



The Montessori

# OBSERVER

Pain

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Child working with Practical Life "polishing" exercise at the Step by Step Early Learning Center  
(Miller Place, New York).

## Step by Step in New York

The Step by Step Early Learning Center (Miller Place, New York) is based in a country suburban community within 10 miles of the State University of New York (SUNY) in Stony Brook, New York. This Society member school provides both full and half-day Montessori sessions for children aged 3-5 from a diversity of family backgrounds. Special features of the school program include art, parent education and a summer Montessori program.

The Step by Step school, directed by **Judy Salmon**, has been in operation for approximately 10 years with its teaching staff consisting of educators with over 20 years of experience and considerable advanced educational background. Ms. Salmon states that "Montessori principles are adhered to in a strong positive environment".

For further information, contact: **Judy Salmon**, Step by Step Early Learning Center, 138 Radio Ave., Miller Place, New York 11764, Tel. (516) 821-0474.

### Organizing the Local Montessori Community

Montessori teachers and schools can significantly benefit from the regular association and communication with others uniquely available through a local Montessori organization. Through such means as conferences, workshops, seminars and regular meetings, such an organization can provide a most constructive opportunity to share experiences and otherwise consider practical problems and interests with which others are likewise involved.

To address matters of particularly local concern and otherwise afford an opportunity for direct association with others, the International Montessori Society supports the formation and active participation with others in an effective local Montessori organization. Where existing local "Montessori" organizations are prejudicially based on exclusionary restrictive

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 1

### "New Society" in the Philippines

*"Society has built up walls, barriers. These the new education must cast down revealing the free horizon. The new education is a revolution, but without violence. It is the non-violent revolution."*

Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.215

The recent remarkably non-violent revolution in the Philippines—to unseat the 20-year rule of the Marcos government—reflects in many respects the true spirit of the "normalized" child alive in the world today. The illusory "new society" promoted by the former Marcos government may now become a true reality of such as expanding harmony, justice and freedom in the Philippines; perhaps a model to the world in this regard.

The spirit of the "normalized" child was evidently present in the revolutionary events in the Philippines during Spring, 1986. Courageous and determined, many persons challenged the established dominant forces of repression and prejudice in the Philippines to create a new opportunity beyond the customary limitations of patterns of the past. The inspiring spirit of **Sylvia Solis** (*Observer*, September/1984, Vol. V, No. 6), Filipino graduate of the Society's Montessori teacher training, was an evident presence in the Philippines recently, expressing itself as a commitment to the principles of: (1) "Observation"; (2) "Individual Liberty"; and (3) "Preparation of the Environment".

With a new regime in the Philippines, the hard work of creating a "new society" is only begun. However, as the spirit of Sylvia Solis manifests itself in the lives of others likewise committed to the emergence of the "normalized" child in the Philippines, a truly "new society" of peace, harmony and love may accordingly become a tangible presence in that country and throughout the world.

### Concentration

*"When a normal child is attracted by an object he fixes his whole attention intently upon it and continues to work without a break in a remarkable state of concentration."*

Maria Montessori  
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.114

### Individual Liberty

*"A lady of high rank once paid the school a visit and . . . said to a little boy, 'So this is the school where you do as you like?' 'No, ma'am,' said the child. 'It is not that we do as we like, but we like what we do.'"*

Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 254



by Lee Havis

*"Pains from our earliest childhood are total mysteries . . . Yet we see their effects every day on the way we live, in our relationships, in our symptoms, and in our social adjustment."*

Dr. Arthur Janov  
from *Prisoners of Pain*,  
Introduction, p. ix

Montessori teaching invariably entails the experience of some pain in the process of one's being with children as a complete commitment to the principles of: (1) "Observation"; (2) "Individual Liberty"; and (3) "Preparation of the Environment." The particular pain of Montessori teaching emerges generally as a resistance to imposing forces in society which are opposed to the emergence of the child's true "normalized" nature. Such resistance implicates a vast organization of defense against the realization of repressed pain from the mysterious past of one's own life which must be directly and personally challenged and resolved in one's immediate everyday experience with others.

### Organization of Defense

*" . . . a kind of 'subconscious organization of defense' is achieved by all parents in the world. All lean upon each other. The whole of society forms a collective subconscious wherein all act in complete agreement when they remove and suppress the child."*

Maria Montessori  
from *The Formation of Man*, p.68

Society's organized repression of the child's true nature necessarily implicates a corresponding repression of one's own long forgotten personal pain from infancy and early childhood. Notably, all, or nearly all, parents have accepted as somehow "normal" or inconsequential a certain amount of crying and other such expression of distress, pain and suffering in their offspring. Accordingly, the average infant suffers extreme pain in the ordinary course of its early childhood development—ultimately resulting in a general condition of "revulsion" to all environmental experience.

### Revulsion

*" . . . if—from early infancy—the child feels a revulsion for the surroundings on which he depends for his development, this must necessarily prevent him from growing up normally."*

Maria Montessori  
From *Absorbent Mind*, p.77

The child's revulsion to its surroundings generally entails a corresponding repression of pain to assure a measure of conscious stability and physical survival in the world. The child is thus mercifully delivered from the constant consciousness of unrelenting suffering and pain in the present moment which is hidden behind the mask of fantasy play to disguise its underlying essential nature.

### Flight into Play

*"A flight into play or a world of fantasy . . . represents a subconscious defense of the ego which flees from suffering or danger and hides behind a mask."*

Maria Montessori  
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.157

Fantasy play is the child's basic means of defense against the conscious realization of pain. In fantasy, the child employs a complex array of symbolic mental impressions and drama in outer behavior to distort and disguise the underlying repression of pain which is its essential purpose. Eventually, the abnormal wanderings of the child's mind become deeply woven into the very fabric of the child's personality as it emerges in stable form at about the age of six.

### Personality

*"With our conscious memory we forget, but the unconscious . . . does something far worse, for impressions made at this level . . . become graven on the personality itself."*

Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.77

The young child's "absorbent mind" compels a personality formation which comes to intimately reflect its characteristically repressive early childhood environment. In later childhood, this repressive "personality" weaves itself into the fabric of organized deviations and conventions in adult society. Accordingly, the repression and camouflage of one's own particular painful early childhood experience comes to assume the proportions of a fundamental "reality" of shared prejudices and illusion with others.

### Camouflage

*"Conventions which camouflage a man's true feelings are a spiritual lie which help him adapt to the organized deviations of society . . . This is the terrible lie lurking in the deepest recesses of the subconscious."*

Maria Montessori  
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.176

One's continuing need to "camouflage" the undue experience of excessive pain from early childhood engenders a certain dramatized "harmony" with others in society. Such drama is readily apparent in such oppressive phenomena of adult society as war, guns, police and prisons. Accordingly, "pain" appears to reflect certain vague external forces—the "enemy" which is somehow "responsible" for one's pain, fear and insecurity in the world.

With children, the average parent or teacher easily imposes blame to avoid resolution of one's own painful feelings of tension and discomfort in the face of misbehavior and disorder. Defenseless and vulnerable, the young child is simply compelled to accept whatever guilt or blame which may result from the adult's callous and judgmental impositions in this regard.

### Cause of Pain

*" . . . children . . . do not understand us, they cannot defend themselves from us, and they accept whatever we tell them. They not only accept abuse, but feel guilty whenever we blame them."*

Maria Montessori  
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.151

Traditional teaching—to punish and blame children for their misbehavior and disorder—generally tends to avoid the cause of pain as that which lies within oneself. By contrast, Montessori teaching accepts the path of growing awareness of inner pain—to discover unconscious inner error to abstain from undue personality imposition in the child's environment. The Montessori teacher—more a "psychologist" than a "teacher"—thus probes into the mystery of the unconscious mind to resolve that which lies hidden from one's own long forgotten past as a little child.

### Modern Psychology

*"Modern psychology exactly suits our method, for whereas the older science was based on the observation of superficial facts of consciousness, the new seeks to observe the unconscious mind, and probe its secrets . . ."*

Maria Montessori  
from *To Educate the Human Potential*, p.27

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 2

Look for the  
**May Observer**  
featuring  
**Independence**

### 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 six times each year to Society members throughout the world. The *Observer* is sent during the months of January, March, May, September, October and November. The purpose of this publication is to provide news and information about the development of Montessori education to extend awareness of Montessori principles and to 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 Society's purpose is to support the effective application of Montessori principles throughout the world.

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#### SUBSCRIPTION

Subscription to this *Observer* publication may be obtained by requesting Society membership which is open to all individuals for a \$15 annual fee. Society members also receive a subscription to the *Montessori News*. Send request for membership benefits.

#### 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 the Society to conform to space requirements. Write for the Society's advertising outline as to rates and other information about design advertising.

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LETTERS TO IMS

The following letters to IMS were received regarding the Society's petition for writ of certiorari which was filed with the United States Supreme Court on January 28, 1986. This petition summarizes the Society's six-year federal court litigation to enable its operation of Montessori teacher training in the state of Maryland which is opposed by that state's regulatory agencies:

February 3, 1986

Dear Mr. Havis,

I have read your documents with great interest. I think they do raise significant issues about government regulation . . . I wish you the best of luck in your endeavors.

Sincerely,

Anthony S. Murry  
Capital Legal Foundation  
Washington, D.C.

January 23, 1986

Dear Mr. Havis,

Thank you for sending me the materials in the case. I certainly agree that the issues involved in this case could have a direct impact on issues which we are directly involved with; i.e., parental control in the area of education. I have opened an active file on this case and would appreciate your notifying us if the petition for writ of certiorari is granted. If so, we will certainly want to file an amicus brief in this case.

Thank you for your invitation for us to participate in this proceeding.

Very truly,

Larry L. Crain  
The Rutherford Institute  
Manassas, Virginia

December 18, 1985

Dear Mr. Havis,

Thank you for requesting our amicus assistance in your case before the Supreme Court.

I have reviewed the materials and submitted them to our president, who also reviewed them . . . We are both especially interested in the Establishment Clause issue and wished our participation had been requested at an earlier stage . . .

We wish you luck and will be interested in the outcome.

Very truly yours,

Stuart M. Niemtzw  
Mid-Atlantic Legal Foundation  
Philadelphiala, Pennsylvania

December 10, 1985

Dear Mr. Havis,

We are in favor of your being allowed the educational freedom to conduct your post-secondary school in Maryland With sincere best wishes,

Daniel D. McGarry  
Educational Freedom Foundation  
Glendale, Missouri

Dear Mr. Havis,

We have reviewed the materials you sent concerning (the Society's petition) . . . this case raises an important issue affecting private education . . .

Please keep us advised of development . . .

Very truly yours,

John M. Cannon, President  
Mid-America Legal Foundation  
Chicago, Illinois

December 18, 1985

Dear Lee,

Your copy of the Society's petition for writ of certiorari made fascinating reading and I hope will be successful. It's unbelievable to me in this day and age that something such as this suit ever had to be originated . . .

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Hainstock  
San Juan Bautista, California

Pain

Cont'd. from Page 2, Col. 3

As an inquiry into the mysterious nature of man's unknown nature, modern psychology follows the same general approach as Montessori teaching to discover the truth of present moment experience. Notably, the recent work of Dr. Arthur Janov reflects this path of "modern psychology" which seeks to uncover and resolve the deeply hidden mysteries of unconscious pain.

Unconscious Pain

*"It is the ability to become unconscious that allows men and women to survive the untold agonies of the past . . . The unconscious is not a vague psychological concept but a reality in our brains and bodies . . . Primal therapy offers the individual a way into the unconscious, and thus a way out of unconsciousness."*

Dr. Arthur Janov

from Prisoners of Pain, Intro. p. x

Dr. Janov's "Primal Therapy" reflects a revolutionary means of resolving unconscious early childhood pains which have become deeply engrained into the fabric of one's personality since infancy. Since "Primal Therapy" allows one to become fully conscious of certain painful early childhood experiences, the need to continue one's defensive pattern of avoidance and "camouflage" in one's personality tends to disappear.

The approach of "Primal Therapy" to probe into unconscious pain, tends to engender a constructive life-long process of "feeling" so that pain is spontaneously resolved within oneself as it arises in the ordinary course of living. "Pain" is therefore recognized as an inevitable aspect of life—a sort of by-product of creative being which finds its ultimate completion and justice in a transcendent harmony between opposing forces in the present moment.

Harmonized Opposition

*"If one pulls in a given direction, there will always be another which pulls the opposite way . . . a wonderful harmony between opposing forces. The result is . . . a harmonized opposition, an agreed disagreement."*

Maria Montessori

from Absorbent Mind, p.143

Pain—emerging in the form of a wide range of body sensations and experiences—is most tangibly present amid the harmonized opposition of forces which surround one's life as a "resistance to truth." Like the many layers of an onion, "pain" is similarly comprised of layers of illusion which arise in one's consciousness as thoughts, prejudices, attitudes, assumptions, emotions and body sensations. The truth of "pain" is therefore uncovered in a process of "peeling off" its many layers until the essential "nothing" at its core is finally realized.

Feeling

*" . . . it is feeling which spurs us on toward perfection."*

Maria Montessori

from Spontaneous Activity in Educ., p.341

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 3

3

Positions & Placements

**Montessori Teacher:** (2-6) starting Aug./1986. Expanding rural school, in established class with extended day. Rural environment with cultural advantages of nearby college. Candidate needs to be flexible during school's expansion and growth. Supportive staff and parent community. Send resumes to: Joyce Dion, Administrative Directress, Montessori Sch. of the Upper Valley, P. O. Box 368, Norwich, Vermont 05055.

**Montessori Teacher:** (6-9) starting fall 1986. School established 14 years, contains 4 Children's Houses, 1 toddler program, 150 children total. Located 35 min. south of Boston on 4 acres of land. Individual must be energetic, resourceful, love kids and animals, be ready to make a commitment and decisions about new program. Salary \$17,000-\$22,000 plus benefits. (10 mo. school yr.) Please call 617-934-7101 and/or write: Bay Farms Academy, 145 Loring Rd., Duxbury, MA 02332.

**Montessori Teachers:** (3-6), (6-9). Opening for 6-9 experienced Elementary Directress and intern or first year Directress for 3-6 level. Montessori school completing 14 years of service to low income families. School serves 2½-6, 6-9. Beginning 9-12 in August of 1986. Contact: Sister Deanna Randall, 400 So. Logan St., Denver, Colorado 80209, Tel. (303) 722-7708.

**Montessori Teacher:** (6-9) School is well-established, 20 years old, new building, waiting list. Send letter of application, resume and references to: Staff Search Committee, Montessori School of Champaign-Urbana, 1403 Regency Dr., Savoy, Illinois 61874.

**Position Desired:** Montessori teacher desires position as such in the United States. Certificate from Parkistan Montessori Training Course (Karachi, Pakistan) in 1970. Presently teaching at Convent of St. Joseph's (Karachi, Pakistan). Contact: Nasira Pathan c/o N. Hussain, 88-05 171 St. Apt. 5D, Jamaica, New York 11432.

Announcements

The St. Nicholas Montessori Centre announces its 40th Anniversary Conference in London, England, April 1-5, 1986. Speakers include IMS advisory board member, Elizabeth Hainstock. In addition, Jacques Cousteau will speak on "Nature in Education." Fee is £100. For further information, contact: St. Nicholas Montessori Centre, 23/24 Princes Gate, London SW7 1PT England.



Children show "decimal layout" at Step by Step Early Learning Center (Miller Place, New York).

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### Organizing Montessori

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 2

policies of participation and membership, contrary to the true spirit of Montessori principles, new organizations must be created accordingly. Each major political jurisdiction—state, province, country, etc.—can conveniently provide the geographical bounds for such organizations. Their general purpose would be to encourage and support one's own individual efforts on behalf of the emergence of the "normalized" child within the jurisdiction

The International Montessori Society has developed a prospective model set of rules and procedures to support and encourage the formation and successful operation of a proper Montessori organization for one's local area. Notably, the Society recommends by-laws which assure an adequate funding source through fees from participants and membership which is open to all schools and individuals without regard to other organizational affiliations and/or educational background.

The Society invites inquiry from individuals and schools to create and operate an effective local Montessori organization. A widespread network of such organizations would provide a most tangible supportive presence for progress in the work of creating the "new education" in the world. For more information, contact: International Montessori Society, 912 Thayer Ave., Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.



Child working with "Knobbed Cylinders" at the Rowntree Montessori School (Bremlea, Ontario, Canada).

### Rowntree Montessori in Ontario, Canada

The Rowntree Montessori School (Bramblea, Ontario, Canada) provides a full year Montessori program for children 2½ - 10 years of age. This Society member school is organized with morning and afternoon sessions with daily hours from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Mary Podgorny, educational director of the Rowntree school, states that her French language program makes extensive use of a "listening, inquiry and discussion approach to learning". In addition, she indicates that children with learning disabilities are afforded a variety of special activities which include: motor education, sensory education, music, art, and audio-visual aides. Ms. Podgorny notes specifically that "the activities focus upon helping children understand themselves and others."

For further information, contact: Mary Podgorny, Rowntree Montessori School, 93 Autumn Blvd., Bramblea, Ontario, L6T 2W1 Canada, Tel. (416) 793-2196.

### Pain

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 2

Montessori teaching entails a peeling of the onion of "pain" wherein feelings are recognized and acknowledged as they randomly emerge in the process of living. Painful feelings and thoughts—such as humiliation, anger, tension, fear and sadness—can readily arise as one patiently observes a scene of some considerable misbehavior and disorder among children. A real courage and perseverance is therefore needed to faithfully stand by Montessori principles during those moments of acute pain and discomfort which invariably arise from time to time in the process of a child's "normalization."

### Courage and Perseverance

*"Through long experimentation we have now arrived at much elimination of error, and the possession of a key which can unlock for children the gates of a healthy and happy education. On our courage and perseverance in its use depends the future of humanity."*

Maria Montessori  
from *To Educate the Human Potential*, p.118

Montessori teachers must be prepared to pay a certain price of pain to participate in the real work of creating a "new education." True Montessori teaching invariably implicates a certain suffering and pain as one works to assure the emergence of the child's true "normalized" spirit of love, peace and harmony in the present moment. With one's primary attention on this emerging new "normalized" child, "pain" need not unduly occupy one's concern. Rather, such pain may be viewed as merely an occasional and necessary secondary effect arising spontaneously from the essential underlying creative work of one's being as a complete commitment to Montessori principles in the world.