classroom, that's all I'm saying," or, "I don't mean to tell you what to value. If you value sexual promiscuity, that's up to you."

With such an approach to values, is it any wonder that the public schools are in the state they are in? The wonder is that things are not even worse. Of course, the VC approach is a form of moral relativism. This is why "questions should not guide toward a preconceived answer" [4, p.45]. The only thing that seems to be exempt from this moral relativism is the valuing *process* itself. In VC, there is no preconceived answer, because there is no "right" or "wrong" answer.

Moral relativism is not the only assumption underlying Values Clarification. Total atheism seems to be an accompanying trait. None of the VC theorists ever mention God, let alone base their ideas on His laws and purposes. Occasionally, the fact that some children may get certain ideas from church will be mentioned, but these ideas are treated in the same context of moral relativism as everything else. And as already noted, since values from church are not arrived at through the valuing process, the implication is that they are not real values and should be rejected. This is why VC theorists can insist that "each generation should have the right to determine its own values" [1, p.449].

"Because life is different through time and space, we cannot be certain what experiences any person will have. We therefore cannot be certain what values, what style of life, would be most suitable for any person. We do, however, have some ideas about what *processes* might be most effective for obtaining values" [12, p.28].

"It is not intended that these [VC] activities be used to determine whose values are 'right' and whose are 'wrong.' Rather, these activities are intended to help teachers and students determine the clarity, consistency and defensibility of particular values" [4, p.41].

At the same time that the moral relativists are saying students must pick their own values, they sternly insist that "tolerance" is an attitude that must be accepted without question [4, p.41]. To say that some things *should not* be tolerated is to (unconsciously perhaps) reintroduce an absolute code of ethics. However, "tolerance" is not any sort of virtue or value in and of itself; everything about it depends on just what is being tolerated.

Most people probably think that "values" education is about teaching children what is right and what is wrong. That, of course, is the one thing "values clarification" is *not* about. (The same may be said for what is passing for "moral education" in the public schools.)

## THE STATE CHURCH

Values Clarification may be irreconcilable with Christianity or Orthodox Judaism, but it is in perfect harmony with Secular Humanism, the religious/philosophical world-view now dominant in the modern public education system. Humanist Manifesto II (signed by more than 200 prominent intellectuals, scientists, and educators) states that "traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God ... is an unproved and outmoded faith" [6, p.13]. Consistent with this, God has no place in the VC scheme of things; the functional atheism of VC is so obvious that no more comment is needed. Humanist Manifesto II states that "ethics is autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction" [6, p.17]. Consistent with this, VC teaches that values "are explored, clarified, and assessed by the utilization of skills and in the light of an ever-expanding knowledge base" [4, p.12a]. Humanist Manifesto II states: "Decision-making must be decentralized to include widespread involvement of people at all levels - social, political, and economic. All persons should have a voice in developing the values and goals that determine their lives" [6, p.19]. Consistent with this, the VC program teaches that "children have to make their own choice; only then will they be apt to act according to their conviction" [4, p.45].

None of this is meant to suggest that VC theorists *consciously* plot to inculcate children in their own philosophy or religion. Most of them seem to serenely assume their own "objectivity," "neutrality," "tolerance," etc. In fact, they are just as prone to indoctrinate as anyone else; the question is really by whom and in what. (Indoctrination does not mean brainwashing or narrow-minded bigotry in its traditional sense; it simply means that certain concepts or ideas are recognized as false or true from the outset, even when they are discussed. Any philosophy with no axioms at all is merely a self-negating form of agnosticism.)

In the VC scheme there is no place for parents or for the church, whose roles are to impart to their children God-given values, morals, and revealed truths. To give just one more example of how VC works in practice, consider the following: A class of children are asked to consider the case of a boy who stole a toy from a store. The sort of question they will be asked about this will show how different the VC system of thought is from traditional values.

VC: Do you think that what the boy did was wrong? Why? Why not?  
Traditional: What did the boy do that was wrong?

In VC, moral relativism is assumed from the outset; what appears to be an example of students engaged in "critical thinking" is really an example of students assuming at the outset that there is no "right" and there is no "wrong." Everything is situational and depends, not on whether or not children come to the "right" conclusion, but only that children engage in "critical thinking," i.e., the "valuing process." Of course, VC theorists like to assume that "critical thinking" is impossible without assuming also moral relativism, in this case their "valuing process." In such a way, absolute values can be excluded from the beginning.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the public schools have in many ways attained the status of an established church. Indeed, all the things that liberals find most odious about an established religion or church apply with at least as much force to an established system of education. People who in good conscience object to the kind of philosophy underlying "public" education are nevertheless required to pay for it. Increasingly, they are coerced into sending their children to public schools (most people are too poor to pay for some sort of private school in addition to public school). Even many private schools that are allowed to exist must increasingly adhere to the public school curriculum, or its equivalent, though most private schools are started because of opposition to the public school curriculum.

David Ehrenfeld, in his critique of secular humanism, stated that in some ways humanism is not like other religions, and one example he mentions is that "there are no buildings labelled 'Church of Humanism' in your neighborhood" [3, p.4]. Strictly speaking, he is right. But in the larger sense, he may be quite wrong. The "Church of Humanism" in one's local neighborhood may very well be the local neighborhood public school. (It should be noted that some private and parochial schools have also become humanistic, usually by adopting the government's curriculum.)

## PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS

Why does VC and, indeed, social studies itself, stress process more than content? The answer to this lies in the philosophical beginnings of modern progressive education.

One of the fathers of progressive education, John Dewey, "was the first philosopher of education to make systematic use of Darwin's ideas" [14, p.252]. Progressive education may be said to be the result of applying the theory of evolution to education. Today, progressive education is so dominant that for anyone to imagine anything else has become almost impossible. Even those who consider themselves strong opponents of Dewey nevertheless accept many of his more basic ideas, perhaps without realizing it, and this would include the evolutionism that underlies progressivist educational thinking.

What progressive education has almost completely replaced is traditional education, sometimes known as essentialism. Unlike progressivism, which is based on evolution, essentialist educational philosophy is based on the concept of essences or unchanging types. As a philosophy, essentialism has its roots in the thinking of Plato and Aristotle, and was later modified to some degree by the Christian Church. It was only after evolutionary theory became widely accepted by scientists that it became the basis for education theory.

The concepts of unchanging essences and of complete discontinuities between every *eidos* (type) and all others make genuine evolutionary thinking well-nigh impossible. I agree with those who claim that the essentialist philosophies of Plato and Aristotle are incompatible with evolutionary thinking. ... The assumptions of population thinking (evolution) are diametrically opposed to those of the typologists ... The ultimate conclusions of the population thinkers (evolutionists) and of the typologist are precisely the opposite. For the typologist, the type (*eidos*) is real and the variation an illusion, while for the populationists (evolutionists) the type (average) is an abstraction and only the variation is real. No two ways of looking at nature could be more different. [10, p.4] Nor could two ways of looking at education and values be more different.

The progressivist/evolutionist holds to the position that unchanging essences (i.e. universals, moral absolutes, things) are mere mental constructs. They do not describe reality because for the evolutionist they are all in a constant state of change. For them, reality is described only by *process*. This is why, in values clarification, the emphasis is actually on the valuing *process* and not values *per se*. This process is, for the progressivist, the application of evolution to the field of education. Since for him the material universe is all that exists, and since evolution applies to the entire universe, evolution must also apply to education. This also explains the strong utilitarianism in VC with its emphasis on the uses of knowledge rather than on knowledge itself. (Utilitarianism is strongly emphasized in the *Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin.)

Biologist Ernst Mayr notes that Charles Darwin lost his Christian faith after he abandoned his belief in "essences" for that of evolutionist thinking [9, p.327]. This is not surprising. The evolutionist stresses "becoming," not "being," and hence talks of "process," "change," "evolution," etc. The concept of unchanging types (essences), whether of absolute values in education or changeless types in zoology is absolutely incompatible with evolutionary thinking. It is absolutely necessary for essentialist (traditional) education.

One is hard-pressed to see how anything can be knowable if everything is mutable, as the evolutionist/progressivist asserts. However, this is a subject far too involved to be dealt with adequately here. But it should be once again stressed that the absence of moral absolutes from modern education is no mere accident. It is a logical outcome, mandated by a commitment to the basic evolutionist/materialist understanding of reality as promoted by Dewey and his modern followers. This understanding of reality is completely at odds with the Judeo-Christian understanding, which is rooted in the doctrine of Special Creation by an omniscient, omnipotent Creator.

## **CONCLUSION**

The particular technique known as Values Clarification may be either explicit or implicit in an educational curriculum. In Alberta it was explicit from 1971 to 1982. Since then, the VC approach has become more implicit, never mentioned directly, but in its basic form assumed. And even if the particular concept of VC is rejected by public education, something similar to it, with the same philosophical assumptions or moral relativism and functional atheism will sooner or later emerge to replace it. Any attempted "reform" of such an educational system will never be anything more than superficial as long as the commitment to the underlying philosophy remains. Perhaps this is why calls for and attempted reforms of public education over the past forty and more years have never really led anywhere.

Educational theorist Jack Fraenkel strongly supports the use of VC in the schools, and praises the work of Raths, Harmin, and Simon as "provocative" [5, p.236]. Others are less impressed. Psychologist Paul Vitz stated that "the VC program should be rejected. The contradictions and incoherence of the system provide one of the shallowest and intellectually most confused systems of thought yet contrived by the human mind" [15, p.125].

The fruits of moral relativism are everywhere: rampant divorce, abortion, an explosion of sexually transmitted diseases, drug abuse, family breakdown, pornography available everywhere, and a crime rate, especially for juveniles, higher than ever. Indeed, the twentieth century has been the century of moral relativism; it is no coincidence that the twentieth century has also been by far the bloodiest in history. One cannot help thinking of a passage that summarizes the bloodiest book of the Bible, the book of Judges. At that time, too, moral relativism was rampant among a people who had turned their back on God: "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).

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## APPENDIX

The ideas of the progressivist/evolutionist educators have even reached into many Christian schools, as for example with their idea of "social studies", which has replaced the separate disciplines of history, geography, and civics. John Dewey was strongly influenced by Darwin's own utilitarianism, hence it is no surprise that history, for example, which has little or no immediate utilitarian application, is deemed to have little or no intrinsic worth by progressivist educators. At most, history is regarded as perhaps being of occasional "use" to help solve a particular social problem.

But the progressivist disdain for history does not stop there. Dewey, and many of his followers, were and are atheists and materialists, denying the whole realm of spiritual values. They regard the past for the most part as pre-scientific rubbish, and the values that the past stood for as having been discredited by Modern Science and the "fact" of evolution. This is probably why "as a widespread social phenomenon, the unhistorical or anti-historical attitude is peculiar to our era. It parallels the widespread seeming indifference to the reality of the soul and the prospect of life everlasting. Quite consciously men and women uninterested in the soul may forfeit their own souls, and a people uninterested in their history may cease to have a history, or to be a people." [2, p. 19].

The crucial importance of history as opposed to "social studies" as an intellectual discipline has been noted: "Lacking a deeper knowledge of how we arrived where we stand today, lacking that deeper love of country which is nurtured by a knowledge of the past, lacking the apprehension that we all take part in a great historical continuity-why, a people so deprived will not dare much, sacrifice much, or take long views. With them, creature comforts will be everything; yet, historical consciousness wanting, in the long run they must lose their creature comforts too. At every level of instruction, from kindergarten through graduate school, the serious study of history has been declining for a half century and more. From time to time, foundations and learned societies, and newspapers and magazines, growing alarmed at the drift toward ignorance of anything not featured on television, publish surveys of the extent to which the rising generation has sunk into a Sargasso Sea of ignorance of the past." [2, p. 17].

Christopher Dawson noted that the "combination of utilitarianism and specialism is...one of the main causes of the intellectual disintegration of modern Western culture...for the Christian, the past can never be dead, as it often seems to the secularist, since we believe the past and present are united in the one Body of the Church and that the Christians of the past are still present as witnesses and helpers in the life of the Church today." [1, pp. 108, 113].

The entire progressivist way of thinking is alien to Christianity. The Christian revelation is based on numerous historic events: creation, the Fall of man, the Incarnation of Our Lord, the resurrection, the last judgment, etc. And some Christian churches place an even greater emphasis on history, as for example in dispensational Protestant theology or in the high regard for Tradition in the Roman Catholic Church. Harold Lindsell's book, *The Bible in the Balance*, which traces the historic decline of belief in biblical inerrancy in many supposed Bible-believing churches, is a work of history. So too is Francis Schaeffer's *How Should We then Live?*, subtitled *The Decline of Western Thought and Culture*. It is the past that is truly knowable, not the future. The progressivist educator, contemptuous of the past and knowing nothing of the future in any real sense, can only concentrate on the present, hence progressivist ideas such as "social studies" and "values clarification".

Creation is a unique moment in time- the beginning of real history. The progressivist/evolutionist, rejecting creation, can only substitute an evolutionary "history" which is really a series of endless cycles of matter throughout eternity. "Values clarification" is a logical deduction from this basic world-view. A proposed compromise, theistic evolution, not only tends to shade off into pantheism, but seems to survive as a proposal only so long as certain key terms are kept sufficiently vague.

#### **APPENDIX REFERENCES**

- [1] C. Dawson, *The Crisis of Western Education* (New York: Image/Doubleday Books, 1965).
- [2] R. Kirk, *The Roots of the American Order* Third Edition (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway Publishers, 1991).

#### **Editor's Note:**

Due to reasons beyond his control, Mr. Forgay was unable to attend the Conference, and therefore did not present his paper. Because this paper was accepted into the Technical Symposium prior to these circumstances it has been included as part of the written record of the Third International Conference on Creationism.

