



The Montessori

# OBSERVER

Progress

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



Discussion during lunch break at the Society's "Creating the New Education" conference held in Harlingen, Texas on September 24-25, 1988. Pictured are (left to right): Claire Van der Put (Edinburg, TX), Lee Havis (Silver Spring, MD) and Needra de Zylva (Columbo, Sri Lanka).

## Montessori Conference in Harlingen, Texas

On September 24-25, 1988, the Society conducted its most recent "Creating the New Education" conference in Harlingen, Texas. This sixth such conference in the state of Texas included the participation of Montessori educators, parents and other interested persons from throughout the entire state. There was also attendance at the conference from the state of Colorado and the country of Sri Lanka.

The Harlingen, Texas conference followed the format of other similar Society conferences to consider a wide range of practical teaching problems from the personal experience of those attending. Lee Havis, the Society executive director, guided the conference discussion to expand awareness of the three Montessori principles in the resolution of specific misbehavior scenarios with children according to the idea of "control the environment, not the child".

Needra de Zylva, a Montessori educator from Sri Lanka, attended the Harlingen conference as a first step in the process of bringing the Society's communication more directly to the attention of people in her country. Ms. de Zylva and other members of the de Zylva family conduct several Montessori schools in Columbo, Sri Lanka, and also operate a Montessori teacher education program. She plans to widely publicize information about the Society's communication and to help organize a Society conference in Sri Lanka in the near future.

The next Society conference in the state of Texas is planned for Houston, Texas on March 11-12, 1989. For further details and information, contact: IMS, 912 Thayer Ave., Silver Spring, Maryland 20910; Tel. (301) 589-1127.

### Imperfect Achievements for Montessori Accreditation

*"Every great cause is born from repeated failures and from imperfect achievements."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Montessori Method*, p. 6

On October 3-5, 1988, representatives from many Montessori organizations and institutions met in New Orleans, Louisiana to continue their efforts to resolve differences in the formation of an "umbrella" accreditation agency for Montessori teacher education programs. Representing the Society at these proceedings, Lee Havis urged adoption of the principles of "consensus" and "inclusivity" as set forth generally in the Society's proposal for such an umbrella accreditation agency which was first submitted for consideration in January, 1988.

The Society's proposal evolved from a process to form an "inclusive" Montessori accreditation agency which has recently proceeded through various revisions associated with meetings held in Washington, D.C. (January, 1988); Berkeley, CA (February, 1988);

*Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 2*

## 1989 Membership Rates Favor Active Participation

On May 1, 1989, the Society will institute a new membership rate schedule to enhance the active participation of Montessori schools and other persons in the Society's work of creating the "new education." The new rate for membership recognition as a "Montessori school" will be reduced from the current \$100 per year rate to \$45 per year for all qualified schools which have actively participated with the Society during the previous 12-month period. "Active participation" means that the school has one of its staff as an active participating student in the Society's Montessori teacher education program, has conducted a Society consultation, or has one of its staff or parents in attendance at a Society conference.

The current reduced membership rate of \$45 per year applies now *only* to renewing school members which also qualify as "active" in

*Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 3*

## Montessori Conferences

*Creating the New Education*

Warren, Michigan  
January 28-29, 1989

Lafayette, Indiana  
February 18-19, 1989

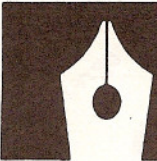
Atlanta, Georgia  
February 25-26, 1989

Houston, Texas  
March 11-12, 1989

Tampa, Florida  
April 15-16, 1989

Pre-paid registration for the full two-day conference is \$150 per person (\$120 for Society members). The payment due date is four (4) weeks before the scheduled date of the conference. A late fee of \$50 applies for registration submitted after the payment due date.

Send registration fee to: International Montessori Society, 912 Thayer Ave., Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, Tel. (301) 589-1127.



# Progress

by Lee Haviv

*"A vast space gives . . . sentiments which engender a passionate devotion for what makes for real progress."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Formation of Man*, p.49

Centered on the vision of the normal child as being in complete harmony with its environment, Montessori education offers a vast space for the creation of a better and stronger humanity to assure the substantial progress of mankind. From this vast space of Dr. Montessori's "new education", the child emerges to reveal man's true creative purpose to overcome the many difficult and problematic social conditions which otherwise repress all effective human expression in the world. Based on three fundamental principles of nature, such a "new education" therefore reflects the underlying quality of all true human progress as that which ultimately follows the direction given by a deeply hidden inner force of creation.

## Inner Force

*" . . . all human progress, stands upon an inner force."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Montessori Method*, p.24

Human progress arises from the mysterious inner guiding force of life itself to express a constant instinct to work and evolve creation. This inner force of nature acts most directly for human progress during the child's formative period of life prior to the age of about six—to engender one's basic stabilized way of being as personality for an entire life-time of experience. True progress is therefore most effectively assured by the provision of a supportive nurturing environment during the critical early childhood period. Otherwise, the thoughtless mistreatment and neglect of young children tends to result in later personality defects which inflict a terrible vengeance on society.

## Vengeance on Society

*"The child who is not properly cared for takes vengeance on society by forming a weak individual, an obstacle to the progress of civilization."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Ed. for a New World*, p.32

Children who are either abandoned to fantasy "play" or forced to comply with restrictive adult control will eventually take their vengeance on society through later forms of defective and detrimental adult behavior. Since ordinary efforts for basic human progress tend to disregard the fundamental environmental causes of deficient character development during the early childhood period, such adult efforts in education usually achieve only limited results at best. Traditional teaching generally functions only to restrict, control and otherwise limit the child by a form of repressive "education" which is routinely accepted as necessary and useful by popular common opinion.

## Common Opinion

*"All that seems to contribute to social progress among adults, according to common opinion, have the vital necessities of the child aside. The adult has always seen only himself in society and in its progress."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Formation of Man*, p.62

Common opinion in traditional education gives priority attention to adult "teaching" rather than to the child's own individual creative instincts to teach itself. Furnishings, facilities and academic materials are often seen as more important in education than is the more delicate preparation of the adult to provide a nurturing psychic environment for progress in the domain of the child's inner spirit and character. Adults therefore unconsciously impose on children many detrimental errors, prejudices and misconceptions which are overcome only from within oneself by the power of a mysterious countervailing constant tendency to progress.

## Tendency to Progress

*"Adults, like children, seem to differ from one another mainly in their defects, but hidden in their hearts there is something deep, common to all . . . a continuous tendency to progress."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.209

An inner tendency to progress is the fundamental characteristic of human nature which constantly urges man towards ever greater freedom and independence with respect to one's environment. This inner tendency to progress is shared with others through the action of resolving many common obstacles and problems in society which otherwise deter the full expression of one's successful harmonious being. Human progress in the complex interrelated functioning of modern society is therefore decidedly a question of considerable cooperation and mutual dependency.

## Dependency

*" . . . man is dependent upon other men . . . his whole life will be in danger if the personalities of those about him have been warped."*

**Dr. Montessori**  
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.187-88

Within the complicated man-made structure of modern civilization, progress depends more than ever on one's effective cooperation and association with others. Such common problems as crime, pollution and nuclear weapons are those from which no single person may ultimately escape without the help of others. Substantial progress in modern society therefore requires a broadly inclusive form of resolution—to achieve a universal revolution on behalf of the advancement of all humanity.

## Universal Revolution

*"A universal revolution is what we need. This revolution requires only that man should raise his values and become the master, instead of the victim, of the environment he himself has created."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Formation of Man*, p.18

Dr. Montessori recognized the need for a universal revolution to effectively overcome the many forms of prejudicial thought and repressive habits of action which have become firmly established over the long history of civilization. In Montessori education, this revolution is active as a means to enable the emergence of the child's true nature in the world. With others in society, this revolutionary "new education" must necessarily communicate a constant accusation against all forms of adult repression and manipulation of children.

*Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 2*

Look for the  
**January Observer**  
featuring  
**Cooperation**

### The Montessori Observer

ISSN 0889-5643

published by  
INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY  
912 Thayer Ave.  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
(301) 589-1127

Lee Haviv, 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.

#### IMS ADVISORY BOARD

Elizabeth Hainstock, Educator, Author  
Romalda Spalding, Reading Specialist  
Dr. R. Orin Cornett, Professor Emeritus

#### 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.

©1988

## Moments of Peril

### The "Tea Party"

from *Observer*, October/1988  
by Lee Havis

In the typical "tea party" scenario, young children are engaged in obvious fantasy which is inconsistent with their true nature of complete harmony with reality in the present moment. Applying the idea of "control the environment, not the child," the key active misbehaving child (the "hub") must first be identified. Thereafter, the "environment" is examined for the detrimental influences as they may arise with (1) "adult personality"; (2) "other children"; and (3) "physical objects."

When the adult is invited by a child to impose control on children in such circumstances or to otherwise engage in the fantasy oneself, the "adult personality" is implicated as primarily detrimental. To remove the detrimental influence of the "adult personality" at such times, one may do so most effectively by engaging in a probing inquiry with the child about the particular reasons for the matter at hand; e.g., asking the child, "why do the other children have to sit where you tell them?"

A probing inquiry with a child in fantasy applies the principle of "observation" in a process of self-examination which exposes the underlying inner drama of one's own repressed feelings associated with the outward fantasy. This expansive "observation" will gradually lead the child back to its normal state of real work in the environment.

The "other children" as an element of the child's environment may be identified as those children who are more passively involved in the "tea party" drama. The adult's non-judgemental eye contact or a friendly hand gesture may be sufficient to disengage the detrimental influence of these "other children" from the environment of the key misbehaving child.

### Upsetting Chairs

The parents of four year old Jane leave the room quickly after a harsh admonition to Jane to stay in the room. Jane then proceeds to upset the chairs. She does not look up in the process of creating this "disorder." What to do?

Answer in *Observer*, January/1989

## Advertisement for Teachers

**Teacher(s):** humble, patient, willing/able to work hard and learn. To supervise children (ages) according to Montessori principles; will train. Contact: your name, your school, address, telephone.

## Progress

Cont'd. from Page 2, Col. 3

### Constant Accusation

"A child cannot develop and expand as it should because an adult 'represses' it. . . . All those who speak out on behalf of children should make this accusation against adults, and they should do so constantly and without exception."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p.13-14

Dr. Montessori recognized the need for harsh and persistent accusation with others to challenge and overcome the many entrenched adult prejudices which otherwise ordinarily prevail in the treatment of children. Without such accusation, many hidden prejudices and misconceptions about the child emerge eventually as adult repression under the guise of "teaching", "discipline" or even "helping". Montessori education must therefore constantly challenge the manner of adult personality expression with children to reveal a wide range of unknown errors.

### Unknown Error

"Unknown error . . . holds the secret to progress beyond a known and desired goal . . ."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p.14

Progress in Montessori teaching relates essentially to the process of discovery and resolution of unknown inner errors of perception and judgment which otherwise routinely suppress the emergence of the "normalized" child. Such an intimate self-examination with children serves primarily to remove the detrimental presence of one's own "adult personality" from the child's environment. Underlying this changing activity and appearance in one's outer personality expression, Montessori teaching remains as always a separate expansive 'being' associated with three eternal and unchanging infinite principles of nature—the three Montessori principles which provide an inner "control of error" to effectively guide the direction of one's thought and action with children.

### Principles Confirmed

"Times have changed, and science has made great progress, and so has our work; but our principles have only been confirmed."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Discovery of the Child*, p.ix

Beyond the considerable outer progress and change of Montessori education since its first appearance as such in 1907, its essential true being with children remains as always a commitment to three specific unchanging principles of nature—principles which are implicated in direction by the phrases: (1) "Observation"; (2) "Individual Liberty"; and (3) "Preparation of the Environment". Being as a commitment to such Montessori principles expands with practice and experience to "control the environment, not the child" so that the child's true nature will eventually emerge. In outer appearance, such Montessori teaching arises as a constant process of experimentation and imperfect achievements.

## Imperfect Achievements

"Every great cause is born from repeated failures and imperfect achievements."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Montessori Method*, p.6

Human progress is realized through the "new education" in outer form as a matter of considerable failure and imperfect achievements. By one's constant reference to the three Montessori principles, the adult is nonetheless effectively guided to remove the various obstacles, errors and detrimental influences in the child's environment so that a proper "normalizing" condition can be ultimately achieved. Montessori teaching thereby proceeds along a continual road of discovery which spontaneously reveals the "normalized" child in the present moment as being in complete harmony with its environment.

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 1

## ...In the Field

By Alethea Farzad

Sara Sweinhart (IMS Student) and Anita Bresler (Reading, PA) recently gave a presentation on the application of the three Montessori principles to a group of about 75 students at Kutztown University in Temple, PA. The 3½ hour presentation generated much discussion and interest in the Society's "Creating the New Education" conference. Sara also represented the Society's communication at the PACCA child care conference in Reading, PA (October 5-6, 1988) as part of her efforts to organize a third Society conference for the state of Pennsylvania in 1989 . . . Karen Countryman (Lafayette, IN) met with the Central Indiana Montessori Teacher's Assoc. (CIMTA) in late September to give a presentation on the Society's conference communication. Karen is communicating her experience from the Milwaukee, WI conference she attended in August, 1988 to others in Indiana and Ohio as part of her coordination of the Society conference scheduled for Lafayette, IN on February 18-19, 1989. For more information, contact Karen at (317) 477-7011 [w], or (317) 743-0290 [h] . . . Alethea Farzad (IMS '88) is coordinating communication for a Society conference in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. She has made calls into the local community of child care centers and has scheduled meetings there to identify interest and support for a local Society conference. For more information or to help with the planning of a Washington, DC area conference, contact Alethea at the Society offices, (301) 589-1127 . . . Georgette Jacob (Warren, MI) is conducting fundraising activities at her school in Warren, MI to raise the money for her entire staff to attend a Society conference scheduled in Warren on January 28-29, 1989. Her school has raised over \$2,000 so far for this important purpose. For more information, contact Georgette at (313) 548-9495 [w].

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

## Progress

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 3

### Road of Discovery

*"All spiritual development is a conquest of consciousness which assumes to itself something that was formerly outside. It is by going along this road of discovery that civilization advances."*

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p.15

The Montessori road of discovery reveals the "normalized" child as a reality in one's experience through various insights, perception and observations. Progress along this expansive road of discovery is seen in children by their outer expressions of such "normalized" personality qualities as: profound concentration, attachment to reality, spontaneous self-discipline, independence and social harmony with others. The discovery of such a new "normalized" child offers real hope for substantial progress in the harmonious evolution of mankind in the world—progress based on the creation of a "new humanity" which is so vitally dependent on the spirit of the child.

### Spirit of the Child

*"It is the spirit of the child that can determine the course of human progress . . ."*

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p.7

Montessori education significantly advances the fundamental progress of humanity by serving the spirit of the little child—to create a "normalizing" environment which allows the complete development of the normal human personality during the critical early childhood formative period of life. Montessori teaching thereby functions on behalf of this unseen spirit of the child as one's being which is separate from the various limiting aspects of adult personality—to reflect the expansive being of "commitment to Montessori principles". Such being as a true Montessori teacher reveals in time the new "normalized" child as the central focus, direction and opportunity for all effective human progress.



Practical life activity at the Alsace Montessori Day School (Fleetwood, Pennsylvania)

### Imperfect Achievements

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 2

Dallas, TX (April 1988); Irvine, CA (August, 1988) and most recently in New Orleans, LA (October, 1988). The Society continues to urge that certain aspects of "consensus" decision-making in the new agency are vital to protect important minority interests and to assure that the most innovative and experimental programs in the field of Montessori teacher education are allowed a reasonable opportunity to successfully participate.

The next meeting to consider these accreditation issues has been scheduled for San Diego, CA (February 7-9, 1989). The Society will continue its efforts at that time to address and resolve pertinent differences and to work towards greater quality, harmony and cooperation in the field of Montessori teacher education.

### 1989 Membership Rates

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 3

their participation with the Society during the past 12-month period. The 1989 rate change will extend the \$45 reduced membership rate to new schools joining the Society so that they too may benefit from their recent active participation with the Society.

For all schools which do not qualify as "active" in their participation with the Society during the past 12-month period, the membership rate will increase to \$150 per year. This new \$150 rate will apply for new schools as well as those which seek renewal.

The 1989 membership rate change for "individual membership" and "associate school membership" will be slightly increased in order to help meet the Society's growing financial requirements. The new rates to become effective on May 1, 1989 are:

#### Individual Membership:

\$20 (one year); \$35 (two years);  
\$45 (three years)

#### Associate School Membership:

\$25 (one year); \$45 (two years);  
\$60 (three years)

The Society encourages its Montessori school members to include all their parents and staff as individual members of the Society. A special group membership program for this purpose is offered to support a greater cooperation and communication at the school on behalf of its basic purpose of commitment to Montessori principles. The group rate schedule is based on the number of participating parents and staff: 1-29 (\$15 ea.); 30-49 (\$12 ea.); over 50 (\$10 ea.). For further details about the Society's new membership rates and group membership program, contact: IMS, 912 Thayer Ave., Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.