

implicit in the interest, without consideration of how the interest may prove to be of instrumental value.

There is a logical link between an interest and discipline as an interest has an order to which the agent has to 'submit' if he is to participate in it in a disciplined way, for to do so would mean that the agent will be engaging in the interest in a manner that justifies his participation in that interest.

The most important question that P.S. Wilson poses is: why should children have to go to school? Only if there were something intrinsically valued in school, and only if we sent children there because of it could it be morally as well as educationally justifiable to say that they should go.

Interests are central. We can justify compelling children to go to school if they are able to pursue activities relevant to their interests. This means that they must see the point of participating in their interests in a way that is appropriate to the interest, and this could mean submitting to the rules of an interest in order to participate in it for its intrinsic value. Wilson argues in this way to establish that there is a logical link between education and discipline.

His view of discipline is somewhat less conventional than Foucault's. Its implication for education is that a wide variety of activities warrants inclusion in the educational curriculum, if

it enables an individual to pursue activities appropriate to her interests.

Discipline is viewed by Wilson as a form of order. He says that the way in which he is using the term discipline 'is that the orderliness characteristic of it is "internal" to the activity or relationship in question'.²³ He then adds that

Discipline, then, is educative order. The word 'discipline' refers always to the kind of order involved in trying to reach appropriate standards or follow appropriate rules for engaging in a valued activity.²⁴

What is established very painstakingly, but with admirable cogency, is the view that discipline and control are not the same thing, though he does concede that they are both forms of order.

But the forms of order of each are of a logically different kind. Discipline is attained within an activity for reasons intrinsic to the activity. Control is achieved for reasons external to the activity. Control is exercised when it is considered necessary to get things done; discipline implies the learning of a logical and evaluative order which must be learnt if the actor understands 'what is involved in doing something'.²⁵ Both discipline and control are forms of compulsion, but the latter lacks the moral dimension that is a feature of discipline. For its implementation control is dependent on force, which is either physical or

psychological.

Where instructions are used to achieve discipline they are of a didactic nature, but when instruction is used for the purpose of the attainment of control it assumes the form of an order, which is devoid of the didactic element.

It would appear that order is compatible with discipline. When children see the point of the establishment of order as a prerequisite for classroom activity, then they are responding in a disciplined manner. 'To order', in the sense of the issuing of commands, is compatible with control and this occurs when children fail to see the point of the need for order. The children respond obediently; the teacher gains control, but the class has not responded in a disciplined way.

Unlike control, discipline is not evaluated against a pre-existing order. It lacks the regulative function that control has, and disciplined activity is not directed at the appeasement of particular others.

It is Wilson's view that 'The only kind of compulsion appropriate to education, then, as opposed to schooling, is not that of control and command, but that of discipline and instruction'.²⁶

I now move to a third writer, Alisdair MacIntyre, who I believe has a contribution to make regarding the concept of discipline.

MacIntyre does not make direct mention of the concept in After Virtue, but there appears to be a notion of the said concept implied in his conceptualization of a practice.

He says that

A practice involves standards of excellence and obedience to rules as well as the achievement of goods. To enter into a practice is to accept the authority of those standards and the inadequacy of my own performance as judged by them. It is to subject my own attitudes, choices, preferences and tastes to the standards which currently and partially define the practice. Practices of course, as I have just noticed, have a history: games, sciences and arts all have histories. Thus the standards are not themselves immune from criticism, but nonetheless we cannot be initiated into a practice without accepting the authority of the best standards realised so far.²⁷

I noted earlier that MacIntyre does not make direct reference to the concept of discipline, but the use of phrases such as 'obedience to rules', 'authority of those standards', and 'the inadequacy of my own performance', suggests that he would subscribe to a view of discipline that is one of control and subservience.

I make this claim because obedience suggests passive unquestioning

acceptance of the dictates of rules, and if the standards of practices have to be accepted as authoritative, then the implication is that the practitioner is subservient to the practice concerned. Finally, inadequacy of performance is judged by existing standards, and while this is true, it is rather distressing to be continually reminded about personal failure to approximate to established standards within given activities, and the danger lies in the possibility of a sense of futility of activity creeping in, because, with the exception of a few, large numbers of practitioners are considered to be failures.

It must be observed that MacIntyre does not argue himself into a position that would support the above claims, but what I have done is make inferences from the position that he adopts regarding practices, which may not be verifiable beyond doubt, but they are nevertheless possible.

To briefly sum up the views of the writers discussed, I will present the crux of each of the writer's contributions. For Foucault, discipline is a form of control. Wilson describes discipline as a form of moral compulsion. Implied in MacIntyre's conceptualization of a practice is obedience to rules to attain discipline.

Michel Foucault, in his analysis of discipline as a form of control, describes accurately what goes on in schools. Discipline

is a form of control where authority figures are responsible for the implementation of the mechanism upon subservient subjects.

P.S. Wilson's view is one which has central to its position the child's interest. Children should be compelled to go to school if there they can engage in their interests. It is morally and educationally justifiable to compel them to go if the above conditions are met, and in this way, though put briefly, Wilson establishes the link between education and discipline.

The two writers present quite different views of discipline. While Foucault presents a picture of what happens in some schools, P.S. Wilson paints a picture of the, for me, unattainable educational utopia. Foucault's 'position' is far too extreme and of necessity should be eradicated from any institution that is concerned with education, while Wilson's position is suggestive of unconstrained freedom, which could prove counter-productive.

However, while I do make the above-mentioned observations, I believe that the writers do not give an adequate account of the concept of discipline. They leave out a vital dimension, which I will now describe.

Discipline is a form of control; it is submission to rules, and it does encompass being obedient to rules as well. But it is not only these things. It is something else as well, which I will proceed to describe.²⁸ Discipline confers rights, circumscribed by

rules, upon people who in turn are guided by the rules of the practice. The rights are circumscribed by rules and practitioners are guided by them. Therefore, in order for a person to attain a disciplined performance in a practice, the person has to be guided by the rules that confer rights upon him, that allow him to make choices, that give him the right to make choices, from a number of possibilities within the rules.

The rules do not give the individual the right to make the choice; they circumscribe the limits from which choice may be made. But the right to exercise choice is related to our positions as autonomous moral beings located in the good society of which it is a prerequisite that autonomous choice is respected. As this is so, it is accepted that an individual has the right to make the choice when the occasion arises.

It will immediately be noticed that my conceptualization of discipline is different from that of Foucault, who analyses it as a form of control; it is different from Wilson's, who defines it as an act of compulsion related to the submission of the individual to rules, and it is different from what MacIntyre's possible idea about obedience to rules in order to attain discipline is. My view is one that claims that a practitioner is guided by the rules, and in being guided by the rules he has the right to choose from the alternatives available within the rules.

What does it mean to be guided by the rules? What does it mean to

have a right to choose from alternatives within the rules? I will answer both questions after I have clarified the use of the words 'rules' and 'rights'.

The sense in which I am using the word 'rules' is the sense in which G.J. Warnock uses it when he discusses 'constitutive' rules. He differentiates 'constitutive' rules from 'regulative' rules by virtue of the difference of their application. 'Constitutive' rules create possibilities from which choice can be exercised for doing something, whereas 'regulative' rules regulate a person's activity; they prescribe how things should be done, and they demand compliance.²⁹

When I talk about rights, I am not talking about a right to be unhindered from doing something; it is not a right to a thing, and it is not a legal right. My use of the word 'right' refers to a right to do something, and in this instance doing something means having the right to choose from a number of alternatives.

On the preceding page I posed two questions which I will now answer. The first question is what is it to be guided by the rules? To be guided by rules means that one is not compelled by them. Rule-guidance does not demand compliance as rule-following does, and the individual is not dictated to by the rules.

To illustrate what I mean I will present an example. The example that I will use is sculpture. Sculpture is presumably

circumscribed by rules. The rules that I am thinking about are rules related to what is acceptable as sculpture; rules about what passes as sculpture. Obviously the cutting of wood into blocks or rectangles is not sculpture, but representation of objects by chiselling stone, carving wood, modelling clay or casting metal is.

It is clear then that while not just anything passes as sculpture, there is a large variety regarding what is accepted. So in being guided by the rules related to what is passable as sculpture, the sculptor has the right to choose the material that he will use, and he has the right to decide which implements are to be used in certain circumstances, though there are certain tools that are more suitably used under certain conditions than others. In addition to this, the decision about interpretation and expression is left entirely to the sculptor.

In the activity described above the person has been guided by the rules and within the rules he has the right to do something. He has the right to make choices, yet it is possible to perform in a disciplined way in such an activity. This is the additional dimension of discipline to which I earlier referred and which appears to be totally neglected in schools.

In schools questions that are asked are 'does the child have this right, or should he have this right?' And if it is argued that the child should have this right, then it may be asked why he should

have it.

My response is that the debate centres upon whether it is better for others to choose for us or whether it is better for us to choose for ourselves. Also, another question that is asked in the school situation is 'when is a schoolchild old enough to make choices?' As a response to this I argue that what must be borne in mind is that the child is not expected to make choices from an infinite variety of alternatives. His choices are limited to a specific number of alternatives, which in the first instance are circumscribed by rules. Examples of such activities which spring to mind are painting, sculpture, games, dancing (classical or other), and designing, (e.g. clothing). There are definitely similar other such activities.

In the types of activities mentioned there is room for error as well and this makes them different from the formal disciplines. In the formal disciplines there is the clear distinction between right and wrong. In the activities I mentioned above it is possible to incorporate error in the activity and it becomes part of the practice. An example of this is where an error in the sculpture is incorporated in the finished product.

P.S. Wilson's account of the logical link between discipline and education is an interesting one, but he fails by not demarcating limits in terms of what is educational and what is not. Further, there is the need to see the point of participating in the activity

in a way that is appropriate to the activity and the implication, for me, is that the agent is relegated to a position beneath that of the activity.

Such an account fails to take cognisance of the role of the agent. A person may in one instance perform a given activity in a disciplined way, but in another instance his performance of the same activity may be absent of discipline.

An activity has a structure peculiar to it, call it its internal organisation that makes it what it is. When a person performs that activity in a manner that is suited to the internal structure of the activity, he is seen to have performed it in a disciplined way.

This is not to say that the person's performance is dictated by the internal structure of the activity. Rather, there is a coalescence of the inert and the animate in a mutually disciplined union.

In this section I have looked at the views of Michel Foucault, P.S. Wilson and Alisdair MacIntyre regarding the concept of discipline. I observed that they operate with completely different notions of the concept and I added that their notions did not give a full account of the concept. I then argued that a more adequate account of the concept becomes available when my notion is granted recognition. The notion of discipline becomes more rounded and complete.

In Section 4 I will undertake a critique of the commonly-held notion of discipline.

SECTION 4 - A CRITIQUE OF THE COMMONLY-HELD NOTION OF DISCIPLINE

Before I launch into my critique of the commonly-held notion of discipline, I consider it appropriate at this stage to signpost for the reader the stages through which my argument has proceeded.

In the first section I differentiated between a discipline, e.g. mathematics, and 'non-discipline' activities. In the second section I pointed out that academic disciplines are concerned with the search for the truth, whereas this is not the case with 'non-discipline' activities. In the third section I located the debate within present views about the concept of discipline, by giving an exposition of the views of Michel Foucault, P.S. Wilson and Alisdair MacIntyre.

In this section I will develop a critique of the commonly-held notion of discipline by making some observations regarding the commonly-held notion of discipline, i.e. that it is a form of control only; I will look at the implications that emanate from this view and its consequences and I will compare and contrast my view with the accepted view.

As a reminder I must point out that I am opposed to the view that claims that discipline is a form of control only. Such a view subscribes to discipline as a form of control that compels rule following. I do not deny that discipline does operate in this way, and I am not dismissing it from education as superfluous. It does

have a role to play if applied with certain reservations. What I am arguing is that to conceptualise discipline in the way described above as the only way in which the concept operates, is to give an inadequate account of the concept. Discipline is not only control through compulsion by rule-obedience; it is also practice through rule-guidance. This distinction was discussed quite exhaustively in Section 3.

Before proceeding with my argument, I must establish use of terminology that will facilitate clearer argument.

I will use the phrase 'commonly-held notion of discipline' when I refer to the view that supports the idea that it, i.e. discipline, is a form of control only; and I will use the phrase 'my view' when I refer to the idea that rule-guidance is being talked about as opposed to rule-following, because the commonly-held notion of discipline subscribes to a notion of discipline as rule-following, which appears to be opposed to my view of rule-guidance.

A Critique of Discipline as Control

Conceptually the English language can cater for one who participates in an activity, one who is involved in a practice, one who produces a work, in a disciplined way. However, the word is very frequently misused and this confuses our understanding of these issues.

Confusion, I believe, stems from the following. Firstly, it is an outside observer, normally some type of senior or authority, who casts judgment upon the subject's performance, and secondly, for me, the subject becomes subjected to the activity that he performs. Let us take each observation in turn. In education if a person is engaging in an educational task his evaluator is usually in some position of 'superiority'. It is that person who may decide whether the task has been engaged in in a disciplined way or not. The subject's viewpoint is totally ignored, if it is sought at all. Now, in making his evaluation, the evaluator may confuse a mechanical performance with a disciplined performance, and so his evaluation will be wrong.

The point that I am trying to establish is that if individuals slavishly follow rules in all the activities that they participate in, they then become slaves to rules; they become rule-following animals who perform activities in a mechanical way rather than in a disciplined way.

I have been using the terms 'mechanical' and 'disciplined', without saying what they are. I will do so now. For me a mechanical performance of an activity is when the agent follows the rules of the activity slavishly, without seeing the point of participating in the activity, with the activity seen as being of instrumental value. In this case participation in the activity in an instrumental way means that his actions are directed at the approval of external others, possibly an evaluator of some sort.

Disciplined performance, for me, means seeing the point of participating in the activity; participating in the activity for its intrinsic value; performing the activity in a way appropriate to it, for its own sake. In this case the agent would need to locate Herbst's opus³⁰ in the activity which he is performing, and I make no distinction here between rule-following activities and rule-guided activities, though I am inclined to issue the warning that the confusion discussed earlier is more likely to arise where rule-following activities are concerned, because it is in these instances that it is easier to tell when a rule is not being followed, and this is where the evaluator comes in.

This brings me to the next point that I would like to discuss. Related to the concept of discipline in its commonly-held notion is the idea of a disciplinarian. If applied in the educational situation, an anomaly then stems from the fact that we have a 'disciplinarian', one supposedly responsible for the imposition of discipline, i.e. one responsible for the control imposed, but we do not have a 'disciplined'.

We do have one who is disciplined by a disciplinarian, e.g. when unequal power relations exist between the one who wields the power and one who is the target of that power, and we do have a person who is disciplined in the performance of an activity. But there is an iniquitous implication that arises from the positions described above that supports what I said in my argument, and it is that it is an invidious arrangement to have, in the educational situation,

power relations that are unequal.

From the remarks made in the preceding paragraph it is possible to make certain inferences. They are that people being educated can only achieve their objective if exposed to the type of discipline described above. People can only be educated under conditions of control and supervision. Alternatively, if they are not being controlled or supervised, i.e. disciplined directly, the discipline assumes a less explicit manifestation. Its form is that of 'judgment', where the person in charge will decide whether a disciplined performance of an activity has taken place or not.

This appears to be very much like the sort of preparation one would undergo if one were being trained as an unthinking, docile automaton being prepared to slot into part of the social production machinery without concern for the person involved. But this is not so; what is being discussed and described is what goes on in schools and other similar educational institutions which are supposed to be in the interest of the individual.

What also goes on in these institutions is that communication is from the top down. Children are talked at, rather than talked to. In classrooms children must guess what the teacher wants them to say; they must respond in a way that the teacher has pre-determined; they must say that something is true, because someone else has said that it is true. If not, they are not disciplined.

My description of what goes on in schools should be cause for alarm. Are schools working in collusion with the ownership class, or are their interests primarily those of the children? If the second part of the above question is answered in the affirmative, then schools are certainly setting about their task in a most peculiar manner.

A Critique of the Disciplines

My approach, though based on an attack on what goes on in schools, will take a different thrust now. It is different because I now talk about 'disciplines', those fields of study that have logical internal structures, and which are concerned with a quest for the truth; which are different from discipline, the form of control.

My approach will be to challenge two established positions, one unmentioned, and one dealt with in a previous section of my essay. The two positions that I refer to are those adopted by Paul Hirst and P.S. Wilson. But before I challenge the positions of the said writers, I believe that it is necessary to reiterate my stance so that it will be possible to observe our points of variance.

I do believe that there is room for the commonly-held notion of discipline in schools, with certain reservations of course. I do believe that there is a need to be exposed to the disciplines, e.g. mathematics, in the educational process, but in each instance, as I observed earlier, the agent is the subordinate. In the first

instance this is so because the authority figure responsible for the implementation of discipline is in a position of control over the subject. In the second instance the agent is dictated to by the rules of the discipline; he is compelled by the rules and has to follow them slavishly if he is to be seen to have performed the discipline in a disciplined way.

My view is that it is necessary for the subject to at least be elevated in status to that of equal, if not superior, to the activity, and this can be done if the individual participates in activities that create scope for choice. Such activities would have internal to their structure rules that serve the function of guidance. The individual is then guided by the rules and he is allowed to make choices within the rules concerning how he will participate in the activity. I chose to call such activities practices, it will be remembered, and as examples of such practices I suggested games, art and music.

The difference between discipline as control and disciplines as school subjects, on the one hand, and my conception of practices on the other, becomes apparent. My view creates scope for choice. The agent is not prescribed to; he is not under control, and he is not a rule-following animal. He is allowed to exercise choice within given parameters, but choice nevertheless it is.

In his article 'Liberal education and the nature of knowledge', Paul Hirst first sets out what he considers liberal education to

be. He says that 'a liberal education is, then, one that, determined in scope and content by knowledge itself, is thereby concerned with the development of mind'.³¹ It is different from an exclusively scientific education, it is not vocational education, and it is not a specialist education of any sort.

Liberal education commits itself to exposure to what Hirst calls the forms of knowledge. They are mathematics, physical sciences, human sciences, history, religion, literature and the fine arts, philosophy and morals. And Hirst states that

Acquiring knowledge of any form is therefore to a greater or lesser extent something that cannot be done simply by solitary study of the symbolic expressions of knowledge, it must be learnt from a master on the job. No doubt it is because the forms require particular training of this kind in distinct worlds of discourse, because they necessitate the development of high critical standards according to complex criteria, because they involve our coming to look at experience in particular ways, that we refer to them as disciplines. They are indeed disciplines that form the mind.³²

What is at stake here is the question of whether it is possible to only achieve a disciplined performance in what Paul Hirst terms 'forms of knowledge'.³³ Hirst appears to imply this in his article, which appears to be in support of R.S. Peter's view about

worthwhile activities. I am in disagreement with this view. In schools children are exposed to a selection from among the disciplines. The disciplines that are used in schools are those that allow measurement or evaluation in terms of performance. Children are evaluated by their performance within the prescribed disciplines. Very often it is mistakenly assumed that those children who perform well within a discipline have performed in a disciplined way. If a child excels in an examination within one of the subjects, i.e. disciplines, it is accepted that that performance is indicative of a disciplined performance. This is not necessarily so. The child may have reproduced what was required of him in a manner that was devoid of discipline. His response may have been completely mechanical. I therefore argue that measurable proficiency does not necessarily indicate a disciplined performance.

Rules do not give a complete description of an activity. A disciplined performance escapes specification by the rules. One cannot differentiate between a disciplined player and an ill-disciplined one in terms of the rules of an activity. And it is therefore my view that it is possible to perform in a disciplined way in an activity that is not categorised as one of the disciplines. Examples of such activities are ballet or soccer or sculpture.

While Hirst demarcates activities that are apparently acceptable as 'forms of knowledge', P.S. Wilson strays by not demarcating limits.

I will challenge him on this issue, and then I will respond to his claim that discipline is a kind of compulsion to which it is right that one should have to submit.

I observed that Wilson does not demarcate limits in terms of activities that are educational, and the implication of this extremely generous attitude is that if the activity is an interest of the individual it is worthy of inclusion in the educational programme. Wilson does acknowledge that 'the interests of children are often childish and absurd', but one wonders how he reconciles this admission with his view that a child should go to school if it is a place where he can pursue his interests. The problem with P.S. Wilson is that one is unsure of what he wants included in the school curriculum. He is not clear on this matter.

What Wilson fails to recognise, I believe, is that activities have social traditions. They have emerged in a social context and are interpersonal. Therefore, it is unacceptable that just anything, because it happens to be the interest of the individual, should be considered to be educational. What happens if the individual is interested in tiddly-winks or pea-shooting? I do realise that my examples are absurd, but it is not inconceivable that there are some people who do have such interests. What then? Do we include such activities in our educational programme because they are the interests of certain individuals? My response is a categorical no! Not just anything goes, and I believe that the criteria should be that the activities should have traditions and they should have

histories of standards of excellence.

Wilson's next argument that I intend to deal with is his claim that discipline is a kind of compulsion to which it is right to submit. I do agree that discipline is a form of compulsion, but it is not only an act of compulsion, it is something else as well.

Wilson does not claim that discipline is only an act of compulsion. However, this is the way in which he deals with the concept in Interest and Discipline in Education, and as he does not take into account other dimensions that may be descriptive of this concept, I am inclined to read him in this way.

I will spell out what this something else is regarding discipline after I have undertaken a brief analysis of the relationship of discipline to rules, and it is likely that my position will attain greater clarity.

For its implementation discipline ultimately depends on rules. A person is seen to have performed an activity in a disciplined way if he follows the rules. If he does not follow the rules, i.e. if he breaks the rules, then he is seen to have performed the activity in an ill-disciplined manner.

When students in schools, or elsewhere, are disciplined by authority figures, the authority figures resort to rules for the justification of the imposition of discipline. So what is

happening here is that those under control are indirectly compelled by rules. They are compelled by the rules of certain activities in which they participate, and they are compelled by rules when they are being disciplined by authority figures. Here discipline is certainly an act of compulsion, but as I remarked earlier, it is not only this; it is something else as well. What this something else is will be discussed in the ensuing paragraph.

My claim earlier was that for its implementation discipline ultimately depends on rules. What if the rules in this case differ from those described above? Rules that guide differ from rules that dictate, and my present concern is with rules that guide.

What is the relationship between an activity circumscribed by rules that guide, and an individual who participates in such an activity? The first response is that the agent is guided by the rules internal to the activity. If this is so, that he is being guided, then what is implied is that in being guided he is allowed to make choices within the rules of the activity. If choice is present, and if it is possible to exercise choice and still perform an activity in a disciplined way then, for me, it is an obvious dismissal of compulsion as a necessary component of discipline. In fact, in the above context choice and compulsion are quite incompatible; in fact they are actually diametrically opposed.

Finally, as part of my observations, I would like to note that the phenomenon of innovation shows that it is insufficient to give an

account of discipline only in terms of something internal to the activity; you need something about the agent (subject) as well. In the commonly-held notion of discipline we noticed that the agent was relegated in status because he was a subject of control, acting out of a need to appease particular others. My notion of discipline elevates the agent in status to equal or superior to the activity. The rules, applicable to most activities, are in most instances static. That they do not undergo dramatic change over time is attributable to the fact that these activities have identities, and if they change in their rules, they lose their identities. But activities are not static in terms of what happens within them, within the confines of the rules, and this is where the phenomenon of innovation appears. But innovation is nothing without the innovator, and this is why, in my conceptualisation of discipline, the agent is given primacy of place because he is allowed to exercise choice from among the rules, with the likelihood of improvising. I believe that my view of discipline says more about the agent than does the commonly-held notion, and, if only for this, I feel that we cannot neglect to give it the recognition that it deserves by creating space for its inclusion in any programme that is considered educational.

Consequences of the Application of the Commonly-held Notion of Discipline

From having made observations I now move on to implications of strict adherence and total commitment to the commonly-held notion

of discipline. After I have done this I will question the validity of the implied belief that it is only possible to attain a disciplined performance within a formal discipline, i.e. a form of knowledge.

The commonly-held notion of discipline accepts that discipline is a form of control. In education it is then accepted that the educand is controlled by an outside controlling force; a 'superior' of some sort who has been placed in authority. Whether the person is 'an authority' is an altogether different matter which we will not digress to discuss here. The educand, or subject, is involved in an unequal relationship, and particular situations will dictate how the subject responds in view of the presence of the authority figure. Put differently, it means that the subject's behaviour will be directed at the approval of particular others. In such instances the individual will be displaying behaviour that is heterocentric.

R.W. Wilson makes the following distinction.

For behaviour in terms of learned standards the term autocentricism is suggested and for behaviour in terms of situational demands the term heterocentricism is suggested. Autocentricism is defined as a condition where particular others are not cited as the authority for behaviour, where there is an orientation to rules or principles; heterocentricism is defined as a condition where particular others are

cited as the authority for behaviour, where there is an orientation to others.³⁴

A question which needs to be asked at this stage is: 'What are the possible consequences of prolonged heterocentrism, as it is true that subjects will be exposed to the commonly-held notion of discipline throughout their educational careers if cognisance is not taken of my view and attempts are not made to implement it.

One possible answer to the question posed above is that it is likely that prolonged heterocentrism could lead to permanent heterocentrism. The person will always cite others as the authority for his behaviour. Permanent heterocentrism, for me, is tantamount to Pavlovian conditioning of human beings. But if it is education that we are talking about, then it is reprehensible that the likelihood of such a situation could arise, but it can, and it does, and we have got to guard against it.

Another way of looking at the above situation is to acknowledge that the hypothetical subject under discussion may never operate as an autonomous human being. The reader need only turn back to Section 1 to read the views of John White and R.F. Dearden on human autonomy, and then she will recognise the invidiousness of the position of the heteronomous subject.

The second implication that I indicated that I would deal with,

that is associated with the commonly-held notion of discipline, is the implied belief that it is only possible to attain a disciplined performance within a formal discipline, i.e. a form of knowledge, e.g. mathematics. I think that this is not so.

A discipline is such because of its formal internal arrangement, so that proficiency in the performance of a discipline is measureable. However, excellent measureable proficiency does not necessarily indicate a disciplined performance of the activity. It may be a mechanical performance, and here again I must reiterate the point made earlier, that it is insufficient to give an account of discipline only in terms of something internal to the activity; you need something about the subject as well.

A person may in one instance perform an activity in a disciplined way, but in another instance his performance of the same activity may be absent of discipline. An activity has a structure peculiar to it, call it its internal organisation, that makes it systematic. When a person performs that activity in a manner that is suited to the internal structure of the activity, he is seen to have performed it in a disciplined way. This is not to say that the person's performance is dictated by the internal structure of the activity; rather there is a coalescence of the inert and the animate in a mutually disciplined union. The role of the agent is of vital importance.

From having looked at the implications of strict adherence to the

commonly-held notion of discipline and the possible consequences thereof, I now want to finally challenge the views of Michel Foucault and P.S. Wilson regarding the concept, in the hope that it will ultimately be acknowledged that there is another conceptualization worthy of consideration.

Foucault's analysis of the disciplinary process concluded in the acceptance that it is a power relation; a form of control, exerted upon people. Such a view would be supportive of the claim that discipline is a form of control circumscribed by rules of compulsion.

As was observed in Section 3 of this essay, P.S. Wilson develops an intricate argument through which he finally links education and discipline. For the sake of brevity I will sketch his main ideas only.

He initially asks why a child should go to school and the answer is that he should go; he is compelled to go, only if the school is a place where he is allowed to pursue his interests. The element of compulsion appears when the child is compelled to go to school because it is a place at which he may pursue his interests. His interests are those activities in which he has seen the point of participation in an appropriate way. Discipline is a kind of compulsion to which it is right that one should have to submit.

My inclination is to say that if P.S. Wilson formulates the concept

of discipline in this way, then it would not be a form of misrepresentation to claim that he, too, would see the role of rules as compelling and dictatorial.

I have developed a view of discipline that is different from that described above. It is not radical, but it is different. Discipline confers rights, circumscribed by rules, upon people who in turn are guided by the rules.

People who participate in what I earlier called practices, have rights, as individuals, to choose the way in which they will perform within the rules of a specific practice. That practices are circumscribed by rules serves to emphasise their histories and traditions, and the rules peculiar to specific practices make them what they are; they retain their identities in this way. But in being circumscribed by rules, it must be painstakingly noted that the rules of practices serve as a form of guidance only. They do not compel. This is the difference.

SECTION 5 - CONCLUSION

To summarise, then, my argument as it has proceeded, so that the salient points may be placed in relief, I will briefly present the contents of each section.

In Section 1, my argument proceeded as follows. I first presented a definition of the two meanings of the word 'discipline'. They are a form of control, and a branch of instruction or learning. My concern is with both, as both concepts of the word discipline have application in education.

Discipline, as a form of control, is implemented by an external agency, and this creates unequal power relationships in the educational situation and it has not been established whether there are moral grounds for the criteria used in the imposition of discipline. All the time, within the process, the subject directs his behaviour at external agencies, and it is conceivable that discipline is confused with associated or similar concepts.

As a result of having continuously directed his behaviour at particular others, the agent has had his individuality eroded. He has been conditioned to respond in a manner that will elicit reinforcement from his evaluator, and this is an immoral situation, where a human being has been denigrated to the level of a conditioned animal. Such a person has been robbed of his autonomy, but I argued that it is desirable to be autonomous.

My next move was to discuss 'the disciplines', i.e. branches of knowledge, as they are applied in schools. Here a relationship exists between a child and an 'object', a school subject, a discipline. This, too, is a relationship of 'control', because it demands conformity from the child because he has to comply with the rules of the discipline, as failure to do so will lead to personal failure.

In Section 2 I differentiated between a discipline, i.e. mathematics, and I explicated its formal, internal structure and its internal organisation and logic. Then I discussed 'non-discipline' activities such as music and art. My terminology for the respective areas of concern were 'discipline' and 'practice' respectively.

Characteristic of a discipline is that it is concerned with establishing the truth. In order to establish the truth within a discipline, one has to follow the rules. A practice, as I conceptualise it, is not concerned with establishing the truth. It is concerned with disciplined performance, but in order to perform in a disciplined way in a practice one is guided by the rules.

I demonstrated that it is possible to attain a disciplined performance in 'non-discipline' activities which I called practices, and I argued for their inclusion in the school curriculum on equal status with the disciplines, because they do have a dimension that is unavailable in disciplines, and it is the

potential for innovation:

Section 3 was utilised to locate my views about 'discipline' within the present debate about the concept. I did this by giving an exposition of the views of Michel Foucault and P.S. Wilson, and I drew Alisdair MacIntyre into the discussion as a result of his conceptualization of a practice. According to Foucault's analysis, discipline is a form of power which facilitates control. For Wilson, discipline and interest are inextricably interwoven. If a child has a particular interest, the child will participate in the interest in a way that justifies his participation in that interest, and his discipline derives from the moral compulsion implicit in the interest, without consideration of how the interest may prove to be of instrumental value.

I observed that Alisdair MacIntyre does not make direct reference to rules, but in his discussion of a practice he uses certain phrases that suggest, I remarked, that he would subscribe to discipline as a form of control and subservience.

I then presented my conceptualization of discipline against the above-mentioned background. Discipline confers rights, circumscribed by rules, upon people who in turn are guided by the rules of the practice. The rights are circumscribed by rules and practitioners are guided by them. Therefore, in order for a person to attain a disciplined performance in a practice, the person has to be guided by the rules that confer rights upon him, that allow

him to make choices, that give him the right to make choices from a number of possibilities within the rules.

The most important difference between my conceptualization of discipline and the commonly-held notion, is that my view encapsulates rule-guidance as opposed to rule-following, and I argued that it is possible to attain a disciplined performance in activities that are rule-guided.

Observations were made by me regarding the commonly-held notion of discipline, implications related to this view were considered and its consequences were assessed in Section 4. I then compared and contrasted my view with the commonly-held notion of discipline. I continued this section by arguing that if individuals slavishly follow rules in all the activities in which they participate, they then become slaves to rules; they become rule-following animals who perform activities in a mechanical way rather than in a disciplined way.

Disciplined performance, for me, means seeing the point of participating in the activity; participating in the activity for its intrinsic value; performing the activity in a way appropriate to it, for its own sake.

I then discussed the deleterious effects of having a disciplined performance controlled by a disciplinarian, where, in places such as schools, children labour under unequal power relations. There

they are relegated to a position of inferiority to the formal discipline. I claimed that my conceptualization of discipline related to rule-guidance elevated the subject to equal or superior to the activity, a position much more desirable than the former.

Finally, I staked a claim for the inclusion of rule-guided subjects in the educational curriculum, as it is my belief that if we are to counter the effects of the school production line by producing critical, free-thinking, unfettered minds, the educational process will have to be planned to this end.

It is my view that it is an illusion to believe that a method of axiomatic instruction will eventually lead to creative and evaluative thinking. The mind becomes manacled by the method of axiomatic instruction, and is incapable of escaping from the fetters of its effect when it is expected to do so. In order for a person to develop creative, critical and free thinking, the individual should be allowed and encouraged to do so within the structure of her educational programme.

The manner in which education is presently structured, with its obsession with the commonly-held notion of discipline and its emphasis of the disciplines in curriculum design, destroys any possibility of producing, as an end product of the process, an individual who is capable of creative, critical and free thinking.

I would like to quote, at length, from Neil Postman and Charles

Weingartner, on what learning takes place in schools, and what messages are transmitted.

Passive acceptance is a more desirable response to ideas than active criticism.

Discovering knowledge is beyond the power of students and is, in any case, none of their business.

Recall is the highest form of intellectual achievement, and the collection of unrelated 'facts' is the goal of education.

The voice of authority is to be trusted and valued more than independent judgement.

One's own ideas and those of one's classmates are inconsequential.

Feelings are irrelevant in education.

There is always a single, unambiguous Right Answer to a question.

English is not History and History is not Science and Science is not Art and Art is not Music, and Art and Music are minor subjects and English, History and Science are major subjects, and a subject is something you 'take' and, when you have 'taken' it, you have 'had' it, and if you have 'had' it, you are immune and need not take it again. (The Vaccination Theory of Education?)³⁵. (Own Emphasis.)

In view of what has been said above, one is then to ask whose

interests are being promoted in schools and other educational institutions? Certainly, with things as they are, it cannot be the interests of the recipients of what is called 'education'. If it is education that is under discussion, then something has gone amiss with its process and objectives, and I think that it should more suitably be called instruction, or something else of a similar nature.

People being schooled³⁶ are passive recipients of knowledge instead of active producers of knowledge. Learning is being told what happened instead of being a happening in itself. As this is the case, how then is education to create people who can think for themselves, by themselves, about issues that affect them individually and as part of the human collectivity?

Our training in educational institutions equips us with a smug acceptance of our inability to think. We transport this debilitating condition into other realms of our lives, where authority is unquestioningly accepted; where we are afraid to express personal preferences, opinions or views, where others, ostensibly better qualified, make choices for us. It has become so bad that we even allow 'others' to make decisions for us. This is especially to be observed in the political sphere where people regard the casting of a vote as synonymous with the exercising of a political right.

This has got to stop, and the places that are ideal for introducing

change are educational institutions, which have the advantage of a large captive audience over an extended period of time.

At these places people should be encouraged to think. Space must be created within the educational curriculum to facilitate personal choice and decision-making and hopefully, as a result of having been allowed or rather encouraged to exercise these faculties, they will rightfully become part of our natures.

An unthinking being accepts his lot in life. He is incapable of indulging in leaps of the mind that will allow him to question the status quo, by comparing what is with what should be, and what could be. He docilely vegetates in his condition of hibernation, unconcerned about how his life has been mapped for him, and is equally unconcerned about his contribution as a human being to his immediate community or society at large.

Schools, within the educational structure, are particularly culpable of some of the more serious charges of stifling individualism and stifling the mind.

There are alternative possibilities available to schools. They have available, for choice, open or closed systems in education. A closed system of education accepts that there is only one correct answer; an open system accepts that there are various possibilities as answers. As consequences of these systems, we either have open- or closed-system thinkers. Sadly, because of the

way schools are structured, the emphasis is on closed-system education, and the consequence is a plethora of closed-system thinkers.

In the classroom the teacher is both judge and arbiter. How is it possible under such conditions to encourage free speech, which I believe is considered by the good society that underpins my argument to be the inalienable right of every human being, as long as it is not used in a manner that is slanderous or hurtful to the next person? Because free speech is not encouraged in schools, Postman and Weingartner observe that 'children become ventriloquists, speaking with the voice of the authorities'. The whole performance then becomes a sham. The dominant mode of action in schools is pretence. Teachers pretend that what they are doing is education, and children pretend that what they are receiving is education. Pretence leads to alienation from the true task at hand, and it ultimately becomes unattainable.

My reformulation of the concept of discipline is an open challenge to the way discipline is conceived of and applied in schools. Schools apply an accurate though limited notion of the concept. My earnest request is that they extend the notion of discipline to incorporate my view, and, if this is done, we will need a reformulation of the educational process as a whole. What are some of the changes envisaged? The most important change that I anticipate is the introduction of rule-guided activities on a par with rule-following activities. Instructors, be they teachers or

professors, should see education as a part of a process in which they are engaging, rather than as a finished product which they are dispensing. Communication should not be from the top down, it should be on a horizontal plane, with each communicant participating in the dialogue, on an equal footing. Learning must become a happening, it must be a right to do. We must become active producers of knowledge. The recipients of education must be given the right to voice their opinions, express their views, air their preferences, approve or disapprove, make choices, make decisions, follow their inclinations that stem from desires, express themselves freely on matters that they choose to discuss, question the pronouncements of authority figures, especially when such persons are in authority, but they are not necessarily 'authorities', with a view to seeking clarification on matters.

My list is certainly not exhaustive, but it covers sufficient ground and lays bare the limitations and restrictive role that education plays, especially in view of the fact that it is closely linked to the commonly-held notion of discipline. The commonly-held notion of discipline is the cornerstone of virtually all education planning and implementation. Education, as it is conceived today, is built upon such foundations. It is time that we rock the edifice, then, hopefully, we will be undertaking the true task of education and it is to educate.

NOTES:

- 1) The Concise Oxford Dictionary - 6th Edition. London: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- 2) Ibid.
- 3) White, John. The Aims of Education Restated. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.
- 4) Dearden, R.F. 'Autonomy and Education' in Dearden, Hirst and Peters (eds.), Education and the Development of Reason. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.
- 5) Refer to Alisdair MacIntyre's use of the word 'practice' in After Virtue, pp.177-178.
- 6) UNISA Study Guide, Geographical Analysis, 1980.
- 7) MacIntyre, A. After Virtue. London: Duckworth, 1981.
- 8) Pitkin, H.I. 'Learning Language Games' in Wittgenstein and Justice. Berkeley: California University, 1978.
- 9) In the chapter 'Literature and Literary Study', in Theory of Literature, the writers make the following point: 'While physics may see its highest triumphs in some general theory

reducing to a formula electricity and heat, gravitation and light, no general law can assume to achieve the purpose of literary study: the more general, the more abstract and hence empty it will seem; the more the concrete objects of the work of art will elude our grasp'. (p.18.)

10) Alisdair MacIntyre makes this point in his discussion on practices in After Virtue.

11) Foucault, M. Discipline and Punish. London: Lane, 1977.

12) Ibid, p.137.

13) Ibid, p.137.

14) Ibid, p.138.

15) Ibid, p.143.

16) Ibid, p.152.

17) Ibid, pp.170-171.

18) Ibid, p.172.

19) Ibid, p.176.

20) Ibid, p.179.

21) Ibid, p.182.

22) Ibid, p.192.

23) Wilson, P.S. Interest and Discipline in Education. London:
Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971.

24) Ibid, p.79.

25) Ibid, p.77.

26) Ibid, p.92.

27) MacIntyre, A., op. cit.

28) My discussion in this section is greatly influenced by Robin Barrow's chapter on Rights in Moral Philosophy for Education. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1979.

29) For further discussion see C.J. Warnock on Rules, Chapter 4, in The Object of Morality, London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1971.

30) In his paper 'Work, Labour and University Education', in The Philosophy of Education, Oxford: OUP, 1980, R.S. Peters (ed.), P. Herbst makes the following distinctions between work and

labour:

'... education is work rather than labour, and that to educate well is to work, as well as to teach people to work.'

'... work is conceived to be a species of unalienated action, labour is activity tending to alienation.

'The product of work is works. I am sorry that the only available English word is so weak and colourless. I shall use the Latin word 'opus' instead. The opus, as I conceive it, is the point of the workman's work; if the opus is well done, he has not worked in vain. I shall argue that in order to work well, a workman needs to love or value that at which he works and if so, he aims at good workmanship. The excellence of an opus will be sharply distinguished from its instrumental goodness, and in particular, from its propensity to procure satisfaction for consumers. At the same time it is not denied that in objects which belong to a telic species, what counts as their excellence may depend on their telos.'

'Work need not similarly cause or give us pleasures; congenial work on the contrary is a pleasure. The pleasure consists in doing the work, not in some consequence, or state of mind, produced by the work. The pleasure of labour on the other hand (if any) is always extrinsic to it.'

'Activities conceived as pleasure-producers are labour. Activities conceived as happiness-constituents are work.'

'Work is non-contingently related to its product.'... 'Labour is contingently-related to its product.'

- 31) See Hirst, P. 'Liberal education and the nature of knowledge' in Education and the Development of Reason, op. cit.
- 32) Ibid.
- 33) Ibid.
- 34) R.W. Wilson makes the discussed distinctions in his article 'Some comments on stage theories of moral development' in Journal of Moral Education, Vol. 3.
- 35) This extract is taken from Teaching as a Subversive Activity by Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner. In part of my conclusion, i.e. Section 5, I am greatly indebted to the writers for the views I express there.
- 36) My essay is not concerned with the distinction drawn between education and schooling and to have focussed upon it in the text would have resulted in side-tracking of the main issue, i.e. that the concept of discipline is distorted in education. My argument that discipline is distorted in education is not dependent upon establishing a clear and presumably crucial distinction between education and schooling, as the distinction is anything but clear or universally agreed upon. My claim is that there are institutions that claim to impart education, whatever their conceptualization of education may be, and in imparting what they consider education to be, they distort the

concept of discipline in their methods and approach. However, there is extensive literature that concentrates on the distinctions between education and schooling. The articles that I have read for this essay, which deal with the difference between education and schooling, are listed below. What they have in common is the claim that education and schooling are of a logically different nature. Education is a concept, whereas schooling is a process of a certain sort. Also, the writers listed below accept that schools do not educate.

The articles are:

- 1) Phillips-Griffiths, A. Extract from 'A deduction of universities', in R.D. Archambault (ed.), Philosophical Analysis and Education. London: RKP, 1963.
- 2) Barrow, R. The Philosophy of Schooling. Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1981.
- 3) Pateman, T. 'Can schools educate?' in Journal of Philosophy of Education. Vol. No. 2, November 1980.
- 4) White, J. The Aims of Education Restated. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1) Barrow, R. 'Alternative approaches to the curriculum' in Common Sense and the Curriculum. London: George Allen and Unwin Books Ltd., 1976.
- 2) Barrow, R. Moral Philosophy for Education. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1979.
- 3) Barrow, R. The Philosophy of Schooling. Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1981.
- 4) Buber, M. A Believing Humanism, translated and with an introduction and explanatory comments by Maurice Friedman, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969.
- 5) Foucault, M. Discipline and Punish. London: Lane, 1977.
- 6) Foucault, M., Gordon, C. (ed.), Power/Knowledge. Brighton: Harvester, 1980.
- 7) Foucault, M. The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction: Translated from the French by Robert Hurley, London: Lane, 1979.
- 8) Hextall, I. and Sarup, M. 'School knowledge, evaluation and alienation' in Whitty (ed.), Society, State and Schooling, Readings on the possibilities for radical education. Barcombe: Falmer Press, 1977.
- 9) Hirst, P.H. 'Liberal education and the nature of knowledge' in Dearden, Hirst and Peters (eds.), Education and the Development of Reason. London: RKP, 1972.
- 10) Lee, H.D.P. (translator), Plato The Republic. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1972.
- 11) Lukes, S. Individualism. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973.
- 12) MacIntyre, A. After Virtue. Duckworths, 1981.
- 13) Marshall, J.D. Wittgenstein on rules: implications for authority and discipline in education in Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1985.
- 14) Moore, T.W. Philosophy of Education - An Introduction. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.
- 15) Patemen, T. 'Can schools educate?' in Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 14, No. 2, November 1980.
- 16) Peters, R.S. Ethics and Education. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966.

- 17) Phillips Griffiths, A. Extract from 'A deduction of universities in R.D. Archambault (ed.), Philosophical Analysis and Education. London: RKP, 1965.
- 18) Pitkin, H.F. 'Learning language games' in Wittgenstein and Justice. Berkeley: California University, 1973.
- 19) Postman, N. and Weingartner, C. Teaching as a Subversive Activity. Penguin Books, 1983.
- 20) Russell, B. Education and the Social Order. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1967.
- 21) Sassoon, A.S. (ed.). Approaches to Gramsci. London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative Society Ltd., 1982.
- 22) Smart, B. Michel Foucault. London: Travistock Publications, 1985.
- 23) Snook, I.A. Indoctrination and Education. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972.
- 24) Sykes, J.B. (ed.). The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 6th edition, London: OUP, 1976.
- 25) UNISA Study Guide, Geographical Analysis, 1980.
- 26) Warnock, G.J. The Object of Morality. London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1971.
- 27) White, J. The Aims of Education Restated. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982.
- 28) Wilson, J. Philosophy and Practical Education. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977.
- 29) Wilson, P.S. Interest and Discipline in Education. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971.
- 30) Wilson, R.W. 'Some comments on stage theories of moral development' in Journal of Moral Education, Vol. 5, No. 3, New Brunswick Pemberton Publishing Company Ltd., 1976.
- 31) Winch, P. The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 9th impression, 1976.