

"For there is a personal nobleness, and even sacredness in work ... in idleness alone, there is perpetual despair."

Thomas Carlyle

"The last product of civilizations is leisure."

Bertrand Russell

What relationship has education to such different philosophical values? Where within the discussion of work and leisure does education reside? How does education fare, when viewed through the work-leisure dichotomy within the community?

This contribution attempts to evaluate the issues surrounding education in relation to work, non-work, leisure and community. Leisure is often viewed as the antithesis to work. This concept raises questions as to the real and underlying purposes of the development of the 'leisure society', and of the increasing role that education is required to play.

The issues surrounding work and non-work

Leisure is accepted as being present in any human activity or situation that enjoys an element of freedom and choice, and is recognised as being 'leisure-like'. Thus, if instead of taking the residual concept of leisure (time left over after work and other obligations), we take a state of being, a holistic view, then the artificial divisions between work and leisure are removed. There will be a blurred intervening area of obligation, family duty and so on.

James Murphy points to work and leisure as concepts that are fundamentally opposed. He highlights the problems central to non-work in relation to leisure:

"In the discretionary time conceptualisation of leisure, the fundamental values around which behaviour is organised are contained within work, not leisure. The valuation of the person is structured in terms of his work performance. No important judgement of the person occurs within the context of leisure *per se*. This conceptualisation relegates aspects of life contained within the sphere of work and leisure to the status of spare time activity.

"Work and leisure involve definitions which are not conceptually equivalent. It is a fallacy, defining work implicitly in terms of behaviour, and leisure in terms of time. This creates no particular problem so long as there is a scarcity of leisure, and little reason to be concerned about its explanation in terms of behaviour. The difficulty of interpreting work and leisure has arisen in part from the narrow, singular discretionary time reference given to leisure, a by-product of the antiquated Protestant work ethic which still dominates the post-industrial society."(1)

Consequently, if leisure is abundant (and the phrase, enforced leisure, has become popular), there arises an urgent need to explain leisure behaviour. In the light of participation rates, developing educational programmes, vandalism, hooliganism, truancy and so on, it becomes necessary to focus on leisure and its value to both the individual and society, within its relationship to work and non-work.

Increasingly, education must reassess its function to society: as a preparation for work, or a preparation for life.

As Margaret Talbot points out:

"The productive work ethic, although only two centuries old, permeates industrial society's thinking, to such an extent that recreation is still seen as re-creation, whose function is to restore the person to mental and physical fitness for work." (2)

In order to consider the implications of the removal of work from people's lives, one must understand the centrality of work to human life which has generated values and attitudes peculiar to industrial society.

However, when considering readjustments to social attitudes to work, Sherman argues that being needed and useful is a more fundamental need than productive labour.

Schumacher (1975) suggested:

"It might be said that it is the ideal of the employer, to have production without employees, and the ideal of the employee to have income without work. The question is: can the pursuit of these two ideals, undertaken with the marvellous ingenuity of modern science and technology, lead to anything but total alienation and breakdown?"(3)

Education has been given the responsibility of preparing people for work and/or an age of leisure, and then blamed for its success or lack of success, depending on your point of view. Kelvin (1981) states that while work may be central in giving structure to an individual's life, it is also the key element in local value systems. The relationship between schooling and occupation, and the demands associated with an employee's role have been continually stressed in works on education (Nesbit, 1957; Entwistle, 1970)(4).

Work equals status and identity; therefore, where do those experiencing non-work (retirement, unemployment, redundancy) find their motivation for fulfilment, and as Maslow suggests in his hierarchy of needs, where do they find self-actualisation? Is it to be found in the sphere of creativity and participation that exists within leisure activities? How much of these activities or experiences should be state provided? To what extent do we rely on education for the formulation of our identity and the appreciation of our culture? These are the central questions to our perception of education.

However, secondary school education has been seen by many pupils, teachers and parents as being primarily a preparation for work. As in government vocational training schemes, this emphasis helps to reinforce assumptions about the centrality of work to the human life plan, and by implication increases the individual's social and psychological dependence on it. Yet the studies of Weir and Nolan *et al.* (1977-1980) suggest that there is a possible conceptualisation of the labour market in dualistic terms by adolescents and that many young people are pleased at the prospect of putting their schooldays behind them.(5)

Will the term 'unemployed' become an accepted term of reference for young people's self-perceptions and for their position in society? However, Kitwood (1980) points out that at present:

"When a boy or girl personally accepts the label 'unemployed', the subjective environment changes: it becomes a state of inactivity and lassitude, where personal powers cannot be adequately used or expressed."(6)

We may construe from this that two identifiable trends are emerging: firstly, that the influence of unemployment is extending beyond the boundaries of work/non-work; and secondly, that young adolescents face major problems, of how to cope with unstructured free-time, and how to use it in order to bring to their lives some purposeful meaning.

The development of youth sub-cultures is perhaps a meaningful expressing of identifiable cultural forms which provide creative stimuli and identification, and more importantly, these cultural activities are enjoyed as ends in themselves, rather than as an opening to external reward. The need to return to a system of intrinsic as opposed to extrinsic rewards for society, is highlighted in the call for a return to the 'play' element in our community. Slogans such as 'put the fun back in sport', and organisations being set up by the government, such as Playboard, suggest that there has been identified a need for a greater appreciation and understanding of the creativity or skill for its own sake, and for the perception what the activity creates for the person involved, not just for the end results of that skill. Perhaps this manifests itself in the arguments against passive 'spectatoritis' and for active participation. The suggestion that people have to work at their leisure, is surely one of contradiction. Perhaps those involved in teaching recreational activities are in a privileged position; for they work with and through the play element. However, the very fact that it is 'play' and 'recreation' may be the very reason for the low status of those involved!

Raffe (1983) suggests that perhaps schools need to offer pupils greater insight into the processes and patterns of living in modern society, without lessening the emphasis on qualifications and work.(7) Surely, the role of schools in the adolescent's transition to society is crucial, and yet it would appear that there is a widening gap between the activities offered in schools and the activities to be found in the adult world. National bodies such as the Sports Council recognise the need to bridge that gap with their campaigns such as,

"Ever thought of sport?"; they say in their pamphlet: "the future of our youngsters is not in the hands of any one individual or organisation. It is up to us all. Let us pull together and make it a success."

Hargreaves *et al.* (1982) refer to youth training schemes and job sharing, continuing education and changed emphasis within leisure education programmes, as examples of how schools need to offer a wider breadth of education.(8)

However, Marsden and Duff suggest:

"To fill many jobs our educational and occupational systems are calculated to limit talent and to persuade individuals how little they are capable of doing."(9)

More hopefully, Mumford (1957) outlines:

"Paedia is education looked upon as a life-long transformation of the human personality, in which every aspect of life plays a part ... (it) does not limit itself to the conscious learning process, or to introducing the young into the social heritage of the community. Paedia is rather a task of giving force to the act of living itself ..."(10)

A sobering thought is that alongside the current cuts in expenditure which are affecting the school system, the adult and community sectors of education have been dramatically cut at a time when probably they are most needed.(11)

Indeed, we are at a time when an integrated system is vital to many people, young and old, who may encounter enforced leisure, or who simply wish to change direction with retraining or continuing education in order to expand their experiences. Where does the responsibility lie to counter apathy and disillusionment, by the motivation of leisure activities? Educationalists must adopt the prime role. Clearly, there has been a marked

trend towards a shifting of emphasis towards art, craft and sports teachers.

There have been successive government sponsored reports, which have given responsibility for education for leisure to the schools, in particular to physical education teachers. The White Paper on Sport and Recreation (1975) referred to the place of teachers of physical recreation:

"They have a dual role - to encourage young people generally to take part in physical recreation, and to develop standards of excellence among the more gifted. The Government wish to encourage them to play an increasing part in fostering plans for physical recreation in the community generally, and in particular, in assisting local authorities in the planning of provision of recreational activities." (12)

Margaret Talbot refers to preparing teachers for the challenge of a non-work age and continues:

"One of the problems in referring this 'problem' of leisure to the schools, is that schools have traditionally been seen, particularly by parents, as places of preparation for work, and subjects are assessed in the instrumental terms of their contribution to 'getting a good job'. If that main perceived function is removed ... schools will need to find a more immediately relevant justification for their activities." (13)

Community, education and leisure issues

The development of community education is another signpost in the growing trend towards the concept of education for life. Any attempt to incorporate the local community and those who have shared interests in the development of our society must surely underpin the concept of democracy and actively involve people in determining their own lives.

N.D. Sidway (1978) pointed to community aims:

"at its narrowest - or most precise - it is seen as a geographical neighbourhood. If, however, community is defined as 'those of like interests', then perspectives expand, areas overlap and the unique characteristics of schools may be allowed to flourish into a broader community" (14)

The Devon Youth, Adult and Community Sub-committee (1983) issued a document 'Bridging the Gap

- Education and the Community', which attempts to put forward the principles of community education, and underline the fact that it is not the exclusive domain of the adult education and youth service.

The document proclaims that:

"Within a delicate and changing social structure, there is a need to focus on education as appropriate to the concept of community which has evolved over the last quarter of a century as symptomatic of the breakdown of the real communities around us." (15)

The idea of community education is central to the problems surrounding contemporary society. Education as a means to counteract the numbing effects of the welfare society within which we live, must become increasingly important. On this issue the document continues:

"The concept of a predominantly centralised welfare state has been challenged from both ends of the political spectrum: there is no denying the benefits of institutionalised social care, but we have become increasingly aware of the system's numbing effect; the embrace which often stifles initiative, destroys selfconfidence, and replaces the natural inter-dependence that develops through personal contacts, commitment and shared responsibility." (16)

Community education can be experienced through adult education classes and activities, through youth schemes, various activities, and can be through the community's involvement in decision making with management of recreational or educational establishments. It can refer to the content of the programme, the perception of the individual of the experience and the interaction that accompanies such involvement. A shift of emphasis can occur from professional to non-professional leadership, and of greater interaction between the voluntary sector and the local authority.

However, the emphasis needs to move from the demands of a society where education is based on meritocracy - a work-reward syndrome - to one that focuses on education in the holistic sense, where the non-specialist can be involved in a sharing that does not depend for its validation on boundaries,

"but gathers its strengths and meaning from trust, fellowship, shared interest, a common sense of continuity and place," (17)

and also from an awareness of perceptions and preoccupations with self and thus with one's environment and

community.

Learning and its relationship with living should not be confined to school and college or to time. Adult education in both a formal and non-formal sense has grown enormously over the years, and requires only motivation and stimulation. A change in attitudes and expectations within our society is required for this fluid process to evolve. Processes that are essential to continuing education are not measurable; their values are as much a question of quality and quantity.

The latter part of the report of the sub-committee goes on to say:

"The experience of community development of all kinds suggests that people without professional skills often lack self-confidence, particularly in a society that places such value on professional training and qualifications. While some degree of training is often necessary, the main qualifications for community work are a commitment to place and an unshakeable will to serve and help others. With effort and application, people are often surprised at their own abilities, as organisers, leaders or more humble co-workers. There is no doubt that the process of developing a greater sense of individual responsibilities and self-reliance can be helped from within the education service.

"It requires, however, a measure of humility from the professional, a shift towards an image of themselves as catalysts or supporters rather than educators or leaders. The idea of 'doing good' will need to be replaced by the idea of 'empowerment', of allowing ordinary people increasingly to shape their own lives and look after their own 'good'."(18)

If the school is to be seen as the focal point of the community then as J. Steel, H.M.I., points out:
"Schools are not islands, but must think beyond their immediate boundaries."

Community education involves people in their own education at all stages ... it is fundamentally opposed to 'consumerism' - we provide, you accept.

The suggestion that any education should be consumerism must be counter-productive. Without interaction within the educational experience there can be no feedback. "Parity of esteem", opportunity for all within education, was the cry of the 1944 Butler Education Act. However, arguments still rage around the reality of opportunity for all and class issues. Paul Willis (1977) identifies the differences operating within education for the middle class minority: that they only are offered the promise of material reward and advancement, while asking the majority to give up other ways of using their capacities for an illusory reward.(19)

School is thus perceived as irrelevant by those young people who look primarily to their jobs for self-esteem and identity. The principles of deferred gratification as operated by the middle classes in the main, ensure that cultural capital is reproduced along the lines suggested by Bourdieu, Coates and Silburn.

Thus there is a basic conflict: those young people who are in most need of assistance in developing personal resources and self-perceptions, are those who are most likely to lose the very source of their identity, but are also the most likely to be alienated from schooling as a relevant experience ... they may not regard the use of their leisure as problematic, as authority does, but they do regard being workless as a problem.(20)

There is a fear that the very formalisation and "enschooling" of learning leisure skills will be dysfunctional, particularly for those groups of children who are already alienated from school. Ken Roberts is indeed sceptical of the role of the physical education teacher in preparing young people for leisure:

"Many teachers of art, literature, sport and music, suspect that they have found a new justification for their traditional fare: they tell us that they are educating for leisure ... when recreation is assimilated into school education it tends to be in forms that are convenient to the schools, irrespective of whether they are likely to prove permanently interesting to the pupils ... most recreational skills are learnt outside the school."(21)

Talbot (1979), however, argues that physical education introduces certain selected activities to children and, in order to make sense of these activities, children interpret them according to their experience and imbue them with meaning; if this activity interpretation is favourable and reinforced socially the activity becomes an interest which may in turn become a lifelong occupation.

Historically, education has reflected the traditional concepts of community - that a few take the decisions and the majority are educated to follow them. The first task of the school has been seen to be one of selecting appropriate training so that they themselves become experts. The second task has been to ensure that the others will be able to respond to the expertise of the experts and, above all, to see their role as necessary and legitimate.

Yet evidence shows that young people are unable to conform, they seek their own identity within their own counter-culture; one which goes against the tide of mainstream culture. Frith argues that the youth of today demand not the right to work, but the right not to work.

Within the broad framework of leisure a new definition is being brought about and contemporary changes in education closely reflect this process of redefinition. It is within the concept of community involving mass decision making by its members and especially in the exercise of leisure that the new definition is most apparent.

"However, the concept of community is not only ancient, but also surrounded by nostalgia, evoking the concept of a small intimate society in which man can live his life wholly and satisfyingly, in close mutually supportive relationships with his fellow man, and enhance the quality of both his life and theirs. Rights and duties are not only properly balanced but shared," suggests John Eggleston.(22)

In a contemporary western society there is an important distinction between traditional concepts and those of today. Membership of the rural and urban community in earlier societies was inescapable, and the only form of social organisation available to man; exclusion from it removed virtually all protection. Decision making was not a democratic process. Conversely, in modern societies there is no inevitability about becoming a member of a community, indeed it requires conscious decision and considerable effort by the individual. New towns and suburbs do not become communities automatically because of geographical organisation, it has to be worked at by a whole army of professionals together with the members of the neighbourhood. This exercise in itself may remove the initial motivation and alter the experience.

There are, however, many reasons for advocating community involvement, which can relate to economic use of resources, political involvement or seeing the democracy is substantiated.

J.A. Haworth highlights the emerging recognition of an active view of man.(23) Man being seen not just as a creature of comfort, a consumer, but also as an agent of change; a person who creates his own reality and who has the potential to shape his own future. Creativity, curiosity and exploratory behaviour are the hallmarks of each of us. The psychology of need may not be the psychology of participation, but the dynamic nature of each individual would seem to demand that effective opportunity for involvement should be available as of right, even if the individual chooses not to participate.

When focusing on the question of needs, there is a complexity in levels and type. Needs change in relation to one's stage in life, and one's preoccupations, interests and activities. Needs vary according to gender, marital status, family environment, work-occupation or lack of it. Education is often a central issue in the question of needs and their consequent satisfaction. Thus, needs are diverse and will change.

George Torkildson suggests that in terms of need, man is a three-dimensional person:

"he is like everybody else, requiring the basic needs of security, belonging and shelter, he is like some other people, sharing the same wants, the same groups, the same interests; he is like no other person - a unique individual, the only one."(24)

Leisure opportunity and education in the holistic sense may enable a person to become a three-phase man or woman, to become all he or she thinks he or she is capable of becoming.

There is a diversity within leisure. The move from mass spectator sports to individual participation is well recorded. The growth in adult education and cultural and physical activities is to be seen within our communities. Decision making within the leisure experience and the quality of the individual performance has also led to an important collective effect, in that the extensive exercise of decision making in this way has added to the determinant of the human environment in which we live.

With the decline of the community and the rise of the industrial revolution, a development of contractual relationships has arisen, most notably to be seen in work, where the worker sells his skills, muscle-power and mental agility to produce a specific product or service in return for an agreed reward or compensation. Is this where leisure appears? Instead of re-creation on the seventh day for six more days of toil, are we offering compensatory leisure in exchange for five days of boredom? Are we exchanging work to the glory of God, for recompense in a society of, or for, leisure? The individual after discharging his obligations to his society or community, is then at leisure to be a different person in non-work activities, and relationships. Is the role of education to be seen in this context? Instead of the multi-purpose member of society within the community, a person becomes a series of different people in different social contexts of modern society.

Within this model, how does the individual with no contractual work justify his non-work activities and relationships? How does he or she perceive their status in the hierarchical structure of the community? Though the content of community embraces the whole of human life and not solely its educational arrangements, it is of central importance and concern to educationalists.

To take a final look at the relationship of leisure, work and education, one must see these issues in the context of the life-style and life-cycle; and Roberts supports the holistic view.

"If we are to take a holistic view of the role of education, then the principles of a more flexible lifestyle run parallel. There is a certain contrast with our linear life-styles: we go through education in youth, work in mid-life, and retirement in old age. This pattern may have worked fairly well in the past, but there are signs that it is now failing to meet human and societal needs. Most advanced industrial societies face an increasing problem of unemployment, which particularly affects those at the beginning and at the end of the normal work career. This is because, in a situation of job scarcity, those in mid-life have advantages in the job market: they have acquired skills and experience without being regarded as too old. But it may be better for their personal, familial and leisure lives if they are allowed and even encouraged to reduce or temporarily leave their jobs and thus effectively share their work with others."(25)

It must be stated that the whole issue of leisure and education raises the question of whether people can be 'educated' to make better use of their time and thereby derive greater satisfaction, when one of the basic notions of leisure is equated with freedom: freedom of choice and freedom of action. Some feel that such an approach smacks of paternalism - others take the more philosophical view: that the beneficial use of leisure

depends on an inner capacity and that this capacity can be learned.

Haworth supports such a view. His plea is for education for living, and a more holistic approach: the education of the 'whole' man, body and mind and spirit. In this respect, he says, education shares the same goal as recreation.(26)

In this contribution we have considered the different functions and benefits of education to the individual within society, with specific reference to the issues surrounding work and leisure. Therefore, when viewing education as a recreational experience, rather than an activity geared towards meritocracy, a definition suggested by Gray, might equally apply to both recreation and education.

"Recreation is a person's experience, an emotional condition within an individual human being that flows from a feeling of well-being and satisfaction. It is characterised by feelings of mastery, achievement, exhilaration, acceptance, success, personal worth and pleasure. It reinforces a positive self-image. Recreation is a response to aesthetic experience, and achievement of a person's goals, or positive feedback from others. It is independent of leisure, activity or social acceptance."(27)

Certain danger signals, however, are being glimpsed amid the euphoria surrounding education and leisure issues. Nothing, it would seem, is free from political prejudice and some concern is expressed with regard to recreation becoming an issue of welfare.

Fred Coalter (1984) points to the argument:

"That much leisure provision is to be understood in terms of such things as the needs of capitalism to socialise the costs of reproduction ... and to use such provision for purposes of legitimisation and social control. Thus just as leisure effects are caused by nonleisure policies, so non-leisure goals are pursued via leisure policies. The idea of 'recreational welfare' in which the emphasis is on the inherent benefits to be had from participation in a range of sporting and cultural activities - is not too far removed from the idea of 'recreation as welfare'"(28)

The 'problem of leisure' is now one associated with the 'collapse of work'. Redefining broader social and economic problems as a 'problem of leisure' can be seen in the misnomer of 'enforced leisure' as associated with unemployment. Fred Coalter goes on to paraphrase A.H. Halsey, when he says:

"That leisure is in danger of replacing education as the 'dust-bin of social policy'."(28)

The involvement of recreation within the community is however seen by some as 'wholesome' in that it is sanctioned performance. Meyer and Brightwell (1964) viewed recreation as a social force. If community recreation is not consciously performed for the sake of any reward beyond itself, but is a force influencing people's lives, it can be interpreted as a system of services which provide 'wholesome' experiences, to counteract disruptive social trends that tend to prevent individually self-selected, pleasurable expression. It is logical to perceive from this value orientation that 'wholesome' individual recreation will lead to recreation as an influence for a social 'good'. From the viewpoint of Meyer and Brightwell, community recreation is a means for improving and maintaining societal cohesion and the quality of life; its development is dependent on social participation. Hence community recreation is a system of services for wholesome, positively sanctioned activities.(29)

Examples of leisure as devoted to community service can be seen in such organisations as Child Poverty Action, Action Sport, Shelter and Greenpeace, and such schemes as Community Sports Leaders Award. In other circumstances these activities might be regarded as drudgery, but the sense of involvement with decision making and the participation in a collective challenge offers a new perspective to the experience.

Shivers suggests that the distinguishing feature of recreation is its consuming and absorbing quality. Could the same be said of education? He continues that the recreational value will be noted after the consuming experience has occurred, whereas recreation occurs at the time of the experience. Is this concomitant with the educational experience witnessed in deferred gratification?

The community needs to be involved at many levels of socialisation, if any sense of freedom over the direction of one's life is to be maintained. F. Hirsch reminds us that changes in life style may not just make community involvement in decision making desirable; they may necessitate it if the imposition of ideas is to be avoided.(30)

Perhaps the 'dress' of leisure for the future will be more and more in the style of education, for education is a seamless garment, a continuing process, where we strive to achieve a more integrated and caring society.

As the A.A.C.E. Working Group on Community Education (1979) pointed out:

"Community education responds directly to local, practical, concrete situations; and that response is a local one - from the community outwards, not from central authority inwards."

Ed Berman, in his L.S.A. paper entitled "Leisure is dead: Long live reality. Community Education and

the 4th R", points out:

"One of the most important community initiatives during the last couple of decades has been an attempt to develop the latent energies of diverse social groups and communities - to encourage people to take control of important aspects of their lives.

"Neighbourhood schemes, play initiatives, community campaigns - these have represented significant initiatives in urban living."(31)

1. Isolation (protection) from the adult world and its problems - work, money, sex, politics, responsibilities, decisionmaking.
2. Over-indulgence ("the freedom to be a child") of childhood in school, where children are occupied with childish tasks for their own good and no one else's, and with "educational" (abridged and expurgated) culture.
3. Dependence (welfare) on institutions for learning, on parents for economic support.
4. Subserviency - children's lack of legal rights gives them slave-status, which is necessary to keep them in school as consumers (education is a massive sector of the economy) and out of production and political significance.
5. Extended age-span - while biological maturity occurs at an increasingly lower age, childhood is extended to adolescence and young adults as education expands.
6. Uniformity - with age-grouping in schools, children are expected to do the same sort of things at the same age - parents anxiously pursue the ideal of the "normal" child, precocity and backwardness are problems.
7. Commercial exploitation. Industries have developed which supply, and in turn define, the needs of children and adolescents, for example, sweets, toys, comics, some kinds of pop music.

Further questions

1. More historical clarification is needed - Aries' work is only a beginning. We need to know more about what childhood was like before the seventeenth century (and is like in other societies), about how its development is linked with education, and about what advantages and disadvantages it has brought to children.
2. Clearer definitions of childhood need to be established if the term is to continue to be useful. We need to make a distinction between biological childhood and the "institution" of childhood, and to specify and trace more exactly the undesirable aspects of modern childhood.
3. A new vision of childhood is needed for the "leisured" society of the future - what useful tasks can children perform and how can they gain economic significance in view of largescale unemployment?
4. What legal reforms, alongside deschooling, are needed to eliminate childhood? (Holt has attempted to answer this one, but not satisfactorily, in my opinion.)

The most important point I have to make is that modern childhood is not a pedagogical but a political problem. Children suffer most of all from exclusion from the "hard" adult world, and over-indulgence in the education world; they are simultaneously made nothing of, and made too much of. Attention to the problems of childhood, then, is most needed, not from those who are already involved with children, but from the adult world of politics and economics. This is why the contributions of Illich and Reimer, despite their brevity, carry more weight than all the thousands of words of John Holt. This is not a battle for saviours of children, exuding love and benevolence, but a political power struggle. Liberating children, like liberating women, is about liberating everyone.

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