



The Montessori

# OBSERVER

Order

Published by the International Montessori Society • 912 Thayer Ave. • Silver Spring, Md. 20910 • Phone (301) 589-1127

## Completing "Montessori"

*"The great majority of teachers, in the absence of sufficient training and experience, end by thinking that the 'new child', so eagerly expected and of whom so much has been said, is nothing but a myth or an ideal."*

Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 210

To "complete" one's experience of "Montessori" is to become consciously aware of the existence of all that is needed to fully realize the "normalized" child. Such "completion" inherently recognizes "Montessori" as entirely within oneself, independent of all external opinion and forces to the contrary in one's environment.

Whereas one might suppose that this "completion" experience would naturally emerge within each teacher in the course of time as a result of one's practical association with children, such is not generally the case. Ordinarily, many deeply engrained, unconscious prejudices and pre-conceived notions about the child and the nature of "reality" prevail throughout life to fundamentally deter and repress such "completion" as a matter of course.

Certified "Montessori" teachers tend unconsciously, if not consciously, to interpret their experience of "Montessori" as that which is represented as such by the certifying body. The very nature of unconscious prejudice argues against any serious inquiry as to "what is 'Montessori'?" after certification as a "Montessori" teacher has been accomplished.

The child itself-bound to accept without question whatever interpretation of reality is offered or imposed by the teacher in its environment—is unable to seriously challenge or oppose a perpetuation of the teacher's fundamental prejudices and misconceptions in this regard. Likewise, whatever communication and association as to "Montessori" which may occur after graduation from a particular teacher training program tends merely to reflect and reinforce those same limited and prejudicial interpretations which originally emanated from the training program itself.

### Truth

*All truth passes through three stages. First it is ridiculed. Second it is violently opposed. Third it is accepted as being self-evident.*

by Schopenhauer

### "Montessori" Organizations

*"... prejudices are so universal that it is difficult to have them recognized as such. They are confused and strengthened by the evidence of facts because all, or nearly all, see the child as he is commonly known only, not the child as he is, still an unknown entity."*

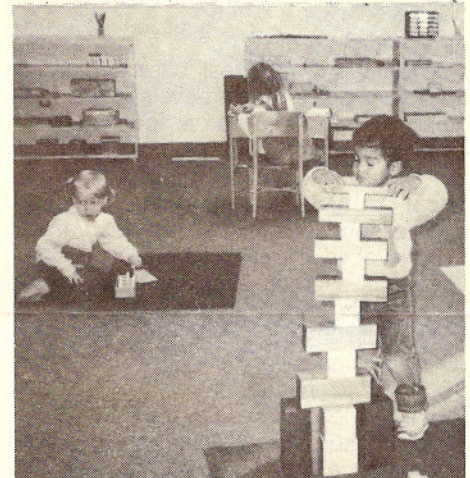
Maria Montessori  
from *The Formation of Man* p. 60-61

"Montessori" organizations which are outside the **International Montessori Society** tend to issue their teacher certifications and propogate their interpretations of "Montessori" according to various vague, imprecise and incomplete expressions in this regard. One is thus readily distracted from the essential completion of "Montessori"—urged instead through one's inner prejudices and personality attachments to the opinion and approval of those in authority to adopt a limited outlook on the "normalized" child—an outlook essentially consistent with the widespread misconceptions and erroneous limited beliefs with which a particular "Montessori" organization has become emmeshed.

Two notable non-Society organizations in the United States, the **American Montessori Society (AMS)** and the **Association Montessori Internationale (AMI)** have both adopted interpretational expressions of "Montessori" which oppose completion of "Montessori". Such expressions have notably become manifest as public opposition to the Society's communication for the training of Montessori teachers. This opposition therefore reveals their antithetical position with regard to that which enables the emergence of the "normalized" child.

### A.M.S.

The AMS organization distributes literature which represents "Montessori" as a "rationale" and "philosophy" where an "open-minded attitude" and "respect for the child" are somehow considered "the most fundamental aspect of Montessori Education". However laudible such an interpretation may be in its general sentiment, this type of vague, imprecise, limited conceptualization of "Montessori" significantly fails to clearly associate itself with the true essence of Montessori education—i.e., that which enables the



Children working at the Acadia Montessori School in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

## Parent Programs at Acadia Montessori

Parent programs are an important consideration at Acadia Montessori, a Montessori school member of the Society in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Annually parents are invited to an evening of slides and talks on Montessori education, in addition to a lecture-tour of the classroom which they experience before applying for admission for their children. Each January, one or two evenings are spent acquainting parents with the subject of managing misbehavior in children. Each December, the parents and their guests are invited to a Christmas musicale presented by the children, as well as a Spring musicale in May.

Acadia Montessori was founded in 1979 by **Marvin** and **Marlene McCormick**. Mrs. McCormick, director of the school, is a former public school teacher with the Detroit public schools whose background also includes Montessori training. Presently, Mrs. McCormick is further extending her education by completing a master's degree in elementary education at Oakland University.

The Acadia school program includes both half-day and full-day sessions with day care offered from 7-8:30 am and 3:30-6 pm daily. Special instruction is provided in French, Orff instruments, computers and physical education.

For further information, contact: Marlene McCormick, Acadia Montessori, Suite 305, Box 2025, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303-2025, Tel. (313) 335-7070.

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 3

# Order

by Lee Havis

*"Creation finds its expansion in order . . . to help the development of the intelligence is to help put the images of the consciousness in order."*

**Maria Montessori**  
from *Spontaneous Activity in Education*, p. 202

Order - the foremost basis for all intellectual and creative development - reveals its true nature as a spontaneously emerging mental form of harmony, consistency and completion in the "normalized" child as envisioned by Dr. Montessori. By contrast, the man-made "order" of adult society generally opposes the creative expansion of the human spirit through its various repressive forms of prejudicial customs, rules, and other such unwitting impositions over the child's true "normalized" nature. Society's lack of true order is amply reflected by the failure of the dominant social institutions, such as traditional education, to significantly deter the continued widespread existence of crime, violence, ignorance and such other expressions of fundamental disharmony and alienation throughout the world.

The "normalized" child uniquely reveals that ultimate order in the universe follows insuperable laws of nature - unbounded by those various forms of limited outer "order" so commonly recognized as such in adult society.

## Order of the Universe

*"Life increases, becomes manifest and perfects the individual, but it is confined within limits and is governed by insuperable laws."*

**Maria Montessori**  
from *Discovery of the Child*, p. 61-62

Life itself teaches that man-made order in society must ultimately submit to the higher authority of true reality as one's own time and place in the present moment. Insuperable laws of the universe - denoted by such terms as "truth," "love" and "freedom" - invariably govern all manifestations of life. Whatever "obedience" there may be to various social institutions is more reflective of the inherent need in man for society with others, rather than any ultimate domination of such institutions in one's life.

## Obedience

*"There is no lack of obedience in the world; quite the contrary . . . What unhappily is absent is the control of obedience."*

**Maria Montessori**  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 257

Man's obedience to the dominant institutions in society reveals the very considerable significance of such external man-made order in one's daily life. History

teaches that allegiance to religious, national and cultural institutions and beliefs, and one's perceived "duty" to others, may well outweigh other compelling needs such as physical survival itself. At bottom, all such obedience to social form finds its original source in the young child's need for order - a first priority in all mental development for the child under the age of six.

## Need for Order

*" . . . the tiny child's basic need for order takes priority over all other social claims that the world may make on him."*

**Maria Montessori**  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 135

The child's compelling need for order - expressing its instinctive urge for harmony and relatedness with the environment - reveals a spontaneous process of constant sensory exploration and integration of environmental experience intimately into its own being. Indeed, the infant begins to create order within itself from the moment of birth through contact with its environment which necessarily must contend with many chaotic and confusing stimuli and sensations. This creative ordering process further continues through those various environmental experiences which spontaneously arise in the young child's ordinary social interaction with physical objects, other children and the adult.

## An Organized Environment

*" . . . the child . . . ought to find in his surroundings something organized in direct relation to his internal organization which is developing itself by natural laws . . ."*

**Maria Montessori**  
from *Spontaneous Activity in Education*, p. 70

The child's creation of complete inner order takes place as a profound "absorption" of a similarly complete outer order in the physical objects of its environment. Such "absorption" therefore implicates the provision of a precisely "prepared" environment which necessarily includes an organized arrangement of simple physical objects for manipulation and free exercise by the child. Through its own activity with such orderly physical objects - e.g., by pouring, carrying, sorting, sequencing, etc. - a most profound inner order is thereby ultimately absorbed. Regrettably, such a constructive "normalization" of the child is ordinarily deterred by the adult's unwitting interference with the child's spontaneous ordering activity with such physical objects. The child is thus constrained to find order elsewhere in the environment - e.g. in the adult's "personality" - however incomplete and limited such order may be.

## The Adult's Order

*"The mind of a little child is certainly not a blank . . . but his concepts are confused. The chaos of his mind has greater need of ordering what it already knows than of gaining new knowledge."*

**Maria Montessori**  
from *Discovery of the Child*, p. 172

Under the guise of "teaching," the ordinary teacher unwittingly imposes her own personality on the child as the most fully available form of "order" in the environment. The child is thus compelled to absorb within itself the adult's "order" - i.e., various personal values, rules and system of judgment, opinion and authority. Whatever "teaching" of new knowledge may be "learned" by the child in such circumstances, true self-discipline and order is nonetheless deterred. The child's activity and interest is therefore primarily directed to assimilate the adult's "order" which essentially mirrors the unconscious prejudices and conventions of one's own parents and those which are commonly found in adult society.

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 1

Look for the  
**February  
Observer**  
featuring  
**Prejudice**

The Montessori Observer  
published by  
INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY  
912 Thayer Ave.  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
(301) 589-1127  
Lee Havis, Executive Director

The Montessori Observer is mailed eight times each year to IMS members throughout the world. The Observer is sent during the following months: Jan., Feb., March, April, May, Sept., Oct., and Nov. The purpose of this publication is to provide news and information about the development of Montessori education to extend awareness of Montessori principles and promote harmony within the Montessori community.

INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY  
The International Montessori Society is sponsored by Educational Services, Inc., a non-profit corporation organized in Maryland, U.S.A. The purpose of IMS is to support the effective application of Montessori principles throughout the world.

IMS ADVISORY BOARD  
Elizabeth Hainstock, Educator, Author  
Romalda Spalding, Reading Specialist  
Dr. R. Orin Cotman, Research Professor

SUBSCRIPTION  
Subscription to this publication may be obtained by requesting IMS membership which is open to all individuals for a \$15 yearly fee. IMS school members also receive a subscription to the Montessori News. Complete the membership application form to obtain an individual subscription and other benefits of IMS membership.

ADVERTISING  
Advertising space is available for services and products relating to Montessori education. Marketplace ads are \$7/line; Position and Placement ads are \$10 each and will be set and edited by us to conform to space requirements. Write for our advertising outline for rates and other information about design advertising.

© 1985 International Montessori Society

## Order

Cont'd. from Page 2, Col. 3

### Discipline

*"Only exercise and experience can correct a disability, and it takes long practice to acquire the various kinds of skills that are needed. The undisciplined child enters into discipline by working in the company of others, not by being told that he is naughty."*

**Maria Montessori**

from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 245-246

Faced with the adult's limited and prejudicial order and authority, the child necessarily rebels according to those forms of expression which are collectively known as "misbehavior." However, such pitiful efforts to challenge the adult's authority generally fail, resulting in yet further punishment, criticism or correction. Throughout such a continuing power struggle scenario in the adult-child relationship, the possibility for creation of true order is significantly disregarded, overlooked or simply ignored.

### Creating Order

*"The disorder of the first moment is necessary . . . do nothing but watch."*

**Maria Montessori**

from *Montessori Method*, p. 89

Montessori teaching is that true order can only emerge from a condition of "disorder." Accordingly, the adult's first function is to "stand and watch" in this regard. A "normalizing" environment therefore necessarily depends primarily for its existence on the presence of a restrained, observant adult able to simply "do nothing but watch" in a circumstance of disorder and misbehavior. Such profound, courageous "observation" ultimately reveals that chaos and confusion does indeed eventually resolve itself in the child's essential ordering experiences with physical objects. Such experiences signal the beginning of "normalization" and the emergence of that true self-discipline which is so characteristic of the "normalized" child.

The adult's attention and function to control the environment *around* the child - i.e., *not the child itself* - gradually assures the emergence of the "normalized" child. A quality of profound inner order and spontaneous self-discipline is thus revealed in the child which far exceeds the type of superficial outer order which might somehow be achieved through the imposition of external control and authority such as evident in the "order" of the adult society.

### Orderly Society

*"Children unaided can construct an orderly society. For us adults, prisons, police, soldiers and guns are necessary. Children solve their own problems peacefully."*

**Maria Montessori**

from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 285

Dr. Montessori recognized that a social order of a most complete and peaceful sort will naturally emerge among children in a truly "normalizing" environment. Such a peaceful association of children, unbounded by the customary external restraints of adult society, shows that the presumed need for repressive man-made institutions is built upon a false notion of the

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 1

# Marketplace

**Montessori-trained partner wanted.** For existing, growing school in Florida. 50/50 financial participation and teaching. Excellent opportunity. Call Steven McNeal, (813) 625-0707.

**Montessori equipment for sale.** Full classroom of Nienhuis Primary and Elementary. Excellent condition; clean, polished, and complete. Must purchase as a total unit for \$3,000. Full listing of inventory available. Also set of architectural blueprint for school, never built. Contact: Jacqueline Schutt, 926 Washington Ave., Girard, Ohio 44420.

**School For Sale:** Perfect opportunity to own a well-established school! Completely equipped ages 2½-7; full enrollment with waiting list. Asking \$10,000; owner financing; generates \$27,000 + yearly. Contact Mary Pancoast, 716-664-7095, 716-679-1479; Montessori Children's House, 120 Chandler Street, Jamestown, N.Y. 14701.

## Positions & Placements

**Montessori Teacher:** (2½-6) to start August, 1985. Well-established school, new building. South Florida on west coast. Salary negotiable. Contact: Maja Wolf, Montessori School of Charlotte Harbor, 4344 Pinnacle St., Charlotte Harbor, Florida 33950, Tel. 813-629-7710.

**Elementary and Primary Directresses:** both openings for Fall, 1985. Seton Academy is willing to sponsor Montessori training for qualified candidate. A private Montessori school in near-west suburban Chicago, Seton Academy draws from a broad socioeconomic spectrum with families from both city and suburbs. Catechesis after the method of Montessori and Cavalletti is an integral part of the curriculum. Faculty candidates must be practicing Catholics. Write to Seton Academy, P.O. Box 192, River Forest, Illinois 60305.

**Montessori Teacher:** for present pre-school or future K-3. Should be assertive, with directing skills and committed to holistic development of children. Contact: Sheepscot Valley Children's House, P.O. Box 449, Wiscasset, Maine 04578, Tel. (207) 882-7977 or (207) 882-6300.

**Montessori Teacher:** Fall, 1985. Experience preferred. School is located in beautiful rural Vermont, one mile from Dartmouth College in Hanover, N.H. Applicant should have confidence in his/her teaching abilities, and show flexibility both with children and parents. Write to call: Montessori School of The Upper Valley, Inc., Box 368, Norwich, Vermont 05055, Tel. (802) 295-2872.

**Montessori Teacher:** (2-6), (K-3). Assertive, with directing skills and committed to holistic development of children, for present pre-school or future K-3. Contact: Sheepscot Valley Children's House, P.O. Box 449, Wiscasset, Maine 04578, Tel. 207-882-7977 or 207-882-6300.

### Merely a Hint . . .

*"The instruction of the teacher consists then merely in a hint, a touch—enough to give a start to the child. The rest develops of itself."*

**Maria Montessori**  
from *Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook*, p. 58-59

## Completing "Montessori"

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 2

emergence of the "normalized" child in reality. Much less does such a generalized expression of purpose on behalf of "better education" direct any significant attention whatsoever to the "essential point" of the entire creative work and opportunity inherent in Dr. Montessori's "new education".

*"children . . . can be 'normalized' . . . What is usually called 'the Montessori method' revolves around this essential point."*

**Maria Montessori**

from *The Foundation of Man*, p. 46

### A.M.I.

The AMI organization has been antithetical to the completion of "Montessori" in view of its similar opposition to the Society's communication of that which enables the emergence of the "normalized" child. The **North American Montessori Teacher's Association (NAMTA)**—an affiliate of AMI—identifies "Montessori" as a "complex approach to human development". To so view "Montessori" as somehow "complex" denies the inherent simplicity of the underlying truth of the "normalized" child.

*"There was no method to be seen, what was seen was a child . . . acting according to its own nature."*

**Maria Montessori**

from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 136

The interpretation of "Montessori" as "complex" tends to direct attention to a maze of relatively minor, insignificant details involving the use of specific materials and various intricate philosophical concepts. Such "complexity" tends to encourage one's reliance on prejudice and illusion, emmeshed as such "complexity" is in confusion and dependency on outer forces of opinion and authority with regard to "what is 'Montessori'?"

*" . . . the revelations of the child are not at all so difficult to obtain, the real difficulty lies in the adult's old prejudices concerning him."*

**Maria Montessori**

from *The Formation of Man*, p. 22

### An Inquiry

A deep and probing inquiry among the various "Montessori" organizations as to "What is 'Montessori'?" is needed to ultimately resolve interpretational differences in this regard. However, since the AMI and AMS organizations have thus far failed to accept the Society's invitation to engage in even an exchange of publications on a regular basis, such organizations readily deter true open-minded inquiry—reflecting instead the typical prejudice, disregard and unconsciousness of adult society which unwittingly oppresses and opposes the emergence of the "normalized" child.

### Opportunity for Completion

The creation of the International Montessori Society does not emerge as simply

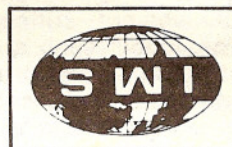
Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 1

Address correction requested

912 Thayer Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910

## OBSERVER

The Montessori



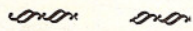
Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 3875  
Silver Spring, MD

### Completing "Montessori"

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 3

another "Montessori" organization reflecting yet one more limited, incomplete interpretation of "Montessori". Rather, the Society expresses itself as a unique support for a true completion of "Montessori". Such "completion" is realized in the Society's expression of complete commitment to the three fundamental "Montessori" principles of nature; i.e., (1) "observation"; (2) "individual liberty"; and (3) "preparation of the environment". This empowering expression asserts the present reality of the "normalized" child—an opportunity for completion of the adult-child relationship for anyone who chooses to participate in this regard.

The Society's opportunity for completion of "Montessori" is moreover a work of harmony and reconciliation among all those entities associated with the term "Montessori". Such work is to recognize and encompass the fundamental creative purpose and vision of the "new education" throughout the entire Montessori "family"—to expand the space of inquiry into the true nature of the child as an "unknown entity" and challenge one's consideration of the question: "what is 'Montessori'?"

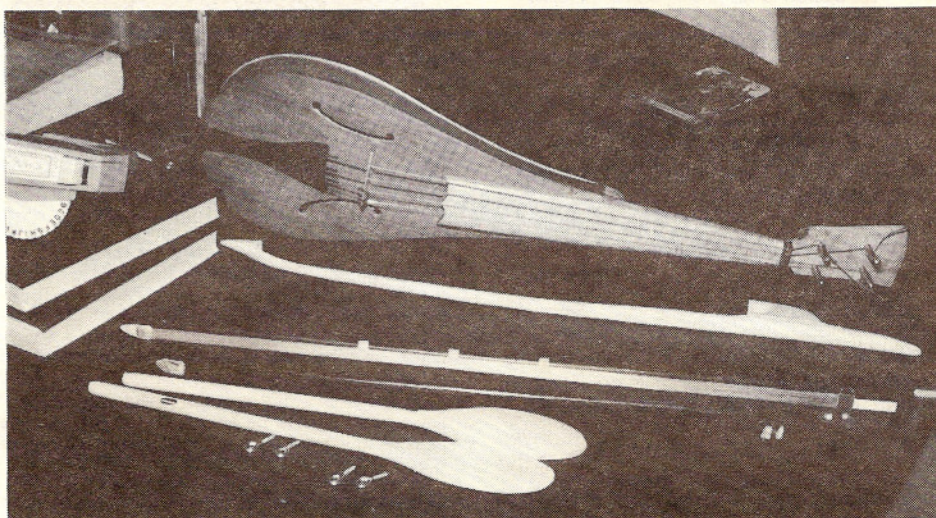


### Order

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 1

fundamental nature of man.

The "normalized" child shows that the path of true order in society is found within oneself as a realization of complete commitment to certain fundamental principles of nature; i.e., (1) "observation"; (2) "individual liberty"; and (3) "preparation of the environment." One's commitment to such "Montessori" principles is therefore the entire essential basis for the eventual creation of a peaceful, perfect order and harmony for all mankind.



The "Montessori" Fiddle—latest musical device created by John Maluda, Luthier (Anchorage, Kentucky)

### "Montessori" Fiddle

The "Montessori" Fiddle, the creation of **John Maluda**, Luthier (Anchorage, Kentucky), is the latest of his series of simple musical devices created for use by children in the Montessori environment. Prior devices created by this industrious craftsman include a "Montessori" harp and psaltery which have been described in prior issues of the "Observer."

Maluda states that his "Montessori" Fiddle is "based on a tenor Rebec . . . designed by **Arnold Dolmetsch** and is teardrop shaped. Frets will be added in the finger board so that accurate stops are provided as is done in the viol (e.g., Viola da Gamba)." He further notes that this latest stringed instrument for the Montessori environment will be held downward as a viol, employing an outcurve bow. Initial introduction of its use with children will focus on simple intonation and the playing of slow, easy music.

Maluda's musical devices are generally

based on the work of Arnold Dolmetsch, a contemporary of Dr. Montessori. History records that Dr. Montessori had Dolmetsch design a soprano recorder and a small stringed "psaltery" for her use and experimentation with children. This association between Montessori and Dolmetsch occurred in Europe around 1910, thus pre-dating **Suzuki** in Japan by some twenty years.

Mr. Maluda is presently preparing a publication entitled "Montessori and Music" to describe his various instruments and their proper use with children. In addition, he is seeking to establish a continuing manufacture of such devices under the auspices of Student Craft Industries of Berea College (Berea, Kentucky). Such manufacturing arrangement is intended to assure and extend the availability and practical use of these valuable musical instruments with young children on a regular basis in the future.

For further information, contact: John Maluda, Luthier, 1901 Ashmoor Lane, Anchorage, Kentucky 40223.