



The Montessori

Unity

# OBSERVER

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## Society Recognizes Montessori Teachers

In 1988, the Society initiated its current policy of recognizing Montessori teachers according to renewable three-year terms of certification based on their continuing participation in professional development and education. Under this form of continuing certification, graduates of Society teacher education must complete at least thirty clock hours of Society-approved coursework during each three-year period following their initial graduation. This new requirement is intended to assure a continuing educational experience of Montessori teachers which is vital to their effective participation in this expansive field of activity.

At present, Montessori teachers may obtain their further required Society-approved coursework by attending at least two "creating the new education" conferences during each three-year period. The Society particularly appreciates those of its graduates who are maintaining a supportive long-term association with the Society through their membership and continuing supportive participation in Society conferences. Recognized Montessori teacher certification is presently held by the following graduates. Year of initial graduation from Society teacher education is indicated in parenthesis, e.g. ('86).

Virginia Jones ('86)  
Lilburn, Georgia

Roberta Templeman ('87)  
Daly City, California

Susan Kelleher ('87)  
Placerville, California

Aleta Shepler ('87)  
Orange City, Iowa

Nancy McEvoy ('87)  
Schenectady, New York

Sylvia Starkie ('87)  
Miramar, Florida

Carolyn Smith ('87)  
Baytown, Texas

Mary Dwyer ('87)  
Bigfork, Montana

Joan Miller ('87)  
Anacortes, Washington

Kathleen Kimball ('87)  
Woodruff, Wisconsin

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Proceedings of the "Creating the New Education" conference held in Atlantic, Georgia, February 17-18,

## Montessori Conference in Atlanta, Georgia

The Society held its most recent "Creating the New Education" conference on February 17-18, 1990 in Atlanta, Georgia. Attending were school owners, teachers and parents from the states of Georgia, South Carolina and New York.

Lee Havis, Society executive director, led the conference discussion in analyzing many specific "misbehavior" scenarios—situations of unnormalized behavior in children arising at home and in the classroom from the direct experience of conference participants. Situations involving undue social dependency among children, fantasy and manipulative language in adult-child conversation were among those considered for resolution according to the approach of "control the environment, not the child".

The conference also considered how small classroom problems are intimately related to larger issues in society involving parents, community, government and the economy. Particular attention was directed to the "long term" needs of each situation for complete "normalization", rather than assuming a more "short-term" goal to achieve an immediate end to the misbehavior. Havis stated that "even an apparently insignificant object or small problem in one's situation can be the occasion for a profound 'normalization'. The 'long-term' result and purpose of normality is always at stake in one's being with children. Constant attention to the three Montessori principals is the best support I know to assure an effective 'long-term' resolution of problems with children."

Havis encouraged the conference participants to support each other with regular communication between Society conferences—to work through their own continuing "small" problems that otherwise tend to remain hidden in one's daily experience with children. Havis stated that without this more frequent supportive communication, problems of "adult personality" are difficult if not impossible to perceive and resolve within oneself.

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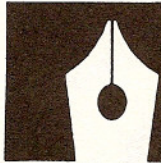
### Three Obstacles to Starting a Montessori School

Knowledge and intelligence—not "money"—are the essential tools which are needed to overcome the various initial obstacles that arise in the process of planning to start a Montessori school. Directed by one's inner 'commitment to Montessori principles', such knowledge and intelligence must primarily challenge and overcome three basic obstacles.

#### Government Regulation

Montessori schools must generally meet strict and exacting government regulations concerning building and fire codes, zoning, and licensure for approval to operate. Preliminary knowledge to overcome this obstacle can be obtained through such means as orientation sessions sponsored by government regulatory

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# Unity

by Lee Havis

*"The universe is an imposing reality, and an answer to all questions . . . all things are part of the universe and are connected with each other to form a whole unity."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *To Ed. the Human Potential*, p. 8

Dr. Montessori recognized a fundamental unity of all being in the universe—an inherent reality of perfect interrelated harmony in each moment of time. Disharmony, imperfection and disagreement therefore reflect only one's limited perception and partial knowledge of this ultimate universal unity. Amid the outward drama of conflict and dispute among diverse competing groups and systems of belief, true unity emerges as an ever-changing state of harmonized opposition.

## 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 not so much an agreement as a harmonized opposition, an agreed disagreement."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 143

Unity may be consciously perceived as a lively interaction of opposing thoughts and actions which work together at an unconscious level for the infinite evolution of the cosmos. This harmonized opposition naturally unfolds in one's expanding communication and resolution of a wide variety of problems, interests and needs in society. Montessori teaching allows this unifying process of communication and resolution to proceed in children according to a commitment to certain fundamental laws of nature.

## Laws of Nature

*"The human being is a united whole, but this unity has to be built up and formed by active experiences in the real world, to which it is led by the laws of nature."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 203

Montessori education supports the normal development of unity in children by its commitment to three fundamental laws of nature: i.e., (1) "Observation"; (2) "Individual Liberty"; and (3) "Preparation of the Environment". These three Montessori principles guide the adult to allow the child's true nature to emerge in complete harmony with all being. The "normalized" child that emerges from this type of committed environment reflects a true point of union for all humanity.

## Point of Union

*" . . . the child must be considered as a point of union, a link joining the different epochs of history . . ."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 66

The young child unifies one generation with the next by absorbing the present culture and intimately establishing its basic characteristics within for all future being as "personality". Young children in the Montessori environment also absorb the order of infinite laws of nature so that their resulting "normalized" being serves as a point of union for all humanity. The young child's unique "absorbent mind" allows the personality to unify itself with its environment through physical activity which is guided by the primary needs of the intellect.

## Serving the Intellect

*"The muscles should always serve the intellect and thus preserve their functional unity with the human personality."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Discovery of the Child*, p. 81

From birth to about the age of six, the young child instinctively unifies its entire essential personality by serving the intellect in its inner process of mental ordering. The child may thereby gradually form within itself the basic character attributes of true "normality"; e.g., independence, self-discipline, concentration, attachment to reality and social sentiments of sympathy for others. This "normalization" arises in the Montessori environment through concentration on physical objects as young children freely move about according to their individual interests.

## Movement

*" . . . psychic energy must be incarnated in movement so that it can unify the personality of the agent. If this unity is not attained . . . the man is divided."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 155

Free movement in a well-ordered environment allows the young child's personality to unify itself according to the laws of natural development. Montessori education supports this normal personality development by offering a wide variety of self-educational materials and activities which provide tangible motives for the child's free choice exploration of individual interests. The child's unified personality expresses itself outwardly in the group as a profound social cohesion.

## Social Cohesion

*" . . . unity born among the children, which is produced by a spontaneous need, directed by an unconscious power, and vitalized by a social spirit . . . I call it 'cohesion in the social unity'."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 232-233

Group unity normally arises in children as a profound social "cohesion"—harmonious being with others which is far beyond the expectations of ordinary "politeness" in adult

society. By "observing" rather than "teaching", Montessori teachers allow the children to work out and resolve many social problems on their own—without the constant interfering influence of typical adult "help". In traditional education, unity is ordinarily imposed on a group of children by various forms of adult manipulation and inflicting punishment.

## Inflicting Punishment

*"Teachers and families unite in inflicting punishment upon a child in the belief that otherwise the corrections would be ineffective."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 213

Traditional teaching tends to force compliance with group rules through adult repression and control. Based on the belief that children are essentially "bad" or "empty", adults customarily inflict punishment to control a child's "misbehavior". By contrast, Montessori teaching views the child as an "unknown entity" whereby "misbehavior" is resolved by following such principles as "observation" to "control the environment, not the child". This revolutionary departure from the ordinary adult control of children

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Look for the  
*May Observer*  
featuring  
**Knowledge**

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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.

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Subscription to this *Observer* publication may be obtained by requesting Society membership which is open to all individuals for a \$20 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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## Moment of Peril

### Kicking the Teacher

from *Observer*, January/1990  
by Lee Havis

A young child kicking the teacher (see *Observer*, January/1990) is a moment of peril which reflects extreme anger and frustration concerning the "adult personality". To "control the environment" in such a scenario must therefore focus on control of the "adult personality" at this time.

When physical harm to the "adult personality" is at issue, one can physically "control" this detrimental influence in the environment by the action of protecting one's body from the serious harm of the child's kicking—while still holding on to the object in conflict with the other hand. Since the adult may be feeling angry or embarrassed at such a "moment of peril", it is usually best to avoid speaking to the child at this time since negative emotions would tend to adversely affect the content and quality of one's particular language.

Verbal interaction with the child might eventually direct itself to the "physical objects" which had been thrown on the floor by the child before. With a question; e.g., "where does that go?" (be specific and point), the adult may thereby bring the child's attention to returning the objects to their proper place on the shelf. Thereafter, the child's attention would be no longer primarily directed to the "adult personality", and the child would tend to return to its normal functioning of self-disciplined, independent activity in the environment.

### The Outdoor Environment

In the outdoor environment, four year old Billy is playing super-hero with another child. This activity involves much jumping and running with wild noises. Billy jumps on another child who then gets angry and bites Billy who screams and runs away looking up at the teacher. When the teacher motions for Billy to "come", he shakes his head and runs to the other child and hits him. The other child does not look up at the teacher but retaliates to the hit by biting Billy again, whereupon Billy screams and looks up at the teacher and runs away, refusing the teacher's invitation to "come". What to do?

Answer in *Observer*, May/1990.

### Montessori Conference

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 3

Some conference participants suggested that the Society schedule its next conference in the area in South Carolina in August, 1990. Definite plans for such a conference will be set in motion according to the specific interest expressed for this purpose. Please contact the Society to indicate your interest in attending or for other information about the Society's "Creating the New Education" conference.

### Unity

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tends to reveal some basic conflicts between the treatment of children at home and school.

### Home and School

*"The human personality, or the care of it, is broken up. On the one side is the home . . . on the other is the school . . . There is no unity of conception."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 13

Since the care of children is ordinarily broken up in society between home and school, teachers and parents must constantly work out and resolve many practical problems about routine and basic approach to the child. In Montessori education, these practical problems are resolved with reference to fundamental laws of nature. Guided by the three Montessori principles, parents and teachers function in their respective roles to express a universal cosmic education.

### Cosmic Education

*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, and readiness to shed prejudices in the interests of common work for the cosmic plan . . ."*

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

Montessori schools, parents and teachers collaborate in harmony with each other together for the emergence of the "normalized" child—to reveal a cosmic plan whose underlying nature and purpose is serving the whole unity of mankind. Centered on the vision of the "normalized" child, this total interrelated united effort is particularly vital to realize now when world-shaking forces exist to threaten total destruction of all life in the world.

### World-shaking Forces

*"World-shaking forces are now making realization of human unity an urgent necessity."*

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *To Ed. the Human Potential*, p. 113

Mass communication and modern technology represent a considerable danger as well as constructive change for the future of humanity. Such world-shaking forces are poised to destroy all life as opposing nations and groups violently contend for power over the future path of human existence. Economic deprivation, greed, crime and ignorance are only symptoms of a much more fundamental human failure of character resulting from the continuing repression and neglect of the young child's normal development. Montessori teaching responds to these world-shaking forces with its transcendent communication of commitment to fundamental principles of nature—a unifying vision of a "new education" to release the child's great healing power of love in the world.

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### Three Obstacles

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agencies, direct study of the regulations themselves, and speaking with others who have successfully obtained government approval for their "child care" activity.

### Staffing

Even owners who plan to personally supervise the program themselves will eventually need to hire staff as a critical aspect of their program operation. Since new staff cannot generally be assumed to understand or really appreciate the experience and practical application of being a "commitment to Montessori principles", firm personal guidance and direction is absolutely vital. Such effective staff supervision requires a certainty of one's own inner preparation for Montessori teaching and a clear focus on the intended result of "normality" in children. Society conferences, consultation and teacher education are available to owner and staff for this purpose to assure and support a continuing preparation for Montessori teaching. In addition, the program may be recognized by the Society as a "Montessori school" to help sustain and support a clear continuing direction and focus on Montessori principles among all school staff.

### Enrollment

Enrollment is a critical initial obstacle to overcome since tuition is the primary basis for the new school's financial viability. Need for funds in the beginning of program operation is particularly critical in view of the considerable fixed costs involved with such aspects as rent and salaries. Initial enrollment to provide tuition income may be difficult to obtain since prospective parents may have already planned to meet their "child care" needs elsewhere. In addition, a new school cannot immediately assure parents of its long-term viability, reputation and favorable quality of operation.

To successfully meet this obstacle of "enrollment", a special outreach effort in the local community must be conducted during the first few critical months of program operation; e.g., through such means as direct personal contact by the owner with young families in the community. Announcements, signs, advertisement and personal visits to nearby employment centers and community groups can be very useful for this purpose. In addition, door-to-door or direct telephone canvassing with program information may help considerably to assure a satisfactory initial enrollment into the program.

Of course, considerable determination and persistence is required to overcome the initial obstacles involved in any creative endeavor. Many specific problem situations can only be resolved through personal experience as a process of trial and error. One may proceed with certainty in this process by following Montessori principles—to use one's knowledge and intelligence to ultimately result in a successful functioning Montessori school.

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**Unity**

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**Love**

"... we are all near to the child and we all love him. It is from this love that comes the child's power for unity."

**Dr. Maria Montessori**

from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 288

As the young child's "absorbent mind" unifies its being in total harmony with the environment, the adult tends to feel this love as a new opportunity to reconcile and resolve various failures of basic human conflict and disharmony. Adults who collaborate with laws of nature in their being with children find that their love for certain individual children naturally expands to encompass a unifying love for the true "normalized" nature of all children. This expansive love for the "normalized" child therefore shows the way to realize the true unity of all humanity.

**True Unity**

"... so far humanity has been in an embryonic stage, ... it is just now emerging into true birth, able to consciously realize its true unity and function."

**Dr. Maria Montessori**

from *To Ed. the Human Potential*, p. 3

The drama of human misery throughout history shows the yet immature and abnormal state of man's conscious awareness of true unity in the world. Violence, suffering and neglect continue today in many diverse circumstances where human beings struggle among themselves for freedom and basic dignity. Despite Dr. Montessori's discovery of the "normalized" child in 1907, humanity remains yet largely unconscious of this new reality of hope and possibility for being—unaware of mankind's fundamental harmony and cosmic purpose for universal peace and justice in the world. The work of creating the "new education" must therefore continue to realize one's true and complete unity with all being in the universe.



Participants in discussion at Society's conference in Atlanta, Georgia, February 17-18, 1990. Left to right are: Tanya Smith (Inman, South Carolina), Terry Patton (Inman, South Carolina) and Pat Kelly (St. Simon's Island, Georgia).

**Society Recognizes Montessori Teachers**

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Judith Horvath ('87)  
Phillippsville, California

Mina Daphtary ('87)  
Wyomissing, Pennsylvania

Alethea Shipllett ('88)  
College Park, Maryland

Susan Buehl ('88)  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Amy Wald ('89)  
Jackson, Wisconsin

Mary Kay Schroeder ('89)  
Dubuque, Iowa

Sr. Elizabeth Close ('89)  
Corpus Christi, Texas

Judith McAlevy ('89)  
Palm Spring, California

Sr. Elizabeth Pinto ('89)  
Parsippany, New Jersey

Nell Rollo ('89)  
Forest Hills, New York

The Society encourages its non-recognized graduates of Montessori teacher education to complete the necessary additional coursework so that they too may qualify to receive current Montessori teacher certification.

**Positions  
& Placements**

**Montessori Teacher:** (3-6/6-9) Full time for 1990-91 school year program expansion. Urban school serving the Black community. Salary negotiable. Send resume to: Christ the King Catholic School, Attn.: Deanna Randall, B.V.M. 1217 Hattiesburg St., Jackson, Mississippi 39209.