



The Montessori

# OBSERVER

Cooperation

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## Montessori Conferences

### *Creating the New Education*

The International Montessori Society conducts its "Creating the New Education" conference over a two-day weekend—all day Saturday and all day Sunday. The purpose is to help teachers, parents and others who work with children to more effectively resolve their various problems and difficulties such as "managing misbehavior".

The conference participants present their various problems with children, such as "managing misbehavior", and these are discussed and resolved by the Society's special way of "controlling the environment, not the child". Lee Havis, the Society's executive director, is present to guide the discussion so that a successful result will be accomplished.

**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

**New York, New York**  
April 29-30, 1989

**Washington, D.C.**  
May 6-7, 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.



Discussion during lunch break at Society's Illinois Montessori conference held in Peoria, Illinois on November 18-19, 1988. Pictured to camera (left to right): Alethea Farzad (College Park, Maryland), Julie Shiplett (Wood Dale, Illinois), Elizabeth Bouslough (Milan, Illinois).

## *New Education Conference in Peoria, Illinois*

On November 18-19, 1988, the Society conducted its latest "Creating the New Education" conference in Peoria, Illinois. This first such "Illinois Montessori Conference" follows a series of almost twenty other similar conferences held throughout the United States since 1986.

Pat Meredith, director and owner of the nearby *Montessori School of Peoria* (Washington, Illinois) provided the local communication and coordination for the conference. In attendance was the entire staff of her school. In addition, teachers, parents and school owners attended the conference from throughout the states of Illinois and Iowa. Alethea Farzad, of the Society staff, was also present.

The conference considered a wide range of personal issues relating to the resolution of "misbehavior" according to one's being a "commitment to Montessori principles". Specific "misbehavior" scenarios were presented by those in attendance, and analyzed according to the Society's special approach of "control the environment, not the child". Lee Havis, Society executive director, guided the discussion in the process of resolving the various issues.

New Society conferences are scheduled for the future according to the interest expressed for this purpose by those in the local area. The Society particularly encourages Montessori schools to support and maintain a regular staff participation in such "Creating the New Education" conferences to assure their continuing education in the effective application of

Montessori principles. Lee Havis states that "after having conducted almost twenty of these conferences throughout the United States since 1986, their effective impact at the level of practical experience with children is confirmed and evident."

To support the scheduling of a "Creating the New Education" conference in one's own local area or for additional information about those already scheduled, contact: International Montessori Society, 912 Thayer, Ave., Silver Spring, Maryland 20910, Tel. (301) 589-1127.

## *Society Group Membership for Montessori Schools*

Montessori schools recognized by the Society are eligible to participate in a special "group membership" program to expand the school's support for "commitment to Montessori principles" among parents and staff. This program enables the school to include all participating parents and staff as individual Society members—with full discount privileges, publications and other such regular membership benefits during the entire one-year term.

The Society recommends that Montessori schools adjust their annual registration form for parents to include a \$15 assessment fee to assure their automatic participation in the

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# Cooperation

by Lee Havis

*"... many who have dedicated their lives to this (Montessori) method, now face this problem of cooperation."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Formation of Man*, p. 5

Over a period of forty years, including two world wars, Dr. Montessori gradually came to realize the difficult yet necessary challenge of cooperation with others in the work of creating her vision of a "new education" in the world—to discover and free the child's true "normal" nature of complete harmony with its environment. This challenge of cooperation continues now as the reality of her vision of a "new education" faces the same essential prejudices and persistent opposition as before—prejudices which have been present from the moment that Dr. Montessori first discovered the "normalized" child in 1907. Despite these many difficulties and obstacles, Dr. Montessori recognized in her visionary discovery a basis for considerable cooperation with others—whereby even apparently unrelated activity may arise as similarly purposeful movement for the ultimate benefit of all humanity.

## Purposeful Movement

*"... purposeful movement... is not limited to action which serves only a personal need... but the doing of it may serve far distant ends whereby it acts for the benefit of others."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 146-147

Montessori education cooperates with many diverse forms of human activity and interest as similar purposeful movement to benefit the ultimate universal peace and harmony of all in society. Montessori teaching not only benefits the children, families and schools directly served by such teaching, but also contributes to the cosmic purpose of creating the expansive "new education" in the world. Most tangibly, this larger transcendent purpose is evident over time as the new "normalized" child expresses itself in society through many diverse experiences and relationships with others. Extending far beyond a specific classroom, school or physical location. Montessori education therefore ultimately engenders an expansive cooperation of consciousness with others who are likewise working for the well-being, peace and harmony of all.

## Cooperation of Consciousness

*"... we must first enter into the 'order of the laws of nature.' then from this level we can raise ourselves and ascend to a 'super-nature' where the cooperation of consciousness is necessary."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Formation of Man*, p. 45

Based on a growing awareness of three specific infinite "laws of nature"; i.e., (1)

"Observation"; (2) "Individual Liberty"; and (3) "Preparation of the Environment", Montessori teaching thereby communicates an expanding consciousness of the reality of the "normalized" child. Beyond the specific words, terminology and behavior which may be directly associated with such a "new education," one's being as a commitment to these three Montessori principles cooperates unconsciously with similar expansive efforts of others through many diverse forms of spontaneous expression, example and daily interaction in society. Among those associated with the word "Montessori" itself, a more conscious form of cooperation tends to arise as common experiences and knowledge are identified and attached to certain specific terms such as "normality". This conscious cooperation on behalf of the "normalized" child expresses itself through many forms of tangible agreement and association with others.

## Agreement

*"... for any achievement men must come together and agree, and for this agreement they must use language, the most abstract of things."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Educ. for a New World*, p. 39

Since her discovery of the "normalized" child in 1907, Dr. Montessori published an extensive written record of her various discoveries and experiences over a period of more than forty years. Such an extensive written record provides a substantial basis for much effective cooperation and agreement. Nevertheless, many differences of opinion and lack of agreement continue to persist within the Montessori community with respect to even the most basic terms such as "normality". True cooperation in Montessori education as elsewhere must therefore entail much more than mere agreement to words alone. Only an attachment to certain fundamental "ideals", such as the reality of the "normalized" child itself, can provide an ultimate basis for true and complete cooperation.

## Attachment to Ideals

*"... the force of cohesion among adults is something that needs to be directed by an attachment to ideals;... something higher than a mere organizing mechanism."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 238

The long history of human experience teaches that an attachment to some basic, central ideal or organizing principle is necessary for true cohesion and effective cooperation in a group experience. In Montessori education, group cooperation is essentially based on the central ideal of the "normalized" child. In society, the ideal of "order" provides the central organizing principle around which arises the basis for cooperation with respect to a wide range of complex and exacting social laws and association.

## Social Organization

*"... our outer social organization needs order as its foundation. The social laws regulating the conduct of citizens and the police force which controls these are of basic necessity in a social structure."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Formation of Man*, p. 44

Responsive to historical precedents, common beliefs and prevailing prejudices, each culture and group has organized its own distinctive social order—to variously favor, control, regulate, restrict and limit many diverse aspects of human behavior. Such a repressive form of order tends to reflect a prevailing condition of fear, violence and control which inherently opposes the expression of true normal cooperation. The limited "cooperation" in society is therefore essentially absent a complete recognition of mankind's cosmic destiny and ultimate common purpose for universal peace and harmony throughout the world.

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Look for the  
**March Observer**  
featuring  
**Authority**

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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.

#### IMS ADVISORY BOARD

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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

November, 1988

Dear Lee:

... I have appreciated the genius of Maria Montessori since first reading her books over 20 years ago. Now I have a little girl in Montessori school and really like the way she's growing up there.

Having been involved in the home school movement in Minnesota, I appreciate too the efforts of the coalition of Americans for Educational Choice (Observer, September/1988). Let's do all we can to break the hold of federal/psychiatric control mechanisms on education. . .

Best,

Keith Hallquist  
Clearwater, Florida

August 23, 1988

Dear Lee,

I want to take a moment between tasks to tell you how much your course (Society's conference, Greenville, SC, August 13-14, 1988) meant to our school and to me personally. . . Today was our first day with the new children. We had fewer separation problem but more importantly, we felt better about the way we handled them and so did the parents! The best part, of course, you know—our children were joyful learners and we felt really good while sharing this with them. THANK YOU.

... We too would like a conference on St. Simons. . . I know that the way will open for us to continue your work here when the time is right.

Thank you, again.

Sue Williamson  
St. Simon's Island, Georgia

## ... In the Field

By Alethea Farzad

**Toni Hammond** (IMS Student), director and owner of the Hammond School (Montessori School), in Roswell, Georgia, recently adopted the Society's suggested advertisement for teachers (See "Observer", November, 1988) with very enthusiastic results. Toni states that she is "pleased with the quality of the people who responded" and that she has found that the advertisement is successful in finding those persons "worth hiring and training" as Montessori teachers. For further details or help in hiring procedures, contact Toni at (404) 442-1082, or call the Society's offices. . . **Nur-jehan Hussain** (IMS Student) is coordinating communication for the Society's conference in New York City scheduled for April 29-30, 1989. She has been calling local area schools and speaking with teachers and others to identify interest in attending the New York conference. For more information, contact Nur-jehan at (718) 523-0468. . . **Doris O'Brien**, from the Little People's House (Montessori School) in Middletown, Connecticut is helping to organize a Society conference with others in Connecticut by identifying interest among those at her school and in the local area. To support the scheduling of a Society conference in Connecticut or elsewhere, contact the Society.

## Cooperation

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### Cosmic Destiny

"... humanity too is an organic unity that is yet being born. . . Cruelties and exploitations, wars and all forms of violence have had to play their part, because man has not yet realized their common humanity and its work in fulfillment of a cosmic destiny."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from To Ed. the Human Potential, p. 113

Many obstacles and prejudices in adult society tend to deter and oppose the full expression of one's cosmic destiny of harmony and complete cooperation with others. With children, society imposes its repressive order in the form of traditional education—whereby parents and teachers systematically transmit their various limiting patterns of personal desires and prejudicial thought from one generation to the next according to a pervasive underlying collective subconscious.

### Collective Subconscious

"... 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 repress the child."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from Formation of Man, p. 68

Society's traditional education of children represses their true natural instincts for self-directed harmony and cooperation with each other through a collective subconscious which prejudicially considers the child as essentially "lazy", "bad", "disorderly", "stupid" or simply "empty". Such a prejudicial adult mind-set invariably denies and opposes the reality of the child as having a "teacher within" itself to naturally guide its own effective development and harmonious cooperation with others in the environment. Based on this prejudicial adult mind-set, traditional teaching tends to impose a systematic repressive adult control over children which is ordinarily justified as providing necessary "help".

### Help

"No one comes running when there is dire need of help; but when there is no need, everyone helps!"

Dr. Maria Montessori

from Absorbent Mind, p. 229

Dominated by thoughts of the child as being inherently weak and dependent, parents and teachers tend to engage in many forms of unnecessary traditional teaching under the guise of "help"—to resolve superficial physical problems for the child which might otherwise be resolved much more beneficially through the child's own self-directed efforts and independent exercise. By contrast, Montessori teaching helps the child primarily on behalf of its "spiritual" development, by offering the real help of one's patience and encouragement for independent, self-directed activity according to the child's own interests. Such spiritual help arises in action as a profoundly delicate and sensitive form of collaboration with nature.

## Collaboration with Nature

"... we have to adjust our minds to doing work of collaboration with nature."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from Absorbent Mind, p. 89

Montessori teaching collaborates with nature by one's being a "commitment to Montessori principles" to create a "normalizing" environment for the young child. Within such a Montessori environment, the young child changes in its outer form from disorderly, inattentive and lazy to a "normalized" state of cooperation, harmony and friendship with all others in the social group. Children over six express this "normalized" cooperation with others through various forms of collective activity and interaction which reveal a natural unfolding of each child's own unique status in the social group.

### Status

"... the child of six. . . likes to mix with others in a group wherein each has a different status. A leader is chosen and is obeyed, and a strong group is formed. This is a natural tendency, through which mankind becomes organized."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from To Educ. the Human Potential, p. 6

"Normalized" children over six find their own particular interest and status in the group as a result of self-directed activity and individual interest for effective social functioning. This true "normalized" cooperation, so strikingly distinct from the violence, envy and repression of ordinary adult society, reflects an ideal way of being together for all regardless of age, culture or history. Such an orderly "normalized" social organization spontaneously sustains itself in stable functioning without the usual forms of repression and control which are otherwise ordinarily assumed as necessary or inevitable in today's adult society.

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## Moments of Peril

### Upsetting Chairs

from Observer, November/1988

by Lee Haviv

The adult does not have "eye contact" with the child who is upsetting chairs in this particular "moment of peril." Since the "other children" is not a significant detrimental element in the child's environment here, the primary detrimental influence is therefore clearly the "physical objects" (i.e., chairs). To "control the environment, not the child" in this scenario, the adult is best advised to approach the child slowly and hold on to the chair that is about to be "upset" next.

The chair is "controlled" by a firm hand hold on the chair (not grabbing or jerking away forcefully from the child)—making sure that one is not holding or touching the child's hands in any way during the process. While the chair is thus stabilized, the child is likely to look up and establish eye contact with the adult. At this point, the "adult personality" may now be

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### Holistic Education Review Promotes Dialogue on New Ideas

In 1988, Ron Miller began publication of his "Holistic Education Review" to provide a forum for discussion of innovative and experimental ideas in education. According to Mr. Miller, this new publication will "explore bold new ideas that challenge traditional assumptions and methods of mainstream education. We seek to explain, in greater depth, person-centered approaches in education such as Montessori, Waldorf, humanistic, alternative, homeschooling and many others—and to promote a dialogue among them on a variety of issues."

The winter, 1988 issue of *Holistic Education Review* featured articles about "peace education". 1989 themes include "Empowering Teachers in Holistic Settings" and "Spirituality".

This new educational publication is issued four times each year. Subscription is \$16 per year, \$29 for a two-year term. For further information, contact: Ron Miller, *Holistic Education Review*, P.O. Box 1476, Greenfield, Massachusetts 01302-9971.

### Society Group Membership

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"group membership" program. In this way, parents will come to recognize a more personal responsibility and participation with the school in its underlying purpose beyond the mere "day care" of their children.

To participate, the school must list all its participating parents and staff on a single form and submit such list to the Society with the proper fee. A special reduced group rate is based on the number of memberships; 1-29, \$15 each; 30-49, \$12 each; over 50, \$10 each. Submit list and fee to: International Montessori Society, 912 Thayer Ave., Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

### Cooperation

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#### Orderly Society

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

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 285

The orderly society of "normalized" children reflects the true spirit of natural cooperation which offers a model and path for all human forms of cooperation in the future. As the new "normalized" child and adolescent emerges into the world, society is accordingly compelled to expand to accommodate a new level of cooperation which serves a purpose far beyond that of the superficial satisfaction of merely personal desires. True cooperation therefore gradually emerges to serve the cosmic purpose of creation itself to evolve and organize a truly peaceful and harmonious human unity.

#### Human Unity

"If human unity . . . is going at last to be organized, it will be done only by an education that will give appreciation of all that has been done by human cooperation."

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *To Educ. the Human Potential*, p. 74

Montessori education works for human unity through many forms of peaceful cooperation with others in society on behalf of the ultimate emergence of a new "normalized" humanity in the world. Such a transcendent purpose begins within oneself as being a "commitment to Montessori principles"—to extend itself in communication with others as the process of creating the "new education" through many diverse forms of participation and association in society. Such Montessori teaching thereby serves the purpose of a better and stronger humanity which gradually realizes itself by means of one's infinitely expanding spirit of complete cooperation with all mankind throughout the entire world.

### Positions & Placements

**Montessori Teacher:** (3-6), part-time for 1989-90 school year. School is located in a Catholic church that sits on a hill surrounded by beautiful farmland. Salary negotiable. Send application and resume to: Montessori Pre-primary School, Attn. Nancy Bristow, 800 Marian, Glenwood, Iowa 51534.

### Moments of Peril

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 3

seen as the primary detrimental influence to be "controlled."

To control the "adult personality," one may well engage in a sincere inquiry with the child as to its activity. If the child says "let go," the adult may respond with a simple "why?" The questioning verbal dialogue thus proceeds to the child's interest in its present activity; e.g., "what do you want the chair for?" Such an inquiry will probably lead to the child's expression of anger associated with the fact of her mother's prior leaving—thus offering a constructive avenue for the complete resolution of such painful feelings through further verbal communication with the adult.

Once the "adult personality" is effectively resolved as a "detrimental influence," the child may then be finally directed to pick up the chairs and return them to their proper location.

### Everybody Hates Me

Seven year old Nathan has insulted, ridiculed, hit and otherwise abused other children in his elementary classroom to such a point that he is "unfriendly" with the entire group of children. Nathan recognizes this situation as a matter of "everybody hates me." When the teacher questions the child as to "why" nobody seems to like him, he states "I don't know." Nathan is unhappy and discouraged. What to do?

Answer in *Observer*, March/1989