

Education for Peace

Requires the

Growth of the

Whole Child

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation my father who died during its preparation. Over the years he helped me greatly with many essays and papers, often under frantic circumstances when I was rushing to get my work submitted on time. This, reading, correcting and discussing was a great source of pleasure for both of us, sharing different intellectual challenges, sharing time and thoughts together. I miss this, but mostly, I just miss him.

With love,

Tim

This dissertation is about education for peace: that is to say, education that liberates individuals rather than crushes their spirit, that enables children to grow into happy, full adults, people who know and understands optimism, cooperation and tolerance, people who can give and receive love.

A Personal History

I began 'school' at the age of five in Albury, a large inland city on the Murray River. This school, Albury Free School, had no building, no 'formal' curriculum, no 'official' teachers, no books, computers, timetable, attendance requirements, rules, principal, classes... if you have only ever been to a 'normal' school, you will find this hard to imagine. A 'school' that is not a school. A school that does not fit any of the mental images you think of when you draw a picture of a school in your mind. A school that is not a place where you go and are told what to do, when to do it, how to do it, what to think. I would describe this school as a 'why' school, rather than a 'how' school. I look at life in much the same way. For me, life has two paths: living and existing. Existing is a life in which you only ask how, or are told how. Living is a life that involves asking why...! Most people go to 'how' schools. There at 10.10 am on Tuesday Mr. Jones tells you to learn long division from 'An Elementary Maths Tutor,' to rule a margin, not to talk, to sit down, to use a pencil, not to be late, to do questions 7-16, to be neat, not to 'help' your friends, to do what someone else 'thinks you should know' - *when and how* they want. My school was not like this at all. Actually, nothing at my school was like this. I do not think I even thought of school as being any of these things.

My next school was Blackwood Community School, in Melbourne. This school had a building, but not what you will be thinking of either. It was an old wooden house, very messy, that some of the people at the school lived in. This school had classes, in maths, cooking, writing, making things (this was my favourite, and you will perhaps not believe what I liked best - making swords!) and other things, but you did not have to go to any of these classes. If the teacher was boring - some were - then I would just play with my friends. Now, if you have always been to a 'normal' school, you will have a bad opinion of play, as something kids should only do after homework, as something added onto life when you are good, or organised, or clean your room. I think play *is what kids do*. But this does not mean that you are not learning. Play is a big part of learning, a huge part. You cannot be made to learn; learning is not something you can be made to do. Actually, making someone learn is the opposite of learning. Making and learning are opposites. Making kids learn is making them not choose for themselves, which is part of making them not think.

Learning comes naturally to kids - especially young ones - who have not been to a 'normal' school and told by a teacher not only what to learn, but that they are only able to learn at school. Kids who are left alone do learn, not all of the time, but at least some of it. But more importantly, they think. They think about what they like, who they like, why things are like they are, why things are not like they could be. Kids like me asked a lot of questions... which some adults find annoying, as they cannot, or cannot be bothered, answering them. Even worse, they have been taught (by 'normal' schools) not to ask questions, well not to ask any 'why' questions, just 'how' questions. They ask questions like 'How many maths questions do I have to do

tonight?’ or ‘How long do you want this essay?’ or ‘How long is the lunch break?’ or ‘How do you spell Napoleon?’ I am not saying these are bad questions, but that things get pretty bogged down if you never ask anything else. Like, ‘Why are we doing this?’ ‘Why do people cry?’ ‘Can we make a cake?’ ‘Can Peter tell us about his little baby brother, who he saw born yesterday?’ Why questions do not have to start with the word ‘why’ – but they ask more than just how to implement a process. Process questions are what ‘normal’ schools talk about when they say that they encourage ‘active learning’ or ‘inquiry’ or ‘initiative’ – but all these words are actually quite the opposite to the reality. The direction of the student’s ‘learning’ path is still not chosen by him, the student. Rather, it is chosen by a teacher, and assessed by that teacher according to her standards. I call this schooling, which for me is the opposite of learning. Students, kids like me, learn how to turn their brains off. You have to, or you are always in trouble and considered annoying for asking too many questions, for just ‘thinking.’ The weird thing though is that teachers tell you to think, and not to ask so many questions. This may seem a bit confusing at first, but it is easy... they do not really mean think, but think like them, think what they are thinking. ‘Not thinking!’ often means challenging things that just seem stupid, not simply accepting that someone else knows best for you - in everything. Unfortunately thinking for yourself almost always becomes impossible, since there are, for kids who go to ‘normal’ schools so many teachers, over so many days, months and years, that in the end you have no idea what you are thinking, or talking about... you have no idea what matters to you. You forget what you really thought and, in a way, who you are, as these are totally connected, and give up trying to think for yourself.

My next school was Fitzroy Community School, also in Melbourne. My mum is pretty cool, and decided that she loved us all too much to send us to school, well 'normal' school anyway, so she started her own, right in our very own house. Well, not a normal house, a commune, with four families, and heaps of kids. In this school you had to go to a few classes, in the mornings four days a week, and so you still had heaps of free time to do what you wanted. This scares some adults, who think that kids with no one guarding them, with no one telling them how to behave or what to do, will just go crazy. This is not true for free kids, and seemed stupid to us. Why just be stupid because you can? I really could not understand why some kids from 'normal' schools, just went totally na-na when the teacher was not looking. What idiots? But eventually I think I got it. They had always been told what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and were totally controlled in everything. School for them was like a prison. So when the teacher, like a warden, was not looking and controlling you, you go stupid. Because you have never chosen to do anything yourself, you - the normal kid - do not even know that you can. Normal kids have often lost the ability to look, and to see, and to think... and to play; by being told what to do all the time. Kids like this are scary, and scared me. But grown-ups are much scarier, as grown-ups who do not think for themselves, can and have done terrible things. I guess they must have gone to 'normal' schools.

I feel that I have to say a bit about what free schools are here, as you will be thinking that I have got everything backwards, and made my schools sound all very good, and 'normal' school horrible. Well, this is true. But, I think you will not understand the most basic thing about free schools... the thing that I think makes them work. And a thing that many working in them do, but do not see. These adults understand it in

their hearts, but not necessarily in their heads, so do it but cannot necessarily explain it. Free schools, community schools and alternative schools work because, for the most part, the people who work in them, start them, *believe in them...* and care. They think that being a kid is very important. That life is for living, not for controlling. That thinking for yourself is more important than doing as you are told. But, most importantly, they love kids. They love people. This love is empowering, as they think that people, kids especially, are born good, and that this goodness, if left alone, will bloom. And it does. When I look back on all my years, at these 'wild' schools, my truest feeling is that I was loved.

So, that is what all this is about. Love. In this, I have looked at three wonderful men, and their works. One speaks about love, another about how 'normal' schools crush kids, and another about peace. I hope you like reading everything I have written as much as I enjoyed writing it.

And finally, remember, be brave!

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Abstract

This dissertation has three major areas of thought: deschooling, Summerhill as the representative of alternative schools, and violence and peace theory. The dissertation begins with a brief introduction (1.0). Violence theory (2.0) is followed by the deschooling (3.0) movement's critique of traditional schooling in terms of the hidden curriculum, a critique with many parallels to that of structural violence. Summerhill (4.0) is then presented as a school that was established and run so as to avoid the disempowering of the child that is so frequent in traditional schooling, a school in which every attempt has been made to establish a peace orientated culture. Peace theory (5.0) follows this briefly, and then again in more detail in (6.0) where its application to practice in the traditional school system is examined. Peace studies courses (7.0) are presented, along with the problems inherent to establishing them in school. Two plans for the future (8.0) follow, but these are not intended to be the only possibilities. The conclusion (9.0) examines the mono-dimensional school system (within a framework of global diversity), and follows with two recent innovations, one at the micro level, another at the macro, and ends with the maxim: peace by peaceful means.

1.0 Introduction

School is the advertising agency that makes you believe that you need society as it is (Illich, 1971, p.114).

The education system, as an instrument of knowledge, liberation, freedom, democracy, empowerment, indoctrination and social control, even peace, has been written on before, so why this thesis?

I believe in peace – peace as absence of violence, peace as the absence of prejudice, peace as universal justice; peace as individuals growing, exploring, creating their own lives, lives they want, lives they love. Peace as growth without interference; peace, to use the words of Johan Galtung, as the actualisation of the potential within every individual (1975, p. 110).

This thesis explores the work of three great thinkers: Ivan Illich, the man most frequently associated with the deschooling movement; A.S. Neill, the founder of arguably the world's most famous school, Summerhill; and Johan Galtung, the founder of modern peace studies. Neill and Illich offer very different perspectives on school and schooling. Neill's perspective is that of the founder and headmaster of a small, progressive, independent school at which the paths of learning are those chosen by the students themselves, a school where all aspects of school life are created, changed and governed according to the wants of the students. Neill (1964) believes that raising happy, open-minded, independent, tolerant humans requires those involved to let go, and let these children, and later teenagers, determine their own

lives, their own learning. Neill (1964, p. 12) thinks that adults, parents and educators who try to 'mould' children, create character-less automatons, people who try and fit the expectations of others, of society... robots who adopt the judgements of others, rather than think, judge and decide for themselves, regardless of how ugly conformity becomes. To live happily and joyfully, Neill declares (1964, p. 12), the child must live his own life. To read Neill is to read his story and the story of his children - their struggles, efforts and growth; and his wishes, joys, frustrations, hopes. His character and beliefs emanate through all of his writings, giving them a very personal feel, in which his pipe, study, records (mostly jazz), potatoes and children are described both in detail and with affection.

Illich, on the other hand, is a structuralist, criticising society's major institutions. His critique of schooling, in *Deschooling Society* (1971), revolves around his belief that schools 'school' - that schools, in other words, teach the need to be taught. Illich thinks that the task of education is to liberate, or empower, the individual: something that he believes schools **do not do**. Schools are seen, in teaching the need to be taught, to take self-determination from the individual, and to replace personal values with external, institutionally determined ones. Individuals are 'schooled out' of their individuality and into accepting the judgements of others, of institutions, into abdicating personal authority, all of which results in the alienation of and from oneself.

These critiques and proposals of Illich (1971) and Neill (1964) are, throughout this work, reviewed, compared and contrasted with and against peace and violence theory - examining the school system, in essence, through a peace and violence filter.

Finally, two positive suggestions are made with regard to the future. Summerhill as an example of a school in which structural violence is eliminated, and Illich's 'edu-credit vouchers' as an alternative method of structuring the learning process, again peacefully.

This work is not intended as a depressant, but rather as an inspiration. It asserts that change is not only possible, but that we have, now, today, both the resources and the insight to make it happen. It argues that the structural violence inherent in our current system of education can be eliminated, that education for peace is possible.

Godwin, writing in 1783 (before the introduction of universal schooling), feared school's potential to control:

Governments will not fail to employ it, to strengthen its hands, and perpetuate its institutions (in Smith, 1983, p. 87).

Education for peace requires that individuals, rather than governments, are empowered by the process of learning. Education for peace, education in peace and by peace, requires the initiative to again be returned to the learner.

2.0 Violence

Violence is not seen as innate, inherent in man, but as ultimately, in the final analysis, conditioned by external circumstances (Galtung, 1975, p. 77).

Violence takes various forms, the most commonly thought of being direct, or personal violence, violence between people, person against person violence¹. This may be physical or emotional, frequent or infrequent, even intended or unintended. The thing that identifies this type of violence is that there is an actor.

This thesis does not concern itself with direct or personal violence, but with structural and to some degree, cultural violence. However, before examining structural violence, it is probably best to give a definition of violence itself.

Galtung defines violence thus:

Violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisations (1975, p. 110-1).

This very broad definition of violence obviously incorporates the traditional, narrowest view of violence, that violence is somatic deprivation (deprivation of health, with killing the extreme) at the hands of an actor who intends this to be the consequence. Galtung however wants to include a lot more than just this, since

¹ Media violence, people killing, maiming, hurting, robbing others.

without a broad definition of violence too little is achieved in the name of peace - peace defined as the absence of violence. Galtung (1975, p. 111) intends his definition of violence to include highly unacceptable social orders, orders that he does not think are compatible with the concept of peace. Peace, held up as an ideal, as something worth striving for, must include more than just the non-beating of one person by another, or the non-beating of one State by another. Violence defined as the difference between the actual and the potential, or more specifically, as the cause between the actual and the potential, is not without difficulty, something Galtung (1975, p. 111) is aware of. Violence thus works in two directions, it may increase, or may impede the decrease in the difference, between the actual and the potential. Violence is present when the avoidable occurs, when the potential, in other words, is higher than the actual.

2.1 Structural Violence

Structural violence occurs when the society or community is constructed or organised in such a way that certain individuals or groups are denied the realisation of their potential. Central to this is the level of insight and resources present in a community. If insight and/or resources are monopolised by a group or class or are used for other purposes, then the actual level falls (or exists) below the potential, and violence is present in the system (Galtung, 1975, p. 111). Structural violence is present in the system when the system produces less than it is capable of. The great difficulty here is the meaning of 'potential realisations' with particular reference to mental aspects, a difficulty Galtung (1975, p. 111) acknowledges, but does not discuss.

The concept of guilt, so far unmentioned, is important here, as guilt demands that there be an actor, and an *intention* to act violently. Guilt is central to our (Western) ethical system, and also our system of jurisprudence. Galtung's theory of structural violence is, however, quite different, with no mention of intention, his theory of violence is entirely located on the consequence side. Galtung, commenting on systems such as ours, states that any system directed against *intended* violence will easily fail to capture structural violence in its nets – and may hence be catching the small fry and letting the big fish loose (1975, p. 115). This is so because personal violence, violence where there is a guilty person, is nearly always an event, an occurrence, and there is very often a person complaining about it. It registers as a non-typical happening. Someone has been hurt, and someone has done the hurting. Personal violence shows (Galtung, 1975, p. 117) as it represents change and dynamism, while structural violence does not. Structural violence is silent, static. In a static society personal violence will register, whereas structural violence may be seen as about as natural as the air around us (Galtung, 1975, p. 117). Galtung (1975, p. 117) also runs the alternative argument, that in a highly dynamic society, structural violence will show as its static state stands out against the movement of society. Revolutions, in general, concern themselves with structural violence.

A violent structure is person invariant, in that the structure is clearly violent regardless of who staffs it, and regardless of the level of awareness of the participants. The structure will persist through changes in person: the violence is built into the structure. The human element in this is that the structure *only* exists so long as it is upheld by the summated and concerted actions of human beings, and as such, all, not just the top dogs, contribute to its operation, all are responsible, as all can shake it through their

non-cooperation. The greatest agent of oppression in most cases is the self, because to the extent that the tools of oppression have been internalised, the person has been persuaded not to perceive their own, and others, oppression.

Oppression, internalised over time is a result of long term propaganda, brain-washing and indoctrination. This indoctrination does not have to be negative, in that the individual be punished for their non-cooperation, or denied a range of actions by the structure, in that their actions are curtailed. Indoctrination can be positive, in that a person is rewarded when he does what the influencer considers right. The strange thing (Galtung, 1975, p. 113) about this type of manipulation is that while that actual (overt) constraints on a person's movements may be decreased, the person may still be effectively prevented from realising their potential. Galtung states that this system is better in that it gives pleasure rather than pain, but worse in terms of being more manipulatory, less overt (1975, p. 113).

The difference between violence that is personal or direct, and violence that is structural, is that direct violence hits human beings as a direct result of the actions of others, while structural violence hits them indirectly because repressive structures are upheld by the efforts² of other persons. Structural violence would be a mere abstraction if it were not upheld by the system, through actions that do not directly 'hit' another, but deny them the possibility of acting, progressing, moving or thinking in certain directions. These actions, while violent, may perhaps not be perceived of as such by the person performing them, as their social background, their social selves, expects such an action of them. The 'issue' of colour, for instance, is a mere

abstraction unless it is upheld by the actions of an individual or individuals.

Galtung's broad concept of violence is aimed at combating this type of violence, by showing unjust social systems for what they are, upholders and perpetrators of violence. An example will help here:

A clerk denies a man entry into university because of his colour, or a woman entry because of her sex. In these examples, violence is being done, since these people are being denied the actualisation of their potential. However, without a critique that goes beyond personal violence, the violence that is done may not be seen for what it is. The clerk has been so conditioned by his society, by its expectations and beliefs, by his perceived identity within it, by his construction of his social self, that he fails to perceive that he is, by the action of denial of a place, upholding a system that is violent, and thus doing violence. Structural violence is person invariant, in that there may be twelve clerks doing this task, or a new clerk every year, but nothing changes. The goodness, or niceness, or Church attendance, or political affiliation of the clerk, in doing this task, is irrelevant.

Intention, so central to discussions of personal violence, is absent here. The person is simply doing his job. Neither they, nor their colleagues or friends, nor society at large, see their action as one of violence, or as one of oppression. The tools of oppression have become so internalised that their action/inaction is not challenged, their social selves accept the structure as part of the way things are, the way the world is, or works. Their culture supports their view of the world, its people and functioning, and their place and tasks within it.

² 'Effort' here is typically just doing what one has always done, as simple as just going to work and

The Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Liberation Movement, the Tibetan Freedom Movement and the Deschooling Movement are either presently involved, or did involve themselves in a struggle to rid the world of various forms of structural violence. As such the Dalai Lama is not being especially caring or enlightened or magnanimous when he claims to have no argument with the Chinese people, with individual Chinese people involved in the administration and governance of Tibet, he is just stating the fact. The structure *is* violent, and as such is *person* invariant.

2.2 Cultural Violence

By 'cultural violence' we mean those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence... that can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence. Violence studies are about two problems: the use of violence and the legitimisation of that use. It is cultural violence... those parts of a culture that shape our worldview into accepting direct and structural violence, into legitimising it... or, if not actually making it feel right, at least not letting us see it as wrong (Galtung, 1990, p. 291).

The suppression of different groups within society, through the structures of society, is acceptable because they have been assigned a lower/different status by the dominant culture of the society: they are less rational, responsible, honest, Christian, less intelligent; or are female, immoral, un-clean, male... to name but a few categories. The use of the dehumanising 'they' **is** important here. Suppression,

doing one's job.

genocide and holocaust are not terms used by those pursuing these ends, from their perspective, from the **confines** of their culture, the dominant culture, their acts are compatible with their world view, how the world is, or should be. The culture preaches, teaches, admonishes, eggs on, and dulls us into seeing exploitation and/or repression as normal and natural, or into not seeing them at all (Galtung, 1990, p. 295).

Within our culture, certain tenets or beliefs in modernisation, development and progress are seen as apodictic; not to believe in them reflects badly on the non-believer, not on the belief (Galtung, 1990, p. 298). Schools fit this category, for to challenge the place and role of schools puts the credibility of the challenger into question, not that of the school. Schools are accepted as necessary, as essential, as part of the inalienable structure of society despite their daily failings: abuse, drugs, truancy, bullying, poor literacy achievements, high drop out rates and teacher stress.

Schools, having inherited or created this *deified* role, are thus able to act in many ways that are generally considered socially unacceptable, without the need to justify themselves. The public feels unable to challenge the structure of schools, their methodology, their assumptions and their place within the community. Deschoolers would argue that schools have taught us not to ask, not to question, and to leave these types of queries to those better informed, better educated, better *schooled*. The authority of the school exists beyond the school, leaving generation after generation of children to grow in a setting beyond their or their parents' determination, again and again accepting its values and decrees. It is here that the deschooling movement takes up the challenge.

3.0 Deschooling

The deschooling movement began in the sixties, and developed during the early seventies, when many alternatives to the mainstream education system were both envisioned and enacted. The deschooling movement was at the most radical end of all reform movements, with Ivan Illich the unofficial leader, after the publication and widespread circulation of *Deschooling Society* in 1971. The basic proposal of the deschooling movement was the abolition of the mandatory aspect of school attendance, and a lessening of the hierarchical nature of modern schooling institutions, generating a return of the control of the educational process to the learner. The movement did not last long, as it soon alienated itself from all branches of the education community, even the alternative, community and free school movements, through its attempt to remove from education all imposed structural and hierarchical aspects.

Illich (1971) states quite clearly that his objectives, in terms of human liberation are incompatible with mainstream schooling, and generally incompatible with most forms of alternative education. Illich believes that no amount of manipulation of the current system will bring about the removal of the hidden curriculum (1971, pp. 39-40) and so changes to curriculum, or teaching methodologies are, at best, irrelevant. Within an authoritarian (normal) school structure there is simply too little room to manoeuvre.

The deschooling movement's critique of school centres around what the movement calls the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum is the term used by the

deschoolers in their analysis of the variation between the claims of, and the actual achievements of school. This refers to the discrepancy between what schools say they do, and what they actually do, and revolves around the claims that educators make regarding the goals and achievements of normal (institutionalised) schooling, that schools:

teach the learner how to learn,
empower their students as creative thinkers,
foster leadership,
nurture independence,
teach moral judgements and responsibility,
and pass on the knowledge inherent in the school's curriculum: mathematics, English, science, Indonesian, social studies, history...

Deschoolers believe that it is the structure of schools themselves, as impersonal, massive, reactive, authoritarian and un-affective institutions that negate, by their very nature, the achievement of such goals. They believe that the curriculum, even when it stresses such qualities, is subverted in its achievement by an incompatible structural setting.

Reimer (in Lister, 1974, p. 2) declares that schools have the following functions:

custodial care, social-role selection, indoctrination *and* education/learning and that the performance of the first three negate any hope of the latter.

Custodial care is frequently referred to as imprisonment by the deschooling movement, with students referred to as inmates and teachers as wardens, with mandatory sentences of approximately 10 years³. Refusal to attend brings heavy consequences, with teachers, truant officers, social workers and the police sent in pursuit of the ‘offender’. School is not however presented as a sentence or arduous (by either the educational authorities, or by society at large), *but as salvation*. The process of schooling is seen to offer not only enlightenment, but virtually unlimited opportunities: the longer the sentence, the greater the enlightenment and opportunities. The desire to partake of this rite of passage has become almost universally accepted, with families worldwide striving to send their children to school. Society has developed a ‘need’ for the rite of school. Illich goes so far as to say that:

school has become the world religion of the modern proletariat, and makes futile promises of salvation to the poor of the technical age (Illich, 1971, p. 18).

This universal faith in the religion of school, virtually unchallengeable, has allowed schools to develop long and complicated initiation performances that are graded, programmed, sequential and mandatory, creating the belief that universal schooling is absolutely necessary (Illich, 1971, p. 15). This reinforces the myth that no alternative system of educating the young does or even could exist, the process is just too long and complicated.

³ The language is highly emotive, but is intended to be so, as deschoolers are really this critical of the

The mandatory aspect of schooling, that which enables the deschoolers to claim that it is a day jail, is 'sweetened' by teachers and parents who do not see it as a punishment but as a procedure or system that is 'doing the child good'. The deception here is so effective that in most cases even the 'inmates' do not notice the bars, bars that are negating the realisation of their selves, of their own wishes and desires. Non-attendance though has come to be seen by all as not only a step backward in terms of personal progress, but as self-destructive. Not just self-destructive in the eyes of the world, but as self-destructive in the eyes of the students themselves. Subordination and the linking of one's future and desires with those of the world has come to be almost universally acknowledged as 'what one does'. Society's domination over the individual, complete when the individual loses all that makes them distinct from society, is close to entire. The situation is close to that of Skinner's *Walden Two*, a 'futuristic' education system.

We can achieve a sort of control under which the controlled, though they are following a code much more scrupulously than was ever the case under the old system, nevertheless, feel free. They are doing what they want to do, not what they are forced to do. That's the source of the tremendous power of positive reinforcement – there's no restraint and no revolt. By a careful cultural design, we control not the final behaviour, but the inclination to behave – the motives, the desires, the wishes. The curious thing is that in this case the question of freedom never arises (in Hemmings, 1972, p. 178).

That you should 'go to school' and 'university' and 'learn' and 'get an education' and that all these things are *good for you*, and that you are esteemed for them, and congratulated for them are all part of the reinforcement of the ritual that is modern universal schooling. Adults and children alike now all believe in school. The place of schools (in our society) is so complete, that the tools of coercion of the past, corporal punishment - the cane, and the religious threat of everlasting damnation, obvious tools of control - can and have been done away with. This makes the student ever more likely to question the validity of his own experience, his motives, wants and hopes, when they are unfulfilled. The lack of fulfilment represents the clash between his hopes and expectations, leaving him feeling lost, for to question what he is being told is for his own good, is to question the foundations of modern society. The student of today is unable to locate the enemy, the oppressor, the creator of his subjugation. Unlike the old situation, where the oppressor held a large cane, he now smiles at you, and tries to understand you, denying the systematic curtailments of the system - making revolt next to impossible. The structural aspect of control and indoctrination is denied, leaving all who challenge it in doubt of their own experience, a horrifying result.

Schools, once seen as places of indoctrination, be it religious, social, political or economic, have somehow freed themselves of this perception, despite the fact that the underlying structure is unchanged. Authority is still out of the hands of the learner. What has changed is that the acceptance of the doctrine of schools themselves has become so universally accepted, that it is not seen. The process of indoctrination has become so normal, that those doing the indoctrination no longer need to wield Bibles and canes. The enemy without has become the enemy within, assisted by huge

personal uncertainty and the assumption of the modern world that one does not really know what one thinks one knows (Henry, in Hemmings, 1972, p. 179), or wants, or desires, or perhaps even likes. Uncertainly fostered by the institution of school, which defines reality for the modern person through the assimilation of the person's autonomy. Autonomy, based upon personal motivations is lost, as personal motivations are replaced with institutional expectations. The school knows what and who you are, what you are capable of, and thus what you want. Schools, by their very nature take away personal responsibility, as without their universal claim to 'know' and the promise of salvation, they cannot justify their own existence.

This is the essence of the critique of the deschoolers, that acceptance of the process of schooling implies the psychological transfer of responsibility to institutions and the acceptance of institutional values. As such, the curriculum, methodology and practice of the individual schools are of little importance, as no amount of manipulation of the current system will remove the hidden curriculum, which is why Illich even rejects all forms of progressive education (1971, p. 39-40).

3.1 The Rite of Schooling

Illich claims that schools curtail learning, and thus have an anti-educational effect both on the individual and on the society. This is done through the monopolisation of all aspects of what is educational by the schooling industry: school is recognised as *the institution that specialises in education* (Illich, 1971, p. 15). Many factors are seen to justify the 'monopoly' granted to schools in the endeavour of education, not least the high number of 'failures', the high cost of schooling and the complexity of the

industry (Illich, 1971, p. 15). Education has become seen as a difficult, arcane and frequently near impossible task, requiring the mobilisation of vast resources: both human and capital, a task only manageable through the incorporation of a large number of specialists assembled in massive institutions (Illich, 1971, p. 15).

Part of the rite of schooling is the establishment of particular categories and roles, in this case the student and teacher, where the student (child) with their inferior status needs care and assistance, granting authority to the professional category of teacher, charged with their care (Illich, 1971, p. 35). In removing education to the special environment of the classroom, a place that requires full time attendance, schools begin to take on almost mystical properties and sacred natures (Illich, 1971, p. 37).

Learning is seen as a product of teaching, that to receive teaching is the only way to learn. The legitimacy of individually inspired and personally constructed forms of learning is reduced, to learn something you need to be taught.

Schools have also been seen to have (historically) freed up the distribution of roles within society, roles once distributed by princes, lineage, sacred ordination or a succession of feats, such as hunting, bravery or the crafts of war (Illich, 1971, p. 19). Illich argues that while schools are supposed to have detached role assignment from personal history, they have rather monopolised the distribution of roles within society (1971, p. 19), in the sense that, all roles are now distributed by the process of school. The learning available through the enactment and performance of *different* roles within society has disappeared, replaced with schools and their mono-dimensional yet 'total' curriculum. The varied curriculum and various life paths available in the 'pre-schooled' society have all been sacrificed at the altar of schooling: the baker,

seamstress, doctor, carpenter, cleric and trader now all pay homage before the altar of school.

The effective dis-establishment of this new rite of passage – many years of mandatory attendance of an imposed curriculum requires (Illich, 1971, p. 19) the banning of discrimination on the basis of schooling. School based discrimination is discrimination that disallows promotion on the grounds of non-attendance of school, and the banning of many forms of work and employment that non-attendance creates. Job access, educational instruction and all forms of promotion are de-linked from attendance at certified educational institutions. As there are laws banning discrimination on the basis of race, religion, age, sex and beliefs, so too we need laws banning discrimination on the basis of schooling. This would *not* exclude performance tests of competence, but would include certificates or diplomas that have no or little relation to the performance of the role, task or skill, certificates that frequently designate merely many years of attendance of school. Where skills are necessary to perform a certain task, then these are tested, but whether you learnt them at school, or at work, or in the street, or from an aunt is irrelevant.

The rite of passage into society is thus thrown open to those with ability and appropriate skill, rather than those who mimic the words and ways of their elders and superiors. To learn, argues Illich (1971, p. 19) means to acquire new knowledge, a new skill or insight, while promotion, as currently enacted, depends largely on the opinion of others and reserves instruction to those whose every step in learning fits previously prescribed measures of social control. The myth of the equality of schooling is exposed; success measured in the ability to mimic and reproduce the

works and ideas of others, in the accuracy of this reproduction and time taken for the completion of this task. Those willing (and able to afford) to submit to more than 15 years of social control and indoctrination, the attendance of a complete ‘education’, are considered successful by society; and those who either cannot or will not submit, are nevertheless ‘schooled’ through the ideology of schooling to feel deprived and inferior (Illich, 1971, p. 49). Conformity equals success – a progressively greater consumption of the products of society.

The ritual of schooling, while still a recent phenomenon, has taken over many of the traditional functions of the church, guild and family, and has thus become fundamental to in our perception of society. This has been done so effectively and thoroughly that it is only with great difficulty that we are able to imagine a society without schools, or a society in which there exists alternative systems or institutions that assume some or all of the tasks currently claimed by the school. Illich (1971, p. 15) states that the belief that schooling is absolutely necessary is becoming increasingly unchallengeable. The task of the deschoolers is to highlight the structural violence inherent in the current school system, and to offer an alternative.

3.2 Salvation

School makes futile promises of salvation to the poor of the technological age

(Illich, 1971, p. 18).

Another myth of the schooling institution is the promise of salvation for all, a promise that if you attend school, take on its values and codes of conduct, work hard, then you

will succeed. This promise of infinite success and infinite promotion to all would imply that we live in a world of infinite resources, that are equally accessible by all. However, both the physical limitations of the world, and the economic and political structuring of society deny this myth; resources are limited, and promotion in school and work involves winners and losers. Not everyone can make it. Not everyone can be 'saved'.

The other lie is that of equality, or of equal opportunity, that all who attend have an equal chance of success, regardless of background. Jefferson (in Reimer, 1971, p. 27) exposed this 'myth' when he said, arguing for public schools⁴, that by this means we shall each year rake a score of geniuses from the ashes of the masses... The result of such a process, as the English aristocracy learned long before Jefferson, is to keep the elite alive while depriving the masses of their potential leaders. Herein lies the myth of equality, of the false meritocracy of the school. Those of the elite have a much greater chance of success than the poor. It is only 'geniuses' of the poor who make it. However, the myth of the meritocracy of schools is a myth the poor feel compelled to swallow, or unable to challenge. [See also Appendix IV].

In any competitive system there are going to be winners and losers, but what is not acknowledged is the handicap that the poor suffer in the schooling industry. This undisclosed fact has led to the massive growth in schools over the last century, as to the masses, and their leaders, schools have held out unprecedented hope of social justice. To the elite they have been an unparalleled instrument of control, appearing to give what they do not, while convincing all that they get what they deserve (Reimer,

1971, p. 28). The myth *is* that of equality of opportunity. The fact *is* the continuance of both the elite, and the old social order or class system. The myth of the egalitarian nature of modern schooling is another false myth. **The poor are relatively unsuccessful in school** (Reimer, 1971, p. 33).

It is worth restating what Illich (1971) perceives to be the greatest false promise - and greatest danger of - institutionalised schooling, *the salvation myth*. The myth of the salvation of schooling has another incalculable cost, in that it allows others to dictate your salvation, to decide what you need and what is good for you. Illich states:

The totally destructive and constantly progressive nature of obligatory instruction will fulfil its own ultimate logic unless we begin to liberate ourselves right now from our pedagogical hubris, our belief that man can do what God cannot, namely, manipulate others for their own salvation (1971, p. 55).

Institutions take over the right to dictate to individuals what is good for them, defining this right as a duty inherent to the institution. In this, Illich (1971) is not incorrect in attributing a God-like aura to the structure of institutions.

The parallel here with the church is not, for Illich, unintended. School in his eyes has become the global religion – the majority are already hooked on school, that is they are schooled in their inferiority toward the better schooled (1971, p. 15). Salvation within the schooling industry comes at a great cost, that of the total subordination to

⁴ Until this time ‘formal academic education’ existed solely in the form private tutors, usually only

authority, and a daily enactment of its institutional values. To achieve school's salvation is to achieve total alienation, subordinating one's personal values, wishes, desires, and hopes to those things that the school thinks are good or right for you.

3.3 The Social Powerlessness of the Poor in a schooled World

The poor have always been socially powerless, but their increasing reliance on institutional care adds a new dimension to their helplessness: psychological impotence, the inability to fend for themselves (Illich, 1971, p. 11).

Much of this psychological impotence, a lack of empowerment, is schooled into the poor. Those who have not been to school and those who have had less schooling are schooled into awe of those who have had schooling; the longer the confinement, the greater the prestige, with the poor of all countries aspiring to a level of schooling that the rich of the developed world attain, a minimum of 15 years. School thus supports the status quo, as the rich are able to stay in school longer, with schooling being disproportionately more expensive the longer one attends. This 'caste' system is not only national but also international, as materially wealthier countries can afford longer periods of attendance at school for a greater proportion of their population.

Obligatory schooling inevitably polarises a society; it also grades the nations of the world according to an international caste system (Illich, 1971, p. 17). Poor nations and poor families cannot compete. The global myth of 'education being found in schools' denies many from participating in the acquiring of knowledge. Other

accessible by the more wealthy),

sources, friends, family, work, colleagues... life, are seen as at best limited in the education that they can provide. Countries are rated, according to Illich, by the average number of years of schooling its citizens attend schools (1971, p. 17), with dignity and esteem going to those whose educational indoctrination is longest⁵. The myth of the school is self-fulfilling, a form of personal disempowerment and 'schooled' colonisation, in which salvation is only achieved through the expenditure of huge amounts of wealth. Nations, like individuals, are hooked on school. Knowledge and skills are only acceptable if they are certified, and certification often has less to do with ability than with attendance. Whether you can plumb or not does not make you a plumber. The important thing is whether you have done a state accredited training course - not whether you can fix a blocked drain. To be a philosopher requires a PhD in philosophy, but not necessarily the ability to think, or to analyse society.

3.4 Process and Substance

Illich (1971) believes that a major confusion in modern society lies in the merging of process and substance (or aim), and that it is predominantly schools that are responsible for this confusion. Students become unable to distinguish treatment from results, they become blurred... and assume that the more treatment there is, the better the results (Illich, 1971, p. 9). This confusion leads them to confuse teaching with learning, grade achievement with education and a diploma with competence (Illich, 1971, p.9). The student is 'schooled' into accepting service for value, process for ability - and acts, abilities and creative endeavours with the institutions that claim

⁵ The United Nations Development Report includes schooling as a measure of a nations global rank

jurisdiction over them. Qualities and values are seen to be inherent in the institutions that claim jurisdiction over them. Police protection is taken for safety; military might for national security; and the rat race for productive work. The value of the endeavour is superseded by the process of the institution, with improvement linked to the allocation of more resources to the institution in question. The military machine typifies this way of thinking: it would have us believe that the more **bombs** and **fighters** and **planes** and **boats** and **guns** we have, the safer we are. That a nuclear arsenal capable of not only destroying the planet a thousand times over, but also making it uninhabitable for a million years, is **national security!**

Process and substance are different: teaching is not learning, and thus more teaching does not bring about more learning, as more guns do not bring about more security. The process that is institutional provision does not necessarily equate to the substance we desire, and in most cases the institutional structure negates the possibility of its declared aim, substance, ever being realised. Peace will never, ever, come at the end of the barrel of a gun. Empowerment will never come through being forced, controlled and manipulated by an institution.

3.5 Institutionalised Values

Teaching and schooling are not synonymous with learning; one comes from within, the other from without. Merging these, teaching and learning, as schools do, removes the individual's self-determination, replacing it with an institutionally determined course, redefining worth for the individual as something determined by another. The

(UNDP, 1999).

institutionalisation of values leads inevitably to physical pollution, social polarisation and psychological impotence: a process of global depravation and global misery (Illich, 1971, p, 9). This phenomenon is common to both rich and poor who are both institutionalised into the need for school, the abdication of personal authority to the other, the specialist, be it a government department or individual or group certified as 'specialist' by the proper authority. Defining what is legitimate and what is not becomes the domain of the other... and within this institutionalised worldview, self-reliance becomes suspect; learning on one's own irresponsible, unreliable (or just unbelievable!); and community organisation, when not supported by the state, a form of aggression or subversion (Illich, 1971, p. 10). Legitimacy becomes devoid of all personal values and individual beliefs and is transferred to those able to gain the 'rubber stamp' of the state - official recognition and certification.

In accepting the institutional values of schools, personal values are, to a great degree, pushed aside. The myth that everything can be performed, measured and certified, very much part of the ethic of schools, disenfranchises affective attributes and empowers institutional judgements. Self-reliance and individual responsibility are eroded as personal values secede to institutional ones. What I believe, think, honour, want and value is continually diluted... leaving a list of things and habits that are said to be 'for my own good'.

School prepares for the alienating institutionalisation of life by teaching the need to be taught (Illich, 1971, p. 63).

This is Illich's most frequently stated message. The claim here is not concerned with the acceptance of *particular* institutional values, but with the accepting of institutional values per se – and the reduction of personal autonomy. The self is lost to the institution, its control and its definitions of worth. In this regard school makes *alienation preparatory to life*, depriving education of reality and work of creativity. Teaching the need to be taught is the first step in the preparation for a life of institutionalised alienation. The hidden curriculum of all institutions is the manipulation of man's world view, an ethic that society *will not free itself from* until we give up the persuasive belief that others can be *manipulated for their own good*.

School is founded on the assumption that someone else, a teacher, educator or education department bureaucrat knows better than you do, knows what you need to learn, what you *really* want, and what is good for you. In the total provision of the learning environment that is school, the learner has no choice but to accept the authority's judgements, *non-compliance is not tolerated*. Non-compliance is failure. Those who reject school are ostracised as social outcasts, not only by the school, but by society at large, to be shunned. "Don't play with her..." they cry, "she's a bad influence." The rite of school is established as necessary - excommunication for the non-believer.

Those who do comply, who take on the works, ways and values of the institution, who mimic and reproduce that which the institution esteems, are rewarded with honours and promotion, one half of the twin edged sword; coercion, punishment and exile for the non-compliant - those who refuse personal enslavement to the school system, the other edge. School is the institution that first and foremost promotes institutional

judgements. Through its monopoly on promotion and success, it is schools more than any other institution, that promote the institutional value of the authority of the other: the state, the institution, the professional, the schooled; all of them disempowering the individual. Schools institutionalise society, or 'school' society into the acceptance and the honouring of its institutions, institutions that continually usurp and negate the independence of the individual.

In school, children learn not only the values of the school, but to accept these values and, thus, to get along in the system (Reimer, 1971, p. 30). In the past this was called indoctrination. Now, only bad schools indoctrinate; good schools teach basic values. The difference here seems not to be in what is taught, but in the overt methodology, that if one is *not* telling a child what to think and do and value, then the child is not being indoctrinated. All schools, however, teach the value of being taught – not learning for oneself – what is good and what is true (Reimer, 1971, p. 30).

Indoctrination however, need not be overt, and is probably more effective if it is not. A system of rewards, positive reinforcements of the values of the school, will corrupt over time (and school goes on for years) the values and personal assessments of worth of the child, until their values become those of the school. Rebellion in the end becomes impossible, as there is nothing and nobody to rebel against, except maybe yourself?

Schools are thus central in the creation of a citizenship that accepts the role and right of institutions in the governing of their lives, teaching conformity to the institution of school, and thus later to the other institutions of society. This is necessarily the case as schools are the first institution that children encounter, or the first highly

institutionalised environment that children encounter, an environment that they are required to attend day in and day out, year after year. In fact, all schools indoctrinate in ways more effective than those which are generally recognised (Reimer, 1971, p. 30).

3.6 Learned Dependency

Illich (1971) blames ‘market manipulation’ for the lack of educational and training experience available outside of school: market manipulation for Illich being the ‘licensing’ of certain individuals and institutions as those permitted to supply education.

Certification (of teachers and schools) constitutes a form of market manipulation and is only plausible to the schooled mind... most teachers of arts and trades are less skilful, less inventive and less communicative than good craftsmen and tradesmen... most language teachers are less proficient... (Illich, 1971, p. 22).

Illich (1971) sees the licensing of certain individuals as restrictive to the attainment of skills, giving not only fewer people the ‘right’ to teach, but frequently less able ones at that. There is however, an even greater cost than that of less skilled teachers, in that the process of institutionalised education takes the creation of an individual’s own education off him or her, and places it into the hands of the bureaucracy, discriminating in favour of school. Thus Illich states what he believes to be the most critically needed principle of educational reform:

the return of the initiative and accountability for learning to the learner or his immediate tutor (1971, p. 24).

Schools, as creators of social reality, do not stop with children, they also create school teachers. Before there were schools there were caretakers of children, gymnastic disciplinarians enforcing practice, and masters with disciples. None of these assumed that learning would result from teaching, while schools treat learning as if it were the product of teaching (Reimer, 1971, p. 37). In limiting learning to what is taught, individuals are totally disenfranchised from their personal experience of the world, and the learning experiences that it provides. Everything of worth, everything the school values, is that which the teacher and the school provide, that which they specialise in. Everything else is either incidental and trivial - or worthless. What counts is what schools provide.

The deschoolers' attack on the learning and teaching element of schooling is therefore much deeper than simply regarding it as irrelevant, they actually claim that it is anti-educational. The enslaving of education as solely within the domain of the school is seen as discrediting the enormous learning opportunities that life itself provides, as well as the learning process itself. If learning becomes solely the mastery of the curriculum, then there is nothing outside of the school that is worth knowing or discovering. Similarly, teachers know all that should be known, and so there is nothing for the learner to discover for themselves, learners thus begin to see themselves as passive recipients of knowledge, knowledge that they cannot learn by themselves. The 'real' experiences of life, self-directed, purposeful, meaningful life

and work (Holt, 1976, p. 7) and the lessons it gives are relegated to second place, behind the taught 'book' learning of school, knowledge that one cannot gather for oneself, knowledge that is in the domain of another, the expert.

In this, schools are claimed by deschoolers (Holt, Illich, Postman, Reimer) to actually oppose true learning, learning that is not only personal and experiential, but also part of the dynamism of the individual. Schools replace this dynamism and natural desire to learn with a cynical contempt for the process of school based learning. Postman quotes from a student who must do an exam for a second time as some students have cheated the first time around... the student is worrying about doing worse.

You study for the big day and then you take the test and then you forget what you studied (1972, p. 58).

This contempt for the learning process, so typical of students, especially high school students who have been in the school system longer, has its roots in the fact that the student has no authority or input into his learning. Prescribed learning, schooling, leads necessarily to dependence, and frequently to a scornful attitude towards learning. Defining *learning* as what goes on in school is thus anti-educational, as not only does it deaden the desire to learn, but, by contrast, in defining life as anti-educational, and as such a waste of time, school removes the student from his greatest possible learning source.

Kafka, thinking of the non-scholarly, remarked that he could not understand why some people were so disdainful of 'everyday' life since that was the only one that

they had (Postman, 1972, p. 62). This attitude seems to be bred in schools, where all 'learning' is done with the explicit object of further gain, or progression within the school system, or into the workplace. Learning for the simple joy of learning, as children learn before they first go to school, through play, observation, experiment, and practice, learning about the world as it effects and acts upon them, seems anathema to the school. Bernard Shaw captures the essence of this when he says that the only time his education was interrupted was when he was in school (in Postman, 1972, p. 57). The exclusive franchise held by schools and teachers retards every individual's learning path.

The natural and equal right of each man to exercise his competence to learn and to instruct is now pre-empted by certified teachers (Illich, 1971, p. 29).

The current system of schooling is pre-packaged, pre-formed, with the expectation that the learner will arrive at the school, much like the 'traditional' employee arrived at their new job, all ready to fit into the mould and routine ready and waiting for them. Student input is rare, if ever, with the school and the teacher deciding what, when, where and how the student will learn. The omnipotence of the teacher denies the student even the possibility of asking *why*. All are denied the right to learn as they wish to learn, and to teach, to share knowledge and skills; to actively participate in the personal pursuit of knowledge and empowerment. The sector that schools exist in, and therefore by necessity exist for, are the areas that schools call learning, teaching and academic - by implication relegating all else to the non-educational. All that is non-school is non-educational, all those who are unschooled, uneducated, and all schooled and non-schooled alike are still schooled into a belief in the *authority* of

schools, authority that costs them individuality and autonomy, authority that disempowers the individual and empowers the schooled state.

This situation has changed little since medieval times when kings could force their subjects to attend to the theological edicts of the church; now modern educators force their disciples through mandatory schooling laws, truant officers, juvenile courts, welfare officers, teachers and the police into a state where their judgements are total subjugated. All initiative and control to do with the acquisition of knowledge - both facts and values - is assumed by the state, and all learn to deliver their autonomy to the state. Illich claims that by making men abdicate the responsibility for their own growth, school leads to a kind of spiritual suicide (1971, p. 65). Initiative is taken from the schooled, and placed into the hands of the other, leading to a life of subsistence, not existence.

Enlightenment, the power to discover, reason and progress through one's own effort is being snuffed out in schools, where knowledge has become the assimilation of an externally provided and pre-packaged curriculum, and promotion brought about by the shadowing of others thoughts and ways. To conform is to 'get ahead'. The role of the teacher is central to the enforcement of conformity, as he combines the role of the umpire, judge and counsellor (Reimer, 1971, p. 37). This provides him with the authority to declare right and wrong, assign grades, and give or deny promotion. Guilt and penance, for failure to conform, similarly lie at the teacher's feet. The state grants the teacher nothing less than omnipotence, on whom the helpless student has no option but to rely. Dependency is taught at school.

Learned dependency is part of the hidden curriculum of schooling, through its promotion of respect for ‘certified’ authority, the regurgitation of past masters, the repression of desires and beliefs, and teaching the student conformity and docility. In this, Illich’s (1971) claim that the overt curriculum is irrelevant is accurate. Whether the class is in Chinese Literature, French Politics or Jewish History, the setting and the interactive process, and the option to partake or not, is not controlled by the student. The structure is not of the students making, and whatever it is, conformity to its precepts is to some degree necessary... its practices, routines, attitudes, belief systems, dress codes, behaviours and form of assessment. To do one’s own thing is *not* an option.

All of these teach an abdication of the person to the institution, a dependency on the structure with regard to thought and action. That is, acceptance of the process of schooling implies the psychological transfer of responsibility to the institution and acceptance of institutional values. And in accepting the institutional values of school, personal values are, to some degree pushed aside, subjugated. The myth that everything can be performed, measured and certified - essential for assessment - denies the value of what the student feels, the place of the emotional in their person, and in their growth and learning. In losing the sense of what they feel, they (the schooled) also lose confidence in their judgements. Self-reliance and individual responsibility are eroded through the lack opportunity to act on one’s own volition. What a person believes in, thinks important, wants and esteems is constantly diluted... leaving a list of things and habits that a person ‘should’ want, things that “*are good for them.*”

Deschoolers see the suppression of the human spirit as part of the weaponry of schooling, a system that inculcates social behaviours desired for a manageable, conformist society: respect of authority, to carry out work not of one's choosing or favour, to be punctual and orderly, to work for distant rewards, to repress emotions in public... (Huberman, in Lister, 1974, p. 55). Huberman (in Lister, 1974, p. 55) similarly sees and is critical of the lack of external motivation in schools, the lack of independence, the uniformity and arbitrary use of authority. These though are not seen as accidental defects or failings of the school, but as part of a deliberate purpose, a purpose identified by many deschoolers as the deliberate creation of a docile citizenry. Holt (in Lister, 1974, p. 43) states:

What this all boils down to is, are we trying to raise sheep – timid, docile, easily driven or led – or free men? If what we want is sheep, our schools are perfect as they are. If we want free men, we'd better start making some big changes.

Undoubtedly, the educational process will gain from the deschooling of society even though this demand sounds to many schoolmen like treason to the enlightenment (Illich, 1971, p. 31). A system of schooling, structured in conformity, docility, dependence and abdication of the personal to the institution is stifling, and surely nothing short of anti-educational. The enlightenment, remembered for hundreds of years as a period of great learning and progress was a period of new thought, new ideas, new thinking, new ways. Nothing new, it seems, happens in school.

Illich (1971) argues that re-enlightenment requires us to divest ourselves of the myth of the authority of schools, and to reclaim the right to think, learn and discover for ourselves. This is to be done by rejecting institutional values, rejecting the notion that the authorities know best, and insisting that the individual has the right to define his own life, regardless of whether this fits in with an authority's prescribed set of expectations and values.

3.7 The Medium is the Message

The medium is the message implies that the dichotomy between content and method is both naive and dangerous (Postman, 1972, p. 30). Postman (1972, p. 30-1) believes that the critical content of any learning experience is the method or process through which the learning occurs, and that it is virtually irrelevant what is said; it is what is done that is critical. In discovering what types of behaviour classrooms and schools promote, it thus becomes necessary to observe what one has students do in them.

So what do students *do* in school? Well, mostly they are required to sit and listen to the teacher, to believe the teacher and all school authorities, and to remember what the teacher says. They rarely make observations, formulate definitions, or perform any task that goes beyond a summary of what someone else has said before (Postman, 1972, p. 30). The entire school process is thus teacher and institution centred, rather than student and individual centred, in which authority is omnipotent and conformity is required. And what lessons do students take from this:

that passive acceptance is the most desirable response,

that discovery is beyond the power of the students,
that recall is the highest form of intellectual achievement,
that the voice of authority is to be trusted,
that independent judgement is to be avoided,
that one's own ideas are inconsequential,
that feelings are irrelevant,
that everything has a right answer,
and that you do not count.

Einstein, on his return to school to prepare for an exam, commented much later on in life that as a consequence, for several years afterwards, he was unable to do any creative work (in Reimer, 1971, p. 33). Given the structure that is modern school, this is perhaps not surprising; rather it is all too predictable. Whatever the declared curriculum, whatever the subjects taken, the medium does not change, the hidden curriculum of disempowerment remains, and constantly is.

3.8 Deschooling in Summary – The Totally Schooled Society

Illich (1971), Reimer (1971), Postman (1972) and Holt (1976) in their critiques of schooling, constantly return to what they see as the greatest evil that schools do, the disempowerment and the alienation of the individual from himself, the fact that schools teach the need to be taught.

Teaching the need to be taught is the inculcation of subservience, the creation of the passive individual, the person who lives his life according to the precepts of others.

In this, the total and exclusive provision of the learning environment leads the child to believe that they are inferior, and must depend on others. Gandhi (in Bjerstedt, 1994, p. 59) defines violence as that which impedes individual self-realisation; an education system that identifies the needs of the learner *from without* denies individual self-realisation, and is thus violent. The need to be taught is the need to follow a path mapped by the other, the system, a Huxleyian world, where the designs that the individual may have for himself have been banished - schooled out of them.

The need to be taught is of necessity a training into acceptance of the continuance of the status quo, an acceptance of the world as good, right and proper the way that it is... in that others have sorted it out, and that *they* know best. Questions at school almost entirely revolve around what is, rather than what could be. Students can ask questions about a French General, the name of the artist, the causes of World War One, or the angle of the bisector, but not why they are learning French History, or why they are all assembled inside on such a nice day, or why they cannot help each other, or why the teacher is in a bad mood, or why exams test what you do not know, rather than what you do? The only questions allowed are the ones that the teacher knows the answer to, not ones that illicit independent thinking, not ones about freedom, self-determination, self-realisation, questions no text book can answer.

These cannot be taught, they come from within, but can be schooled out of the person. It is impossible to teach a person how to think, thinking is a gift that is given, but it is possible to teach a person not to think, by telling them what, when, where, and how... producing a generation of robots (Neill, 1964, p. 12). Robots - 'beings' that do what they are told without asking why... *beings that are taught all that they know*; beings

unable to determine the worth of anything for themselves. Holt (1970, p. 26) says that school is one big lesson in How To Turn Yourself Off.

Teaching the need to be taught is the single most violent lesson a human can learn, as it is the absolute in alienation, inevitably leaving a person who may know some things, mathematics, accounting, physics, piano, spelling, but not how they feel, what they desire, what they hope for. Self-determination has been replaced by dependence on the other, the future is taken as determined by the other rather than created or originating within the self. Hope, to wish for a future that is pleasing, fulfilling, enlightening, loving and joyful - the tool by which self-actualisation is realised – has been annulled by dependency. To hope is not to be programmed, because to be programmed is to fulfil the expectations of the other: the authority. Freedom is necessary for hope to exist, control and authority annihilate hope, as hope is premised upon the ability to change what is to what could be, to create, and to make true. The critique of the deschoolers, is that of hope versus expectation (Illich, 1971, p. 106) in which hope, trusting in the goodness of human nature, is lost without the possibility of an open future. Hope needs the potential of realisation, a potential that schools crush, through their total provision.

To teach the need to be taught, is to replace hope with expectation, and create a world in which rewards come to those who do as they are told. The need to be taught creates the authority of the other over the individual. The other who knows best what you need to know, what you should do, where you are going! School based authority is built upon the destruction of hope, and the achieving of absolute control in a predetermined path... the creation of a world in which only expectation exists...

Huxley's *Brave New World*. A structure so omnipotent in its violence, so necessary, *so natural*, that any alternative ceases to exist. The world cannot be conceived of in any other form, the tools of oppression are part of each and every individual, *the totally schooled society*.

This fear, the fear of the totally schooled society is shared by Neill. Neill, commenting on structures, is however by contrast to that of the deschoolers, almost absent in his critique. He is not a structuralist, and so his commentary within this framework is minimal. His time is, on the otherhand, taken up with the lives of individual children, and his attempt to let their personal and innate qualities grow in freedom, to let their spirit and goodness bloom.

4.0 Summerhill

All crimes, all hatreds, all wars can be reduced to unhappiness. This book, *Summerhill*, is an attempt to show how unhappiness arises, how it ruins human lives, and how children can be reared so that much of this unhappiness will never arise (Neill, 1964, xxiv).

Summerhill, and its founding principal, A.S. Neill, are synonymous with freedom and educational reform. The school he started in 1921 is still running nearly eighty years on, and still upholding the principles for which he founded it: freedom and love. These principles he promoted on the world stage, through the publication of many books on education, as well as numerous journal articles, radio interviews, and lectures. Summerhill, through its existence and its renowned principal, gained a worldwide reputation as an alternative to mainstream education; a school where the students were respected and accepted as creators of their own learning path, a school where learning took place from the perspective - and under the authority of - the child.

Another aspect of *Summerhill*, the book, is its strong critique of the negativity and sadness that Neill attributes to modern society, based primarily upon poor child raising, and the way in which he sees society both could and should be. He wrote and spoke constantly for a period of over fifty years on the failings of civilisation: the hate, punishment, wanton aggression and restrictive mysticism. At times he is as blunt as to call society sick and unhappy (Darling, 1994, p. 245).

Still, Neill's rebellion against society is not without bounds, he openly admits to accepting both some of the social and statutory norms, to avoid ruin and imprisonment (Neill, 1964, p. 23). Neill for instance believes in free and natural love, but in one of the few areas where he exerts direct authority over the decisions of Summerhill students, he bans their engaging in sexual activities at school. This is done in as sincere a manner as possible, for Neill places adult sincerity as one of the most important conditions of free child raising (Fromm, in Neill, 1964, p. xiii). Neill has never in all his years of work at Summerhill lied to a child and so when confronted with the problem of two adolescent students wishing to have sexual intercourse, he bans it (1964, p. 23), not on any moral or personal ethic, and not on the grounds of religious precept, but for the simple functional reason that the school would be closed down and he himself probably imprisoned if such activity took place. Neill's writings imply that the students had no problem with this ruling, and that they understood and appreciated his predicament (1964, p. 23).

4.1 Goodness

The basis of Summerhill education and the underlying premise upon which all of Neill's philosophy lies is his undying belief in the goodness of children (Snitzer, 1983, p. 56). Neill does not believe that the average child is born a cripple, a coward or a soulless automaton, but with full potentialities to love and be fascinated by life (Fromm, in Neill, 1964, p. xii). Neill viewed children as naturally kind, noble and responsible, qualities that traditional schools and authoritarian families 'schooled' out of them, and as such Neill saw Summerhill as a place where children could exist and

grow in their natural goodness. Summerhill allows children to express their own natural goodness, something traditional schooling drills out of them (Neill, 1964).

The British Governments School Inspectors' report on Summerhill (for the year 1949) paints a picture that would seem to reinforce Neill's claims concerning the nature of children:

the children are full of life and zest, their manners are delightful, if a little unconventional, but their friendliness, ease and naturalness, and their total lack of shyness and self-consciousness made them very easy, pleasant people to get on with (in Neill, 1964, p. 84).

This is a recurring theme of Summerhill, reported by Neill in his many accounts of visitors reactions to Summerhill, and a fact of which he is obviously very proud.

Neill (1964, p. xxiii) claims that it is the difficult child who is unhappy... he is at war with himself and as a consequence, at war with the world... no happy man ever preached a war or lynched a Negro. Neill believes that social problems are produced by hatred (Darling, 1994, p. 246), and that when love replaces fear in child raising, then hatred disappears, of both the self and the other. To affirm that which is the child, rather than coerce them into being what they are not, results in happy individuals, not unhappy followers (Neill, 1964, pp. 11-12).

Neill believes the aim of education is synonymous with the aim of life: the aim of education, as is the aim of life, is to work joyfully and find happiness (Neill, 1964, p.

111). Neill does to a certain degree enlarge on this belief, to further claim that this can only be achieved when one lives one's own life.

The function of the child is to live his own life – not the life that his anxious parents think he should live, nor a life according to the purpose of the educator who thinks he knows best. All this interference can only produce a generation of robots (Neill, 1964, p. 12).

In this light he dismisses Montessori, as still one who thinks she knows best what children want, directing learning through artificially created play (Neill, 1964, p. 25). Interference, for Neill, destroys the child's natural joy of discovery, the joy when a child succeeds in overcoming an obstacle for himself. The deliberate provision of the learning environment, a lesson, toy or book, leads the child to believe that he is inferior, and must depend on help. Neill is so critical of much traditional education that he states that only pedants claim that learning from books is education (Neill, 1964, p. 25), as this form of learning is nothing more than intellectual dependence. Neill is not anti-intellectual as many have claimed, but does not believe the child should be forced down an academic path when it is not for them, an action that in destroying the will of the child, destroys their future happiness.

I would rather see a school produce a happy street cleaner than a neurotic scholar (Neill, 1964, p.5).

Neill is not opposed to scholarship as such, and is in fact very proud of the scholastic achievements of his graduates, but is opposed to the loss of the exploratory and

creative nature of learning which he believes is common in traditional schools, based upon taught and book learning. Neill dislikes the subservience that traditional schooling inculcates in the learner, the fact that good scholarship is a measure of how well you can reproduce the work of others. Neill is not anti-intellectual, but despises the unimaginative intellectual (Walta, 1990, p. 63).

The intellect for Neill is not to be left undeveloped, but should be developed alongside the emotions. Neill, in his holistic view of child-raising, does not see the intellect as the only thing that develops - the affective attributes of the child should be left to develop naturally as well, through the giving of love. Neill values the ability to feel at least as highly as intellectual abilities (1964). After a session at a teacher training institution, Neill, as usual, feels disappointed with the outcome... declaring that (1964, p. 25) these trainee teachers had been taught *to know*, but had not been allowed *to feel*. No judgement was brought to bear on their education, no personal perspective, the whole process came from above. Knowledge for Neill is greater than what one can be taught, it must be based on one's own interaction with the world, and through one's own experience, experience that is entirely one's own. Summerhill is therefore not only a school, but a way of life, a lifestyle in which every individual pursues their own goals, free from guilt and fear, free to learn in their own way. This is not the experiential learning of Montessori⁶, where the child discovers using 'toys' and 'materials' provided by her, or even an outing of any sort where the students 'experience' the world, for these are still experiences organised and determined by another. Life itself is the educator, and a student learns through his interaction with it.

Neill in his determination that the child can and should have the freedom to determine his own education, does not entirely dismiss all traditional learning, for he says that every child needs the three R's (1964, p. 25), but he is unwilling to insist that they learn them, as this insistence, he believes, causes more harm than good. When, or if, a child decides to learn something from the traditional school curriculum, he is welcome to attend class, or receive individual tuition. If he never attempt this during his time at Summerhill, this is not a concern for Neill. And, perhaps surprisingly, when the curriculum of Summerhill is examined, it offers many of the subjects and teaching methodologies of traditional schools. In this Neill is not a conservative, actually this is perhaps a more radical position than many of his others – as he believes that the teaching methodology and the structure of the lesson and classroom situation is irrelevant, that if a child wants to learn something, he will learn it.

A child who wants to learn long division will learn it no matter how it is taught (Neill, 1964, p. 5).

This view of teaching came early to Neill and underlies the whole structure of learning at Summerhill.

I have decided to ostracise brilliant teaching forever. It is all wrong. Good teaching is not necessarily good education. The interest should come from within the child (Neill, in Hemmings, 1972, p. 48).

⁶ No further mention will be made of Montessori, but the myth that they shared many educational philosophies is a false one.

This was to become central to Summerhill, where all formal teaching and class attendance was voluntary, and entirely at the child's discretion. Neill actually thinks that this freedom creates, or more precisely does not quash, the child's natural desire to learn. At Summerhill, the children who have always been there generally attend classes most of the time, it is the children from traditional schools that suffer from lesson aversion⁷, that have switched themselves off and do not want to learn. Holt (in Lister, 1974, p. 39) also believes that schools turn a child off learning:

Almost every child, on the first day he sets foot in a school building, is smarter, more curious, less afraid of what he doesn't know, better at finding and figuring things out, more confident, resourceful, persistent, and independent, than he will ever again be in his schooling, or unless he is a very unusual and lucky, for the rest of his life.

Schools, through their of lack faith in the child, in treating them as worthless, untrustworthy and fit only to take orders, destroy the natural confidence and curiosity of the child, creating a self-concept of worthlessness and ignorance, a person unable to learn anything for himself. Neill believes that the best learning environment is one of loving approval, and that love and approval will often cure a child's problems (1964, p. 297). Neill has, according to the report of the British Government School Inspectors established a better learning environment than many schools (Neill, 1964, p. 85), but an environment that the inspectors claim is not being utilised efficiently, as the academic achievements of the children are not seen to be great, while similarly not

⁷ The average period of recovery from lesson aversion is, Neill states, three months, although one girl, from a convent school, loafed for three years (1964, p. 5).

being lack-lustre. This is probably due to Neill's emphasis, and the very reason that he established Summerhill in the first place, to bring happiness to a few children, through the creation of a free and democratic environment. It must also be remembered that traditional classroom learning was not a priority for Neill and many of his students, and that freedom had a much higher importance.

Freedom is probably the word that comes up most frequently in the writings of Neill, as it underlies all of his work. As mentioned above, children are free to choose whether they attend class or not, but their freedom goes much beyond that. At school meetings, the school parliament, conducted every week, the students decide upon not only the rules of the school and various activities, but they do this independently of the adults of the school. Of course the adults can have their say, but the decisions are eventually put to a vote, and are final and binding. Neill states many times (1964) that his wishes are often denied, and that his vote is worth no more than a child of five. The topics discussed at meeting frequently include the following: requests to keep certain doors or windows closed, noise (at night and at supper), toys and other things in the linen cupboard, requests to return a missing book and other items, lights being left on, boys urinating on toilet seat, bullying, young children going into town, young children waking others up, children annoying the kitchen staff, and various public announcements... (Hemmings, 1972, p. 141-2). This list basically concerns many of the issues that any communal society would need to discuss, issues that need to be negotiated, and issues where tolerance is necessary on the part of all. The school inspectors (Neill, 1964, p. 78) commented on the slowness in which some decisions were reached, decisions that an adult could have made for them easily and quickly. *This is missing the point.* That the children decide for themselves, and in doing so,

learn to mediate and negotiate, to air their own views and feelings, and to reach a decision, is what is important. The children are empowered by their ability to solve their own problems, not enslaved by the need for a higher authority to constantly act for, and over, them.

When Neill talks of freedom, he is often taken as meaning that everyone can do as they want, in a very spoilt sense... the school meetings should dispel this myth.

Freedom is not a theoretical construct for him, but a very **practical** thing, the balance between the individual and the community (1964, p. 53). The school community, through the process of the school meeting establishes what it can and will accept, and how it will deal with (repeat) offenders. In this situation of close living, tolerance is needed on all sides, particularly that of the teachers who have most likely not grown up in such a noisy, cramped and lively environment. The issue of tolerance is not an issue frequently discussed by Neill, although all the children and staff, Neill included, would of necessity be aware of the needs and failings of others, living in a small community so close together. Neill only makes one comment on tolerance: we are leading children along the way of being tolerant by showing *them* tolerance (1964, p. 123). Noise, bedtimes, mess and using others people's things, are the most frequent and common points of discussions, a list almost identical to that posted at St. Albert's College, UNE (St. Albert's, 2000). The difference however is that in the case of Summerhill, the students, much younger (aged 5-18) than those of St. Albert's, are negotiating and discussing the rules by which their community will run, where as at St. Albert's College, a University College, these are imposed. Neill would argue that Summerhill is giving its students a much better start in life, in preparing them for the negotiations that they will have to undertake in any shared household, family setting

(as grown ups, not as children) and for many workplace and social settings. Not only are they being given the tools, but also an experience and understanding of other people's positions, other's feelings, wants, limits and wishes. They are determining the quality of their lives, not having a lifestyle imposed upon them from above.

Hemmings (1972, pp. 142-4) reports of a school meeting where the question of rewards for the finding of lost items is discussed. The arguments, suggestions and wishes of the participants in this debate show amazing clarity of thought, and perception of human nature. The main question is whether there should be rewards or not: those favouring the granting of rewards (by the school community) claim that the offer of rewards encourages others to look for the lost item. The argument against this being that it encourages the taking of the item, as the 'thief' knows that he can return it as soon as it is noticed missing, and thereby get an 'undeserved' reward - that an incentive to take or steal is actually created through the functioning of a reward system. This argument won the day, and the system of rewards was disbanded. Then somebody objected that what if an individual (not the school community, and as a one-off) wanted to give a personal reward, for the finding of a lost item that they wanted dearly, should they be allowed to... ? [Full detail of discussion concerning rewards presented in Appendix I].

The issues here are real ones and not easily discarded, and while the discussion centred around the children of high-school age, many of the younger ones participated, and all listened. These skills of rational thought, decision making and justice were not taught. Neill (1964) would argue that they cannot be taught, but they would almost of necessity be present in any student that had spent time at

Summerhill. Freedom, as Neill sees it and uses it in Summerhill, empowers children to think for themselves. This is contrary to normal institutional schooling which fashions them into accepters of the *status quo* (Neill, 1964, p. 12). Normal schooling based upon the acceptance of other's decisions about what a child should know, what is good for them, what they like: imposed authority turning the natural independence of children into thoughtless, will-less followers.

Freedom does give Neill some anxious moments though, particularly the climbing of trees and the making and use of wooden swords (1964, pp. 20-21). Neill claims that to prohibit all dangerous undertakings would make a child a coward, but nevertheless he always feels anxious when a craze for swords begins, and is glad when it is over. Still, any attempt to ban swords would almost certainly fail at the school meeting: while the students would undoubtedly understand Neill's feelings and worries about them hurting each other, they would not consider this a good enough reason to ban swords. Responsibility, in the eyes of Summerhill students would lie with those engaging in sword fighting, an activity, like all things at Summerhill, *voluntarily* engaged in.

4.2 Authority and Fear

Discipline and punishment dogmatically imposed create fear; and fear creates hostility (Fromm, in Neill, 1964, p. xiii). Neill believes that aggression of the fighting type is hate; and youngsters full of hate need to fight. When children are in an atmosphere in which fear is eliminated, they do not need to show hate (Neill, 1964, p. 20). This for Neill eliminates the need to discipline students, something he would not do anyway.

He also states that it is important as a teacher to approve of the things that a child disapproves of in himself – his self-hatred (Neill, 1964, p. 294). Thus when a child breaks a window at the school, Neill does not tell the child off, but asks him why he has done it. Neill approves of his reason for breaking the window and asks the child what he is going to do about it...

“Break more windows” he answers doggedly.

“Carry on!”

The boy carried on and ended up breaking all the windows in an entire wall, but Neill never lost his temper, or even morally cajoled or attempted to manipulate the child (Neill, 1964, p. 10-11). It was assumed by both Neill and the child that the child would pay for the windows, that was the understanding they both had of the private property rule, a rule made by the students. Neill never attempts to punish a child for any ‘crime’, viewing most ‘crimes’ as the necessary venting of a child’s frustrated needs and wants. However, it is important to remember that Neill will not put up with simply any behaviour: when a child attacks him with bites and kicks, he warns the child not to do it again, and when the child does it again, Neill hits him back⁸. This is not as punishment, but as a simple response - he does not want to be hit. There is no moral involved, no rule, and no reprimand. O’Carroll in *Start Your Own School* makes a similar claim: that if a child hits me I hit him back, (1980, p. 64). Again, there is no concept of punishment or wrongdoing, or of the child having committed a

⁸ Crime is used here *without* the usual Judeo-Christian moral and ethical suggestion of an evil or bad act, there is nothing wrong with the act or the child, it is simply that the person hit either does not want to be hit, or cannot tolerate being hit. This simply reflects the capabilities and desires of the person being hit, not any higher moral code. No rules or morality are involved, and no guilt.

‘crime’ – it is just that this act, hitting, cannot be tolerated, or is not wanted, by the person being hit. The implication here is that if someone were unconcerned about being hit, then there would be nothing and nobody who would or should interfere. This point is important for Neill, as he believes that it is wrong to call on ‘independent’ authority figures or moral codes. Interactions are between individuals, and what is ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ is what they want, or like, or are happy to accept.

Freedom from guidance, based upon the faith that Neill has in children as kind, noble, responsible, and able to live their own lives, allows Neill to create an environment where this can in fact happen. As Neill (1964) states again and again, the function of the child is to live his own life. This has occurred at Summerhill, as the report of the British Government School Inspectors confirms: initiative, responsibility and integrity... are being developed (Neill, 1964, p. 84). Neill would probably correct this statement, to one more in-line with his view of the nature of children, and say that these attributes are not being destroyed at Summerhill, as they typically are in traditional schools. Neill actually believes that more than this is occurring, he believes that only freedom allows children to grow normally, to develop as happy children and later into happy adults. Freedom leads to happiness, while ‘guidance’, covert (carrot) or overt (stick), lead to a generation of will-less adults: a society carried on the shabby shoulders of the scared little man – the scared to death conformist (Neill, 1964, p. 12). Neill takes as gospel the principle that you cannot make a child learn anything without, to some degree, lessening their independence and creativity. **To make, is to make conform.**

Schools as they are – are just mass production factories... and universities and their certificates and degrees do not make a scrap of difference in confronting the evils of our society... a learned neurotic is not any different than an unlearned neurotic (Neill, 1964, p. 28). Success for Neill, is not in degrees and jobs and wealth, but in the ability to work joyfully and to live positively (1964, p. 29) and it is nothing less than a crime that so much of our endeavour works contrary to this.

4.3 Neill on Love and Independence

For Neill, love and happiness are inextricably mixed, in that without the ability to love both oneself and others, a person cannot be happy. The ability to love, as opposed to the ability to hate, for Neill determines whether a child, and later an adult, will be happy.

New (and old) pupils feel loved because they are accepted as they are, and there is no attempt to turn them into something else (Darling, 1994, p. 246). In the sense of showing love to another, love and approval are for Neill almost synonymous. When adults approve of children, it is possible for them to give the children the freedom that they need to be true to themselves. As such, freedom is seen as evidence of love, of an open and warm acceptance of the child for who he or she is, not for what he or she does, or should do, or may do. Love is good for children, without it, it is impossible for children to be true to themselves (Neill, 1964). When approval is not given unconditionally, then corruption of the child's independence occurs, as they attempt to curry favour with the adult (teacher or parent) and twist themselves into the shape that they deem the parent or teacher approves of. Neill continually sees this with

students who join Summerhill from other schools, as these students always begin by attempting to ‘curry favour’ with the teachers at Summerhill, through insincere shows of ‘respect’ – respect that Neill thinks is a public face of fear (1964, p. 110).

Neill (1964, p. 110) claims that it takes at least six months for children who transfer to Summerhill to lose their insincerity... when they arrive they are bundles of insincerity with unreal politeness and phoney manners... in about six months they are natural, healthy kids who say what they think without fluster or hate. Sincerity thus re-occurs in children when they encounter an environment where they feel it is safe to be themselves, and no longer fear being reprimanded or made to feel guilty for being true. Neill believes that adults’ inability to let the child be free, and thus loving and happy, comes from fear, fear that the child will not grow or develop unless forced to do so (1964, p. 109). When adults take a pessimistic view of the nature of children, they become so fearful of what the children will do with freedom that they cannot grant it (Darling, 1994, p. 246).

Neill thinks that this fear, the fear of what the young may ‘get up to’ is one of the ills of our society, a ‘life fearing society’ that fears the vitality of the young, their energy and capacity for pleasure, and it is this fear that lies behind the authoritarian nature of the conventional school and home (Darling, 1994, p. 246). Authoritarianism works itself out in techniques that produce not virtue, but cowardice, as true virtue cannot be brought about by threats or bribes. Authoritarian child-raising, based on a pessimistic view of the nature of children is self-fulfilling, as the fear that it generates pushes the child toward insincerity and stops the child living for himself, and attempts to live in the image that they perceive their elders wish them to mimic. Becker, in examining

the training of teachers states that the process of teacher training is much the same, in that the student teachers are forced to mimic the ideas and methods of their teachers:

The faculty and administration have a tremendous amount of power over the students... students have no opportunity to build their own perspectives and simply take over ideas formed in them by the faculty... (in Lacey, 1977, p.67).

Neill would probably believe this to be the case because for the whole of their lives; children, now young adults training to be teachers, have adopted the attitudes and ways of their teachers as this was required of them. As adults, they now do the same, mimicking the ways of the past, upholding the status quo, moving with the group and not thinking and doing their own thing. Living life in, and as, the shadows of others, not for themselves.

Neill is frightened of people who are mass-minded, people who accept the status quo no matter how abhorrent it becomes-

I saw a hundred thousand obedient, fawning dogs wag their tails in the Templehof, Berlin, when in 1935, the great trainer Hitler whistled their commands (1964, p. 100).

Neill believes that his Summerhill graduates are not this kind of person, that they are people who know their own hearts and minds, *hearts* leading to *minds*. Whitaker (1983, p. 19) agrees with Neill that the programming that pupils normally get in school, a series of graded tests and exercises, not only steals their joy of discovery,

but actually leads them to believe that they are inferior and that they have to depend upon teachers or others for help, not their own beliefs or knowledge. Their independence is schooled from them, as is their freedom to think for themselves, in a process that moulds them into another generation with 'acceptable' social standards and moral beliefs.

In this light, schooling can be seen as society's main agent of social control; and as such, obedience to authority, conformity of approach, and uniformity of appearance are of necessity the 'aims' of schooling, stated or unstated. Neill talks of this in terms of spirit, and the background of his students.

Originally Summerhill attracted mostly girls who had been expelled from 'normal' schools, but as the years progressed the school has begun to get girls from families who *believed* in Summerhill... and a fine bunch they are too, full of spirit and originality and initiative (1964, p. 15).

Girls who are not *dependent*, but girls who believe in themselves and think for themselves. Freedom has created such children, and it is freedom from fear, guilt and interference that nurtures such children. As such Summerhill is quite different from the normal school, as it does not try to socialise its students to fit society, to fit the mould of normality.

The normal school is in fact concerned less with the needs of the individual child than with the ways in which the individual child can respond to the needs of society (Craft, in Hemmings, 1972, p. 173).

The normal school is not a *place* in and of itself but a processing arena, a means toward an end, a job, a wage, a stable place in society. As such, schools must almost of necessity, squash or crush the natural initiative of their students, since initiative or active learning, learning what one is interested in for its own sake, creating, solving, planning and evaluating one's own discoveries and thoughts, is *counter productive*, in terms of societal acceptance, and thus unrewarded in exams. Schools promote passive learning, learning in which the students deny their own curiosity and 'learn' to demonstrate that which teachers' want, giving the teacher answers to questions they already know, a lifeless, sterile and demoralising process. Therefore it is schools themselves that create learning difficulties, through making 'learning' a process that is without vitality. Papert states that children begin their lives as eager and competent learners... they have to learn to have trouble with learning... (in Whitaker, 1983, p. 28). It is schools, in their insistence that what they are offering is valuable, of interest and worth, that kill the natural joy of learning, through the imposition of a curriculum and process alien to the child. The child is alienated from his own curiosity, alienated from his natural desire to know, to learn, to understand. Learning is not, and should not be, a dull means to an end, but a joyful process, engaged in eagerly for its own sake. Schools, in making themselves and the 'learning experience' a means to an end, the constant imposition and control of which is outside of the control of the child, deaden the learning process and crush the inquisitive spirit of the child, usually permanently.

For a society that values stability and normality, the process could hardly be improved upon, and is verging on Orwellian:

From the proletarians nothing is to be feared. Left to themselves, they will continue from generation to generation and from century to century, working, breeding and dying, not only without any impulse to rebel, but without the power of grasping that the world could be other than it is. (Orwell, in O'Neill, 1969, p. 77)

In Orwell's futuristic society the inquisitive and inquiring mind has been entirely subjugated, and virtually no one challenges any aspect of the status quo - Neill's greatest fear. School and life, Neill believes, are not constructs of parents and educators who think they know best what the child wants, what is best for the child (1964, pp. 11-12). School and life are, or should be, child centred, filled with the vitality that is children. Imposition of authority and the necessity of conformity destroys this and leads to servitude, a society of conformists. School, as normally constructed takes initiative away from its 'inmates' and moulds them into will-less adults, 'normal' people.

Summerhill on the other-hand, does not strive to imprint normality onto its students, to make them docile, stable members of society. It does not define normal, but leaves each member of its small society to define it for themselves, to create their own path. It is also not a school, in that it is not a means to an end, a processing arena for life that arrives later, but is a place of living, now. Unlike conventional schools, it is more concerned with the needs of the individual child than with ways in which the individual child might respond to the demands of the society (Hemmings, 1972, p.

174). This is what Neill means when he repeatedly states that *Summerhill is not a school, but a way of life* (1964).

Again, independence, in the hearts and minds of the students of Summerhill (as with all children), requires them to be raised in freedom, as individuals with their own wills, desires and wants, not pushed toward normality.

Liang (in Hemmings, 1972, p. 177) makes a scathing attack on what is typically called normal:

What we call 'normal' is the product of repression, denial, splitting, projection, introjection and other forms of destructive action on experience. It is radically estranged from the structure of being... the condition of alienation... of being out of one's mind, is the condition of the normal man. Society highly values its normal man. It educates children to lose themselves and become absurd, and thus to be normal. Normal men have killed perhaps 100,000,000 of their fellow normal men in the last fifty years.

As such, Liang (in Hemmings, 1972, p. 177) argues that 'normality' should not be the objective (or a by-product) of schooling, that social conditioning to fit society is really an 'estrangement of being' and leads to the human condition in which men can and do slaughter each other by the million. Fromm (in Hemmings, 1972, p. 179) suggests that the substitution of pseudo acts for original acts of thinking, feeling and willing, leads eventually to the replacement of the original self by the pseudo self, that in performing according to the designs of others over a long enough period, we are

eventually unable to locate our own motivations and desires. We, in essence, live and exist only in the role assigned to us by the other, be they family, teachers or society at large. When this occurs, it is perhaps accurate to say that we have substituted our true self for a false self.

Hemmings (1972, pp. 179-80) believes that this seems to be the aim of the traditional form of education - to substitute the original thoughts and feelings of the child (original in the sense that they originate from his own psychic process) with other thoughts and feelings which are considered to be more socially useful, more civilised or morally acceptable. It is here that Neill (1964) most fundamentally differed with the traditional notion of what school was for, since for him it was to find happiness. He considered happiness to be based upon the child as knower and pursuer of his own will. As such, guidance, control and authority were anathema to education, as they all, to a greater or lesser degree, deny the child an exploration of self.

Hemmings (1972) analysis (above) of the mode of traditional schooling is not that far away from the totalitarian world of Huxley, as depicted in *Brave New World*. The speaker (below) is the director of the Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre, talking to a group of new workers about the education/indoctrination of 'his' young children:

Till at last the child's mind is these suggestions, and the sum of the suggestions is the child's mind. And not the child's mind only. The adult's mind too – all his life long. The mind that judges and desires and decides –

made up of these suggestions. But all these suggestions are *our* suggestions!
(in O'Neill, 1969, pp.98-99).

4.4 Neill on Structure

You cannot teach anything of importance... charity, love, sincerity (Neill, 1972, p. 154).

The critics of Summerhill say, in effect, that living just in order to live, just to enhance the quality of living...well, that may all be very nice - sort of a hobby as it were – but not acceptable as the prime goal (Lawson, 1973). Living for just the sake of living without *having* wealth or achievement to show for it – that is just plain immoral. Such critics cannot comprehend the Summerhill criterion: not *what* one is, but *who* one is (Fromm, in Lawson, 1973, p. 256).

The structure of school should be pro-life, pro-enthusiasm, pro-approval, pro-being. In Neill's (1964) terms, this requires the rejection of most of what is now considered school, and the duties and obligations of schooling, all of which are pro-obligation and pro-imposition. This will allow the being of, and the growth of, *the who*, not the creation of *the what*. The happy individual.

4.5 Neill in Summary

Neill believes that children, to be healthy, happy individuals need to be raised in freedom, meaning that they are given permission to find their own thoughts, feelings,

wants, desires, hopes and dreams; given the space to be themselves. This does not require them to be placed in isolation, on a real or emotional island, they just need to be loved and reassured that they are valued simply because they are.

The bestowal of freedom is the bestowal of love.

And only love can save the world (Hemmings, 1972, p. 77).

5.0 Peace

Peace seen as more than the absence of personal violence is premised upon a positive view of human nature, human nature seen as essentially good. This is necessary for the existence of freedom, for the personal pursuit of empowerment, a negative view of human nature would entail either overt or covert control, threats and the use of force or indoctrination, to subdue personal violence, the destructive inherent in the negative. A positive view of human nature allows peace to lead to peace. Peace as the sense of something of worth or value, more than just an absence, peace defined positively, positive peace.

Peace is generally defined both positively and negatively, a two-sided definition of peace. Peace, the absence of both types of violence: personal violence and structural violence. Galtung defines the absence of personal violence as negative peace, and the absence of structural violence as positive peace (1975, p. 130). Peace is therefore connected with both conflict and development.

Positive peace, defined positively, is an egalitarian distribution of power and resources. As such, peace is not only a matter of controlling and reducing the overt use of violence (Galtung, 1975, p. 130), but is again intimately connected with the realisation of potential, sometimes referred to as vertical development. Such a definition of peace assumes, a priori, an optimistic view of human nature. If man were conceived of as essentially barbaric or evil, brutish, as in a Hobbesian world view, then the maintenance of society would require, if not the frequent use of direct

violence, at least as a minimum, a society controlled by an oppressive structure, a structurally violent regime.

Man, conceived of as basically good, allows for the creation of a society in which structural violence is reducible, if not eliminable. Man does not need to be controlled by means of violence. It therefore becomes possible to modify the structures of society to bring about a more just, more enlightened, more peaceful world. When human nature is seen as good, then it is the structures of society that cause the corruption that reduces the potential. *Peace is possible*, and if we do not have it, it is because something or somebody is against it (Galtung, 1975, p. 149). In the creation of a society founded on and through peace the conditions under which tendencies toward violence are actuated should not be built into the structure. Structural violence needs to be replaced by positive peace. Toward this end structures that reduce man's potential, structures that reduce the human actualisation of potential, must be reduced and eventually eliminated.

6.0 Education for Peace – Schooling as Structural Violence

The fight against structural violence is called liberation (Galtung, 1975, p. 279)

Educating for peace is education for liberation, education that empowers individuals, gives them the confidence and the hope to achieve what their goals, to determine their own path. Education for peace, founded on a positive conception of human nature is an education that does not negate or destroy man's potential for good, the pursuit of the path of peace. Peace education is thus a means and an end, and *not* a means to an (unconnected) end, not the *means* to the *end*. ie. traditional *schooling*. It is not only learning about peace, but learning through peace, and learning about peace requires the learning to be done through peace. The process of peace education has to be compatible with the end of peace education, the end must be compatible with the means. As Muste states: there is no way to peace, peace is the way (in Thacker, undated, p. 24). Peace education is not compatible with doing a prescribed course, and passing a peace-studies exam at the end of HSC or A Levels, but about how learners learn, about how they determine their path, about who they choose to interact with and learn from, about how they determine to reach their own potential, a process of empowerment.

Potential here is very important, as potential is an endowment *innate* to every individual, everyone has greater and lesser ability in different areas, and everyone has greater and lesser motivation in different areas. Boredom, failure and refusal to learn are *products of modern schooling*, as it is only when a student is forced to study or

work at something that they do not enjoy or desire to learn, that this can occur. Boredom is being forced to do something that does not interest you, or being forced not to do something that does. A child who loves woodwork will not be bored by woodwork, will not fail woodwork, and will not refuse to learn woodwork (when they themselves can determine how, where and when they learn it!). Forcing them to learn woodwork may put them off it though. Keldorff (in Bjerstedt, 1990a, p. 89) reports on how some students from Copenhagen had been forced to participate in a peace education project, and talked of it disparagingly, a mistake that Collinge (in Bjerstedt, 1992, p. 20-21) also makes, deciding what children need to know, need to do. School in this case, putting children off peace. Literature, stories, books and English in general appeal to most children, who spend hours of their own time – reading, or hassling their parents to read to them. The exploration, discovery, imagination, hopes and dreams that reading conveys are attractive to so many, but after a few years of forced reading at school, the pleasure and joy are often lost, and books may not be touched again, or not touched for years. Neill often talks of the aversion to learning schooling creates through forcing a child to do something they do not want to do (1964, p. 5). The lesson here with regard to peace studies is crucial, if the intention is not to put children off peace, or see it as something that should or can be forced.

School structure, with a prescribed curriculum and hierarchical authority, necessitates such a result, as the child or teenager has no input into how, when, where or what they are going to learn, with the result that they are put off learning by being forced into doing something that they do not want to do, or if it is something that they want to do, in a manner in which alienates them from it. The structure of the school is violent through its total lack of care for an individual's aspirations and feelings, students are

treated as sub-citizens, 'justified' by defining them as learners. This not only alienates them, the learners, from their own learning, but makes learning, school learning, synonymous with indoctrination. Schools indoctrinate, in that the learner is forced to do something that they do not want to do, to the satisfaction of the other. Those who oppose freedom, Neill believes, base their opposition on the unfounded assumption that the child will not learn or grow unless forced to do so (1964, p. 109).

Peace, seen as actualisation of potential is incompatible with telling a student what they need to know and awarding prizes and promotion according to how well they reproduce the work or skill. Reproducing the work of another, copying, in which the best copies are exact, but appear to be new is considered the highest form of school learning, yet seems little more than a dulling of the human potential. However, it is a dulling that schools revere, and place on a high pedestal. This form of learning (a misuse of the word) has no connection with the actualisation of individual potential, as the individual is denied a part - a form of schooled prejudice in which the learner needs their learning determined for them by a certified authority. In defining the learner as the one who needs to know, and the teacher as the one who knows, the structure legitimises indoctrination. The teacher not only can, *but should*, impose their will on the learner - indoctrination as learning. Massive violence done in the name of school. Neill does not talk of violence, but frequently talks about happiness and the enslavement of the status quo, the same rejection of joy and love (1964, p. 98)... the destruction of the free child and the creation of a civilisation that is sick and unhappy (1964, p. 102).

In all his writings Neill mentions only one (other) school that does not enslave, Homer Lane's Little Commonwealth (1964, p. 121), a place that accepts all for whom they are. Neill sees all schools as indoctrinating students to be respectful of authority no matter how stupid it is... don't question anything, just obey (1964, p. 102). Neill does not talk of disempowerment, he speaks more simply, saying that school authority, this form of authority, leads to unhappy children, hateful children, and a sick world (1964, p. 100-102). When children cease to pursue their own goals from their own motivations, ceases to act on their own volition and subverts their will to that of the teacher or authority, they become ugly and hateful... unfree child-raising results in a life that cannot be fully lived. Such an education almost always ignores the *emotions* of life (Neill, 1964, p. 100).

6.1 The Hidden Curriculum – Structural Violence

The deschoolers' critique of the hidden curriculum is a critique of the structure of school in terms of structural violence, and it is this that leads them to call for a deschooled society. School is seen by the deschoolers (and many peace educators) as so structurally violent that it cannot be resurrected or reformed to an extent that would eliminate this violence. Illich (1971) states quite clearly that his objectives, in terms of human liberation, is incompatible with mainstream schooling, and generally incompatible with most forms of alternative education. Illich believes that no amount of manipulation of the current system will bring about the removal of the hidden curriculum (1971, pp. 39-40) and so changes to subject areas, or teaching methodologies are, at best, irrelevant.

6.2 Peace Educators and School Structure

The question of the structural violence of schools is therefore of much greater relevance than the curriculum for the peace educator, for unless the hidden curriculum is attended to, it is impossible to educate for peace. As Galtung states:

It is naive to believe that the contents of a message will survive any form in which it is presented; the form may often be more important than the content (in Thacker, undated, p. 11).

As such - as some peace educators have argued – schools, as prime examples of structural violence, will subvert and emaciate the study of peace, and thus peace educators should stay well clear of the formal education sector (Duczek, in Thacker, undated, p. 15). Duczek however believes that to give up on peace education in schools is a defeatist position, and that individual teachers should be encouraged to create an atmosphere of openness and support, a classroom setting itself an expression of, and compatible with, ideals of peace (in Thacker, undated, pp. 15-16).

This position is typical of peace educators and peace-minded teachers who are striving to bring about a more peace oriented classroom setting. Bjerstedt, in the journal *Educational Information and Debate*, published continually for decades, interviews (over the years) literally hundreds of peace educators, almost all of them offering suggestions for classroom styles, teaching methodologies, curriculum changes and materials - despite an acknowledgment of the difficulties all these face, set against the violent structure that is the school. That is, an acknowledgment of the

structural violence of the traditional school and classroom and a belief that the content of a message will not survive an incompatible medium of delivery. But despite this, the value of certain methodologies and materials is continually talked of, and promoted. This appears to be a defeatist position, an acknowledgment of the violence inherent in the school system, and then a proposal, which has already been acknowledged as, a priori, unachievable. Trying is not always without merit, as sometimes the stance and effort is an achievement, but it is definitely without merit when the stance itself is acknowledged as incompatible with the end. In terms of structure, no curriculum reform or modification, or change to an individual teacher's classroom teaching methodology is enough... within an authoritarian school structure there is simply too little room to manoeuvre⁹. Magnus Haavelsrud (in Bjerstedt, 1993, p. 35) talks about pre-determined education, and the problems of implementing peace education at school:

Yes, but that is probably the most problematic thing of all, that the very thing that I would ideally have liked to happen to peace education, namely that the content was developed from the pupil's own interest, ideals and hopes, seems too hard to implement at school. There seems to be a built-in idea that if you are to teach somebody something, the content must be determined in advance.

Galtung's (1975) peace triangle, with corners consisting of cooperation, friendliness and love, when presented within a school environment, seem anathematic.

Cooperation has been classified by schools as cheating, friendliness as disruption, and love as irrelevant to education, as love has nothing to do with facts. All of these

⁹ *Waging Peace in our Schools*, a book promoted as a school 'handbook' for peace education is again,

qualities: cooperation, friendliness and love are qualities of community, and brought up time after time by Neill (1964), Hemmings (1972) and Darling (1994) in their discussion of Summerhill, and O'Carroll (1980) in his discussion of Fitzroy Community School. Qualities that build communities are however a direct threat to structures concerned with the maintenance of power; schools in which students have input into the structure would be a quite different places. Neill (1964) believes that it is structures of control that allow, even encourage, bullying and guilt, that create a person and society in which individuals are willing and able to crush each other in support of a non-questioned and un-challenged status quo.

Evans (in Thacker, undated, p. 71) talks of the risk of such an education, with the massive destructive potential of modern weaponry:

It is possible to kill thousands by pressing a button without feeling any anger, without being at all aggressive. One just 'does as one is told', and 'tries not to use one's imagination'.

Traditional school structure supports the creation of this type of human perfectly, in its upholding of the authority of the other, its stress on doing as you are told, of obeying, and its denial of the worth of an individuals thoughts and feelings. It aims to build, as Neill so clearly states, a generation of robots (1964, p. 12). Within such a structure, a course on thinking, or on personal decision making, or consideration of others, or in peace education is impossible. As these are all to greater degrees,

in a sense, superfluous, as if the structure of schools were changed, it would not be needed. The symptoms, not the causes, are being dealt with.

personal... and disallowed by the structure of school where all decisions come from above. The medium is the message (Postman, 1972, p.28).

7.0 Peace Studies Courses – At the School Level

The belief that there is no connection between the means and the end is a great mistake. Through that mistake even men who have been considered religious have committed grievous crimes... The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as between the seed and the tree... We reap exactly as we sow (Gandhi, in Dalton, 1993, p. 9).

Peace as a value, as something worth striving for, as something worth doing, can and will grow and thrive when nurtured by peace. It cannot be taught, and cannot be forced. The seeds we sow are the seeds we grow. The values of positive peace, care, love, hope, tolerance, dignity, empowerment cannot be taught in the school sense of taught. Care cannot be taught, but can be given, or shown. Love cannot be taught, but can be shared. Tolerance cannot be taught, but can be exhibited. Education for peace requires those 'doing the educating' to exist in and of these values. Education for peace is thus not an easy thing, and a thing that none in one sense are qualified for, and yet in another that we are all qualified for, as these values are innate to us all. The curriculum of peace education is the methodology of peace.

A peace studies course which provided nothing but the facts free of values might contribute nothing toward peace... as research indicates that people are not moved toward peace... by their intelligence or by their knowledge... but by their attitudes and values (Eckhardt, 1984, p. 79).

Peace education is a process, a process whereby the methodology of peace education, has to be compatible with the ends... it is more than just understanding or knowledge. As such, the requirement of peace education is incompatible with an education system riddled with structural violence. *This difficulty must not be overlooked*, especially by those seeking to implement peace education in schools. The hard questions need to be answered - peace education without structural change is meaningless.

In forcing a student to do something, study peace for instance, the incompatibility of message and medium, of process and goal, become apparent. While the intended message may be one that we, peace educators, care about peace and are striving for peace, the student will learn, whether or not they take in anything from the course, that it is acceptable to force a someone to accept your designs. That authority has the right to dictate how a person should think, and that authority has the right to discard, or ignore, how you feel.

Neill, in talking of tolerance, claims that the students at Summerhill learn tolerance through being shown tolerance (1964, p. 123). Peace is the same, to force someone to accept the precepts of peace, is to do them violence. Peace can only be learned if those interacting with the young, as teachers, friends, relatives, mentors live lives that are examples of peace... whether or not peace is ever overtly mentioned. Neill never mentions peace, but his youngsters, in their care for each other and consideration of each other, and their ability both to think for themselves and to act with autonomy, are the ambassadors of the future that this planet needs. Ambassadors who, while they may never speak of peace, are still ambassadors of it, through the lives that they live, through the constant enactment of the values of care, tolerance, co-operation,

autonomy and open-mindedness. Values can be learned, but cannot be forced into anyone, cannot be taught.

Unfortunately, institutionalised compulsory schooling is incompatible with the goals of peace education, as the medium of the mainstream school, the structure, is violent. Galtung, in discussing this dilemma writes:

Will it not merely sound hypocritical? - or, even worse, remain empty words that are nullified through the much stronger message of verticality and dominance being normal and acceptable, conveyed through the structure itself? (in Brock-Utne, 1996, pp. 43-4).

This leaves peace educators, or teachers interested in peace values, with a real and difficult dilemma, for unless the structure is overcome, the message of peace will be lost. As long as education remains what it is and no educator becomes a martyr to the system, either in school or out of school, then the reality becomes one in which educators will have to renounce peace education, or as O'Carroll and Berryman (1980) so boldly declare, *Start Your Own School*. Neill too seems to have an acceptable alternative, a school that is non-violent, a school that would be truly free with the abolition of compulsory attendance laws, a school that is a true beacon of peace, a school where love is granted to all, tolerance exhibited, and freedom given. A school free of structural violence, where children and teenagers are empowered through being accepted for who they are, not for who they should be. The dispiriting of children that is forcing them to fit the precepts of others is absent.

Illich's deschooled society is similarly free of structural violence, in that the path that the individual takes is in his hands, and that all learners determine their own path, free of the requirement of professional educators authorised to make decisions about their abilities, competencies and future.

Liberation, a path to peace, is a path that cannot be determined externally, it comes from within. Peace has become an imperative... our destructive potential, our violent potential, is too great. But *peace* is something that *cannot* be *forced*. Peace must come freely, be given freely. Peace, in the words of Neill, requires us to love and affirm children, and to let them live their own lives (1964, p. 12).

8.0 A Plan for the Future

If humanity is to progress, Gandhi is inescapable. He lived, thought, and acted, inspired by the vision of humanity evolving toward a world of peace and harmony. We may ignore him at our own risk. Martin Luther King, Jr. (in Dalton, 1993, p. ix).

Illich, in *Deschooling Society* (1971) offers a possible solution to the hidden curriculum of schooling, the hidden curriculum being a term used by the deschooling movement analogous with the term structural violence (of schools) of the peace education movement, in its application to schools. Illich's plan (1971) is both individualistic and community building, in that it lets the individual plan and structure his own education, through working with different individuals and groups already present in society, accessing the skills, knowledge and talents of the community.

Illich (1971) dubs his proposed solution 'edu-credit vouchers' in which every citizen is granted a lifetime worth of educational purchasing power to spend, over the years, as they see fit¹⁰. The funding comes from dividing the current education budget among all citizens of the country, but instead of funding institutions, individuals are given the direct means of purchasing their own education. Every person thus seeks out masters, guides, educators, artists, tradespersons, literature teachers, mechanics, numeracy teachers, outdoor education teachers, carpenters, gardeners, acrobats, potters, literacy teachers or various combinations of the above, or an infinite list of skills and knowledge providers not listed here, to pursue the education path that they

wish. Coordination is provided for those who want help in accessing the talents of the community through Community Education Networking Centres (Illich, 1971), whose task it is to put learners in touch with teachers. Learning returns to the world, and is no longer only a product of being taught by a specialist certified by the state. The infinite number of skills and talents available in the community form the platform upon which the learner takes his education, all able to share the talents and knowledge that they have accumulated over a lifetime. This does not mean that all education becomes an entirely individualistic pursuit, as learners can choose to combine with other learners for some 'classes' – but in groups of their choosing, groups determined by themselves.

Illich has often been criticised at this point, for not setting down exactly how he expects this system to work; but those criticisms, generally from professional educators, simply show that as far as dispelling the violence of institutional schooling and empowering the individual to create their own path to knowledge, they have missed the point. Illich is not dictating a plan or a path, *that is for the individual to decide*. Illich is not telling us how we should be educated, what we should do, and how we should do it... this is exactly not what he is doing. To criticise him for this is to have misunderstood his whole critique of the disempowering of man that is the teaching of the need to be taught. Illich's edu-credit vouchers not only grant the freedom to choose one's own educational path, but also the responsibility for it. The most critically needed principle of educational reform, (Illich, 1971, p. 24) is the return of the initiative and accountability for learning to the learner. Training thus becomes a direct connection between the student and the practitioner of the particular

¹⁰ Macklin in *When Schools are Gone – A Projection of the thought of Ivan Illich* expands upon Illich's

skill, whether the training is within what has traditionally been known as the academic, artistic or the technical, or a combination of both. [Appendix II gives an example of how the conversion of edu-credit vouchers could be used to purchase a year's worth of training for a brother and sister of primary school age. It must be remembered that the variation here is infinite, and that Illich deliberately avoided such illustration so as to not project his own bias onto the structuring of an individual's training/education. As children become teenagers, and later young adults, it is almost certainly going to be the case that the decision(s) will move more and more away from the parent, and from under their influence. Appendix III is an example of a possible edu-credit learning pathway chosen by older teenagers.]

Illich does not ban schools, this is not on his agenda... but he wishes to destroy their mandate, in terms of authority and coercion. Students no longer have to attend school; they have the right and the ability to choose how their education is conducted. Certification, of schools and individuals is done away with. Summerhill, presented previously in some detail, as representative of many alternative and progressive schools, now gains a tenuous position. Students no longer just choose between schools, they choose whether to be schooled, or not to be, schooled.

Neill, in his construction of Summerhill, gives his students freedom of action and thought within the school, but not in whether they attend school, in this the coercive power of the State is still present... all young people are forced into schools. The freedom apparent at Summerhill is thus a strange one, in that school is compulsory, so it is not a matter of school or not, but which school. So where does Neill's

Summerhill lie in Illich's non-violent education? Comfortably, I believe. From all that Neill writes, I think it is apparent that he would not want any student at Summerhill who did not want to be there, those students forced there by the state, or their parents.

“I can't decide whether to send Marjorie here or not.”

Neill:

“Don't bother, I have decided for you. I am not taking her. You don't really believe in freedom. If Marjorie came here, I should waste half my life explaining to you what it was all about, and in the end you wouldn't be convinced.”

Neill did not want a student simply for the sake of numbers, he wanted students from families who believed in free child raising. His meaning of freedom - is freedom from coercion, freedom to live your own life. As he states repeatedly:

the function of the child is to live his own life, not the life prescribed for him by his parents or educators, who think they know best (Neill, 1964, p. 24).

Educators are not just teachers, but all those involved in the bending of the child to their dictates, to their prescriptions. Neill (1964) is foremost against all forms of coercion, believing that it is this that crushes the spirit of the child, turning them into 'fawning dogs' and 'scared little men' who unquestioningly accept the status quo, the dictates of authorities, the acceptance of an unfulfilling life placed upon them by

society. Neill would certainly be an advocate of non-compulsory schooling, of truly free education.

9.0 Conclusion

In Broken Images

He is quick, thinking in clear images;

I am slow, thinking in broken images.

He becomes dull, trusting his clear images;

I become sharp, mistrusting my broken images.

Trusting his images, he assumes their relevance;

Mistrusting my images, I question their relevance.

Assuming their relevance, he assumes the fact;

Questioning their relevance, I question the fact.

When the fact fails him, he questions his senses;

When the fact fails me, I approve my senses.

He continues quick and dull in his broken images;

I continue slow and sharp in my broken images.

He in a new confusion of his understanding;

I in a new understanding of my confusion.

Robert Graves, 1914 (in Farrell, 2000, p. 9)

This dissertation presents two possible alternatives to the structural violence that is inherent in traditional education, ‘normal’ schooling. Summerhill as representative of the alternative school movement, and Illich’s ‘edu-credit vouchers’ as a system that instead of funding schools or education departments, instead gives individuals the necessary finance to ‘buy’ the educational path they desire. This is not to say that *all* alternative schools overcame, or have overcome the problems of structural violence in school, or that given access to Illich’s ‘edu-credit system’ will be empowered, or that there are only these two alternatives, but that there are options available and that alternatives exist to the orthodoxy that is the current, closed, system we call school.

The earth and its people exist in an almost infinite range of social, economic, political and cultural settings, reflecting different traditions, values, wants and perceptions of worth. In stark contrast to this is the global school system – unique in its uniformity. The core of the centre, reproduced in not only the periphery of the centre, but at the core and periphery of the periphery too. It is the largest, strongest, hegemonic structure in the history of mankind - imperialism’s greatest triumph. Schools in Melbourne, mirroring (and mirrored by) schools in Kunming, China; Namche Bazaar, Nepal, London, England; Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong... Global conformity in schooling for individual and collective human global diversity? For a planet with such diversity in patterns of living, in needs, requirements and wants, in any setting, apart from the hegemonic tyrant that is the global education industry, this conformity would seem ridiculous. A ‘one size fits all’ to all of mankind. And yet, as Illich (1971) states, to challenge this rite of school brings the questioner and their intellectual and mental capacities, rather than the school system, to task, so hooked on and immersed in the rite of school we have become.

As this dissertation has shown, in terms of education for peace, the hegemonic education system that is modern schooling, must be overcome. Until this occurs, peace education is no more than a well intended phrase. Within the current structure, education that liberates and empowers the individual is impossible.

This should not be seen as depressive though, but as a challenge - the future is open. The challenge for us thus becomes, how fast will we grasp this opportunity. When, how and where will we commit ourselves to the replacement in child raising of a culture of peace? And how much support will we give to those who do?

Last year, my friend, Bob Morgan started his own school, Alia College in Hawthorn, Melbourne, a school in which the individual, rather than the institution, is of primary value and comes first. I have not heard Bob speak of education for peace, but he is doing it, living it. I am proud of and inspired by him.

In the second half of this year, 2000, the Liberal-National Coalition Government will introduce legislation into parliament in which, for the first time in the history of Australian education, education funding is directly linked to the student, the individual. In this instance, this model of funding is only for non-government school students, but this is not really the important issue, the issue being that for the first time, *the individual*, not the institution, attracts the funding. While this 'edu-credit voucher' is only useable in an appropriately 'certified' institution, what we normally call a school, a conceptual break-through has been made. Education funding has

become, in a very real way, learner centred¹¹. I dearly hope that the Senate has the wisdom to pass it.

9.1 Peace by peaceful means

In conclusion, bravery is needed in raising enlightened children. If children are to grow into caring, open, loving, responsible, positive, tolerant adults, they must be treated and raised as such. Treating them as sub-rational, sub-human, not to be trusted, needing constant control and guidance in all things, generally selfish and stupid, and then expecting them to emerge from more than ten years of such treatment enlightened and empowered, verges on the absurd. Enlightened and empowered children, and later adults, need to be raised as such, in and through love, freedom, care and hope.

¹¹ The legislation proposed is actually much better than Illich's 'edu-credit voucher' system, in terms of social justice, as it gives greater funding to poorer families, families of lower socio-economic status, thus not only promoting equality, but equality of opportunity.

10.1 Appendix I

The ethics of offering rewards

It seems worth reproducing the discussion in some detail as an example of the way in which the meetings were used for the working out of what may be called the dialectic of freedom.

It was Myrna who introduced the subject by pointing out that ‘certain people’ were taking advantage of rewards being offered by stealing things, waiting for the reward to be announced, and then ‘they queue up for the reward for finding something that they stole in the first place.’ She proposed that no rewards be given for anything found. ‘We should be honest enough with each other,’ she said, ‘so that if we find anything we should give it to Carole to post on the board, and not wait till a reward is put up.’

In the discussion that followed there was no inquiry whether this practice was in fact prevalent, no suggestion of an attempt to find out who the con-men might be who were pulling such a trick, and no moralising beyond Myrna’s original statement. That it might, or did, happen was the reality and the meeting concerned itself simply with the proposal that rewards should be banned. Brendan was the first to object to this: it was up to the person who wanted to give the reward, he thought. Myrna’s proposal, he considered, was in effect an unwarranted bureaucratic encroachment on his liberty. Myrna at once saw this side of her idea and modified it to suggest that the community should decide on the size of the reward. Carole intervened to observe that the worth

of a lost possession depended on how the owner felt about it, not on any absolute value. ‘Why should the community decide how you feel about it?’ she asked. Again, Myrna amended her proposal. Now she wanted a rule that would require that anyone wanting to offer a reward to bring this to the attention of the community. ‘You have to make an announcement before the community before a reward can be posted.’

The chairman, perhaps seeing a chance of cutting short a tricky wrangle, took a quick vote on this very much modified proposal. It was defeated, mild as it was. Perhaps the meeting still read into it the spirit of Myrna’s original proposal. Roy asked that the vote be taken again, but Wilf intervened to say that this should not be necessary. He tried to conciliate by suggesting that ‘all Myrna is doing is appealing to the community not to bring up a reward straight away.’ And Myrna agreed that that was all she wanted now.

However Carole, not following the course of the discussion too logically, reminded the meeting that ‘sometimes a reward is a good thing’, and she recalled an incident when a visitor’s keys were lost and the reward she offered resulted in their being found on the hockey field within a couple of hours. Myrna, in spite of her retreat, was perhaps making her point, for Carole, who had defended the individual’s right to decide about a reward, seemed not to be conceding that it was only sometimes a good thing.

A move that the subject be dropped was opposed by Wilf who thought it too important an issue. Rewards *did* encourage people to steal and he thought the meeting should face this fact. Carole objected, rewards were useful, encouraging

people to keep their eyes open. Wilf agreed and said he didn't want rewards to be banned: 'It is just a suggestion that before you offer a reward you appeal to the community. No one said you had to do this. You can do what you want.'

Now it was as if the meeting suddenly realised that this attempt to find a formula was leading into meaninglessness. Everyone abruptly reverted to their original positions. Scott said he thought the thing was personal to whoever lost the article. 'I don't think we have a right to say that someone cannot give a reward when he or she wants to. Nobody has a right to say that. It's your life.' Myrna then withdrew from most of her concessions, returning to her earlier point of view that the community should decide when a reward was necessary. If she hoped to make any headway with that, she was deluded. The first objector, Brendan, came back emphatically: 'Hell no! If I decide I want to put up a reward, that's my business – not yours.' At that the chairman moved the meeting on to the next business. 'I think we have talked this subject to death,' he said.

10.2 Appendix II

The Smith family have two children: Tom who is ten, and Annabelle who is seven. Each child's edu-credit entitlement, funded by the State educational authority, is worth \$8,500¹², giving the Smith family \$17,000 pa to spend on their children's education. The children's weekly timetable, for forty weeks of the year, looks like this.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Literacy/ Numeracy	Chinese	Outings	Literacy/ Numeracy	Science
Sports Squad	Pottery, Acrobatics/ Juggling		Pottery, Acrobatics/ Juggling	Fables

This is the timetable for Tom and Annabelle, but in most activities, they are joined by the Williams, Casey, nine and Tina, ten. These children are neighbours living three doors up. Henry Chong, the son of an old friend of Mr. Smiths, is also a frequent member of this 'school'.

The breakdown of the costs are:

Literacy/Numeracy	\$4000
Science	\$1000
Fables	\$1000
Chinese	\$2000
Outings	\$2000
Pottery/Juggling	\$3000
Sports	\$1000
Dance (4pm on Tuesday)	\$1000
Books/CD-ROMS/Music	\$1000

The literacy/numeracy teacher used to be employed as the year three class teacher at the local primary school, but now tutors different groups of children, in groups of three to seven, at their homes. She has timetabled Wednesday off for herself, a time she spends either writing, something she never had time for before, or in the garden. She finds teaching small groups much more fulfilling, as she spends all her time in instruction and creative endeavours, and is not stressed by trying to keep thirty ‘monsters’ under control. Her image of children has improved immensely now that she no longer has to deal with them en masse.

The science class is taught by Mr Chong’s father, a retired doctor, with an interest in chemistry. He refuses payment, and so spends all the money allocated for the class on materials and equipment, giving the children a truly hands on experience. His comment on the whole experience is “That it is a joy to be able to spend time with my

¹² This figure is the estimated amount that the State and Federal Governments spend on each child in a State school in Australia, when total recurrent and capital expenses for the whole state, are divided per child. This figure comes from data published by the A.I.S.V. on Student Centred Funding.

grandson and his friends, and give them such a real introduction to the world of the scientist. I wish I had such an opportunity when I was young.”

The Chinese language lesson is also probably the Chong family’s influence, as they felt Henry was somehow disconnected with his family and their traditions, speaking only English. The lesson is taught by an overseas Chinese student, studying business systems at University in Australia, on his free morning. The extra income means that his family back home do not have to struggle so much to support him.

Sports Squad is only attended by Tom and Annabelle, the other families have a different priority for this time, and their children are not so hooked on sport as Tom and Annabelle, who are fanatics. Sports Squad is the creation of the local junior cricket teams coach. His son, twenty one, is a very keen sportsman, and assists his dad with this, as twenty local children attend the weekly session.

Pottery is conducted in the workshop of a local, previously struggling, artist, who now puts four afternoons aside for his ‘apprentices’. His studio is a bit crowded with all five children, and so his granddaughter, a busker/street entertainer/acrobat/juggler has two or three of the children in the backyard, where she teaches them the joys of the circus. Her class has proven so popular, and her rapport with children so good, that her grandfather is in shock. She herself hated school, was bored and into all the ‘wrong people’ and ‘wrong things’ - and now look at her... she is so good with kids, and just loves them!

Fables invites a different speaker each week, and is coordinated by a group called the 'cultural collective' who the local Community Education Network Centre put the Smith family onto. They send out a different representative from a minority or Nationality cultural group each week, to speak about their cultural history, through the use of fables. Henry does not attend this class, as he goes to a Music Masterclass at the Conservatorium.

Dance is on Tuesday afternoon, and again only Tom and Annabelle attend. It is at a tap/jazz school in the local scout hall.

Outings are taken by the parents and grandparents in turns, all giving up three Wednesdays a year. The Smith budget of \$2000, which equates to \$5000 when all five children are included, is \$120 per week, which in Tina's words means that they can do some 'cool stuff!' trips to the zoo, the beach, the museum, gallery, science works, horse riding, canoeing, and even a sky dive - which was the year's greatest hit.

The list of things that can be tackled is infinite, and the structure of the week is virtually without bounds. Coordination, as the numbers are so small, is a simple task, just give Mr. Chong a ring. The children also have an input into what they learn, and how they learn it. Casey wanted to learn juggling, and so got his mum to organise it. Tom and Annabelle love all sports, and so put them on the agenda. The destination and type of outing is determined by the children as a group, and presented to the parents, who also from time to time offer a few suggestions. All the instructors are tried for a few weeks before being appointed; and only when the families and children

approve of them, their knowledge, rapport, and communication skills. As such, there are no bad or boring teachers, and learning is the joy it should be.

All the parents feel that their children are blazing ahead, academically and socially, because of the personal guidance and tuition, and because everyone who interacts with their children is valued by them and takes a personal interest in their progress.

The greatest change that would probably happens to a timetable such as this, is that as the child gets older, and becomes a teenager, they will presumably take an ever greater interest in the structuring and components of their education, until the whole of it is their own plan, exhibiting their desired learning path. [See Appendix III].

10.3 Appendix III

The edu-credit entitlement funded learning program of Pamela, nineteen.

Pamela has created her own learning program for the last three years, using the \$8500 allocated to her by the State education authority. Over the three years her interests have changed, with this change being reflected in the choice of subjects and activities she has pursued.

This year she is particularly interested in anthropology, literature (classics) and dance. She has arranged through the Community Education Network Centre to have an anthropology class conducted locally, which she and three friends and a couple of other people attend. This takes place twice a week, for one and a half hours, but the discussions are often continued on for hours at a café or someone's home.

The classics group is conducted at the local library, by one of the library staff, who has been passionate about classics for all of her life. The class occurs two evenings a week, and has a starting time, 7pm, but no end time. The discussion continues until everyone feels that it is time to finish. She also attends a Dostoyevsky Fan Club meeting at the Beetle Bar once a week, something she saw advertised on the community Education Network Website, and which was recommended to her by her mum, who is a great fan of Dostoyevsky. The books are done in great detail, as there is no timetable and they consider themselves 'racing' if they cover more than three books in a year. The 'professor' used to teach Russian Literature at the University of

Melbourne, where they did a book a week, a sort of an express tour; but unfortunately one in which he felt everyone was left with the cover open, but the book unread.

Pamela attends four dance classes, each with two sessions per week, at the CAE (Council of Adult Education) in the city. Dance has been her passion for a few years, so she also teaches a couple of classes herself, for retired couples. She finds teaching this class so romantic and the old couples love having such a 'bright young thing' as their teacher.

The only other class she has is mathematics. This is in itself quite phenomenal, as when she had 'gone to school' she hated maths and was terrible at it. Still, something had always nagged her - she should be able to do maths. So in her first year of creating her own learning program, she put two hours a week into private maths classes. She not only found out that she could do it, but that she loved it, and so still did a couple of classes a month, when she and Margaret, her teacher, had time.

Pamela, commenting on the whole experience of creating her own learning program, stated 'That when you are in charge, and the group is small, and you are interested in what you do, there is no such thing as failure, no such thing as being bored, and everything you do is fun!'

10.4 Appendix IV

The Sunday Telegraph (23/1/2000) reported on what it called the 'Educations Great Divide' in that on standardised literacy tests, poorer areas (of N.S.W.) did less well than more well off areas. The socio-economic status of the community was seen, yet again, to influence success in a supposedly egalitarian, public education system.

Similarly, The Age and Herald Sun both ran stories on the successes and failures of VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education, equivalent to the HSC/A Levels) students for several days with the release of results in the middle of December, 1999. In reporting on these results, both newspapers ran stories on the backgrounds of the top twenty one students of the state, many of whom had received Melbourne University Scholarships worth approximately \$100,000. These students composed eighteen who had attended private schools (with school fees of \$10,000 to 12,000 per annum), only three who had attended government schools. However, the three who attended government schools, had not attended even average government schools, but selective government schools, schools that zoned, only taking students from their surrounding area. These government schools were all located in traditional, well established suburbs, with expensive homes, and wealthy families. All twenty one students had thus come from privileged backgrounds.

Little would have seen to have changed in the last few hundred years.

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