



# The Montessori OBSERVER

Public Education

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## Downtown Montessori in Houston TX

The growing *Montessori School of Downtown*, now has five separate locations in the Houston, TX area. However, it began in the 1980's as just a small in-home babysitting enterprise, conducted by newlyweds, **Rita and Hersh Kumar**. As recent immigrants from India, their story of "America" is one shared by many others who, with meager material resources, worked with skill and determination to ultimately bring about today's very successful result.

For Rita and Hersh, their first years in America were hard, as both were struggling to survive as soon-to-be parents. And, when their first child was on the way, they wondered where they might find a suitable childcare facility up to their high standards of quality. So, with a shared passion for education, they decided to start accepting small children into their own home to provide care that other working parents in the community would appreciate and value. And, as funds became available, they purchased an old, quaint building that served as their first "Model Preschool". Here, they began providing a more formal type of education and care to children, including those in their own growing family as well.

In the course of time, their efforts brought about more school locations, and the development of an organization to serve their employees as well. As the number of employees grew, staff meetings were held where Hersh regularly encouraged employees to "Be the best version of yourself".

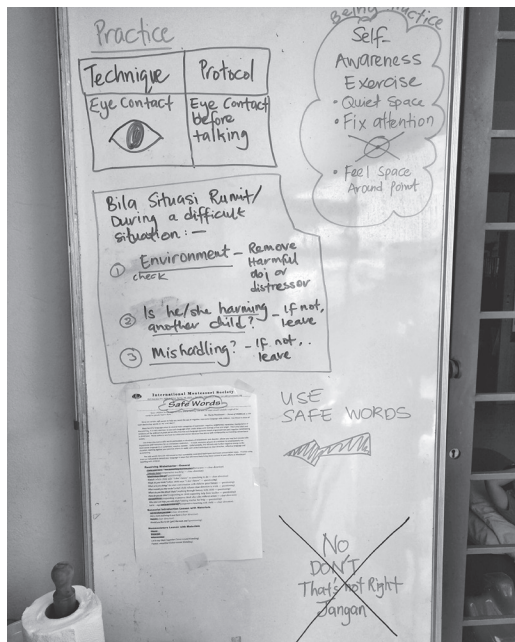
Now, with the covid pandemic causing disruptions in their program, they have adjusted to include extra safety and security, along with a consistent commitment to education. Recently, Hersh reports the school has adopted online education as a tool to help children not available for in-school attendance. Remarkably, despite the current situation, Hersh and Rita are in the process of expanding the school to include more locations, with the newest one now currently under development in Aliana, Texas. Their motto has always been to serve children as "self-inspired learners".

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Serenade's "board" to review topics in IMS Webinar with staff at Tasputra Perkim (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)

## Lee presents technology at World Education Summit - 2021

On Friday, March 12, 2021, Lee Havis presented an introduction to the IMS "*Technology of Scientific Education*" at the **World Education Summit-2021**. This summit, held by remote computer link-up from March 10-13, 2021, featured the participation of a large number of policy makers, educators, foreign diplomats, and other stakeholders, focusing on emerging trends and innovations in the field of early childhood education. Held on a 3D virtual platform, this **18th World Education Summit** was organized by *Elets Technomedia & Digital Learning Magazine*, and included the sponsorship of many associated partners in the field. Website: <https://avtaar.eletsonline.com/wes-school/>

Before his presentation, Lee was introduced by **Priya Saxena**, Director of *tittletots learning program* in Houston, TX, who also conducted a brief interview with Lee after the presentation as well. About this event, Lee said, "I'm especially pleased there is now available a public recording of this half hour presentation, so that even those unfamiliar with this unique subject matter can begin to understand and appreciate its crucial value and purpose".

The published recording of Lee's presentation is available for viewing at the IMS website and elsewhere on social media: <https://lnkd.in/ecMTB8B>

## 2021 IMS Webinar Teaches Technology

On February 6, 2021, the second IMS webinar on "*Technology of Scientific Education*" began its journey through 8 weekly sessions on this powerful and unconventional topic. The final session in this series, focusing on the protocol "imagination-previsioning" is set to complete the webinar on March 27, 2021. Participating in this latest webinar are parents and educators from around the United States, as well as in Malaysia and Gabon, West Africa.

Lee Havis, the originator of the technology, created and is presenting this webinar as a practical replacement for prior in-person workshops on the subject, which are now made difficult due to covid-19 concerns. The 2021 version refines the first 2020 webinar somewhat, although the topics of each session remains the same. Among the session topics are "resolving misbehavior" and "talking to children".

In each 1 hour session, Lee conducts a running commentary on a particular topic, which is highlighted by a series of slides and videos on the subject. Each session also includes a home-study report for the IMS "websters" to practice pertinent skills during the week between sessions. In addition, many websters use copies of the "*Danbury Study Guide*" to complete specific page reading Lee assigns at each session.

Before each session, there is a rebroadcast of the prior session for those who missed it or would like extra reinforcement. In Malaysia, one webster, **Serenade Norman**, gives special instruction on each session topic to members of her teaching team in Kuala Lumpur. She states, "...to enable them to carry over the theory into practice, we put a board up. With a catch up at the end of the day, this is for us to discuss how the session is going with experiments and exploration." (See image of "board" this page)

Future IMS remote learning webinars will be offered based on interest in the general public. Lee is also using his recent webinar experiences to help complete a text he is preparing about the technology.



# Public Education

by Lee Havis

*"The masses must be educated, and education must be available at all times."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Peace and Education*, p. 111

Despite her frequent conflicts with conventional educators, Dr. Maria Montessori was still a foremost advocate of education for all. However, she did not favor the popular education of her day that violated so much her visionary perspective on the subject.

In 1907, Dr. Montessori's revolutionary style of scientific education emerged as a striking departure from the public education of her time, which was just beginning to establish itself as a significant function of government. In Europe, this type of official state education came as a logical outgrowth of compulsory school attendance laws, which were originally set in motion by the *Code of Napoleon* in the early 1800's. So, after 1907 until her death in 1952, Dr. Montessori was in constant conflict and dialogue with state and national government officials on the subject of public education.

## Education and the State

*"Education...no longer matters only to children and their parents, but also to the state..."*

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

Since the time of the ancient Greek and Roman empires, educating youth has been recognized as a means for controlling and influencing the shape and direction of culture. However, only in more recent times has government taken such a dominant role in the field, refining it now into a fearsome instrument of official state policy for purposes of political indoctrination.

In fact, Dr. Montessori's discovery of the influence of the environment on child development was a significant factor that encouraged greater government involvement in the field, such as demonstrated by the policies and practices of Mussolini in Italy and Hitler in Germany in the 1930's. However, since Dr. Montessori's message of freedom and independence for the individual child was not part of this public education movement, state laws assuring the "right" to education served only to promote and extend the ideas and customs of the prevailing personalities and cultures of the time.

## Right to Education

*"...the right to an education....All that it has meant is that the child has been burdened with the labor needed to provide the adult with culture."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Education and Peace*, p. 73

When state laws forged a "right to education", public education simply followed the prevailing myths and prejudices about the child in the surrounding popular culture. So, Dr. Montessori's view of the free, independent, individual child was rejected in favor of a curriculum that only reinforced the well-worn pattern of society that viewed the child as weak, dependent, and unguided by nature.

## Pattern of Society

*"...the erroneous belief has persisted that it is the duty of the adult to fashion the child according to the pattern required by society."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Education and Peace*, p.18

Even before there was any state "right" to education, parents, schools and educators were active in their local communities promoting their basic cultural values and customs to children. However, the development of modern networks of communication and transportation has now allowed this prior natural, parent-run public education to become a uniform, highly centralized system of state-run institutions at the national and state level of government. And with the emergence of "Democracy" in the 1900's, this state education system was gradually evolving into a virtual monopoly control in the field, made possible by just the approval of a bare majority of its citizens.

## Democracy

*"Democracy...what irony! To choose one's rulers! But those who rule cannot free anybody from the chains which bind all!"*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Formation of Man* p.16-17

In the early 1900's, European countries were just beginning to embrace the new concept of democracy based on majority rule of the people. With this concept came also the idea of "socialism" which relies on government to assure equal welfare and well-being for all, including the delivery of a high-quality system of public education.

In the 1920's, Dr. Montessori also felt the influence of these idealistic social changes, which led her to accept the state sponsorship of her schools in Italy, under the regime of Italian dictator, **Benito Mussolini**. Only after his real fascist purposes became fully evident, did she withdraw from this experiment with state-sponsored public education.

In the 1930's, however, Dr. Montessori continued her dialogue with public leaders and government officials to promote her form of scientific education committed to the free, natural development of each individual child. At that time, her message focused especially on how education

might bring peace to a Europe just moving towards the outbreak of World War II. Throughout this dialogue, she consistently urged public officials to reject the popular idea of an educational system organized to fit the child into the blind, robotic machinery of a modern industrialized world.

## Blind Machine

*"Education today causes the individual to dry up and his spiritual values to wither away. He becomes a cipher, a cog in the blind machine that his environment represents."*

**Dr. Maria Montessori**  
from *Education and Peace*, p xiii

As Dr. Montessori saw the danger of a modern industrial age in her time, imagine how she might think about today's blind machine of "big tech" that is moving society even further away

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Lee Havis, Executive Director

The Montessori Observer is mailed four times each year, in March, May, September and November, to IMS members throughout the world. The purpose is to provide news and information about the IMS work in Montessori education, and to extend awareness of Montessori teaching that brings about the child's true nature throughout the world.

### INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY

The International Montessori Society is sponsored by Educational Services, Inc., a non-profit corporation organized in Maryland, USA. The IMS purpose is to support the scientific approach to true natural being throughout the world.

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### SUBSCRIPTION

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### IMS ON THE INTERNET

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/imsmontessori/> An on-line IMS discussion group, "Montessori Tools and Tips" is available for anyone to join at no charge. To join this group discussion, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/montessoritoolsandtips/>

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## Moment of Peril

by Lee Haviv

### Impatience and Defiance

In this moment of peril, 4-year-old Gayle doesn't want to leave her dolls, when her mother is impatient to leave with her for an important meeting. (See *Observer*, November, 2020) *What to do?*

**Analysis:** Gayle is the "hub" child of a misbehavior scenario having detrimental influences in physical objects and the adult personality to resolve. The basic solution is to get Gayle's attention away from the physical objects and give her a clear direction to come with the mother.

**Practical Advice:** Since the "dolls" have Gayle's immediate attention, any of your frantic, impatient talking about something else will only project negativity, and will be ignored by Gayle anyway if you are also violating the protocol *eye contact before talking*. So, since physical objects are detrimental here, remove their disorder first, before directly addressing your own personality. In the process of doing this, however, control your own language and behavior as well, such as by saying nothing, and showing no impatience, fear, judgment, or anger in your facial expression.

Approach Gayle in her doll-playing activity (*proximity*), and touch the one that she is handling at the time to get her attention. (*distraction*). When she looks up or otherwise reacts, let go of the doll, following the protocol *least amount of adult involvement*. When you have her eye contact, give her a *clear direction*, by saying, "It's time to go to the reunion meeting. So, let's put your dolls away now".

Since Gayle is likely going to act stubborn and defiant, her first reaction will probably be to say, "No! I want to stay here". In this "power struggle" situation, control your personality, such as by using the *patient waiting* technique. (Don't argue with her or try to explain or justify the "value" or "need" for her to leave with you.)

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



Child working with math materials at the Montessori School of Downtown in Houston, TX

## Public Education *Cont'd. from Page 2, Col. 3*

from the path of natural, spontaneous learning she advocated. Now, we see the visible effects of these forces in education through remote, virtual learning and instruction in front of a computer (machine) screen. And, everywhere, children behind a mask, under orders from government's continuing "state of emergency" that retards or totally destroys normal economic and social life for all.

### Behind a Mask

*"...instead of a human society based on love and justice, we have a society in which all men must hide behind a mask in order to live."*

Dr. Maria Montessori

*from Education and Peace, p.90*

Dr. Montessori recognized ordinary education as a fearsome enslavement of the child to an unnatural, repressive social reality. And now, how much more is this happening with children today as enslaved victims to the seemingly interminable pandemic of fear associated with a covid-19 virus.

Everywhere, governments relegate children to the mind-numbing torture of stale, lifeless schooling, now either socially distanced and behind a facemask in a physical classroom, or isolated at home to undergo instruction in front of a computer screen. And regardless of location, professional educators still dispense the same dull, boring curriculum to children who are treated as no more than a cipher on the teacher's record-keeping chart.

### Professional Educators

*"The true concept of liberty is practically unknown to professional educators...A principle of repression that amounts at times to slavery has a firm grip on both schools and education."*

Dr. Maria Montessori

*from Discovery of the Child, p. 9-10*

So many well-intentioned, good-hearted persons enter the teaching field, only to find that their role as professional educators has been reduced to that of prison guard, babysitter, or worse. Good potential teachers are readily disqualified or withdraw themselves due to the stifling demands of a rigid state curriculum and the restrictive standards of teacher certification and training they must endure.

Even as Dr. Montessori sought to set up her own alternative schools, she found a serious obstacle in hiring teachers qualified with official certificates from state training institutions. Sadly, but predictably, these "best" teachers were hopelessly unsuited to the delicate, spiritual task of scientific teaching guided by cosmic laws of nature.

### The Best Teachers

*"In America, experiments never succeeded because they looked for the best teachers, and a good teacher meant one who had studied all the things that do not help the child... with teachers from the usual types of training colleges, these prejudices are so deeply rooted that they are incurable..."*

Dr. Maria Montessori

*from Ed. For a New World, p.52*

In my own personal experience, several decades ago, I encountered official teacher education personnel who strongly opposed the whole idea of Dr. Montessori's scientific education. And today, even greater state control of education has multiplied the difficulty to offer a genuine alternative to the repressive conditions of ordinary public education. While government officials and political leaders promise to "transform" or "improve" public education with more funds and greater control, the result is only to repackage the same old ideas and prejudices that have reflected a basic misunderstanding of the child for years.

### Misunderstood Child

*"An attempt is being made to transform education...all this, however, is being effected around the same figure of the misunderstood child who is seen through eyes distorted..."*

Dr. Maria Montessori

*from Formation of Man, p.73*

Even in the Montessori community, well-intentioned practitioners have misunderstood the child that Dr. Montessori discovered in 1907. Even among the best, most skillful practitioners, teaching remains distorted by the same "mist and clouds" around scientific education that blinded Dr. Montessori herself during her life as well. Happily, new insight on the subject has finally dissolved this "mist and clouds", so that Dr. Montessori's "new education" can now be practiced in an objective, scientific manner that was never possible before.

### New Education

*"A new education from birth onward must be built up. Education must be reconstructed and based on the laws of nature and not on the preconceived notions and prejudices of adult society."*

Dr. Maria Montessori

*from Formation of Man p.97*

With the passing of Dr. Montessori in 1952, the work of creating her "new education" has been passed on to us. In 1979, my own breakthrough on the subject was discovery of the key to scientific education, which later led to a precise technology for its effective practice in 2003. Still, however, conducting this scientific education is a formidable, confusing task because it so fundamentally challenges the existing reality of conventional concepts and practice of education.

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**OBSERVER**  
*The Montessori*



*Moment of Peril*  
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After a brief moment of *patient waiting*, apply the *repetition* technique with *distraction* again, (if necessary) to get Gayle's attention once again, and repeat the same phrase as before, "It's time to go..." If Gayle starts to ask you questions, such as "Why do we have to go the reunion?", use the technique *reflective language*, such as by replying, "Why do you think we have to go?" If Gayle says she doesn't want to put her dolls away, offer some clarifying guidance, such as by saying, "Where do they go?"

In this back and forth dialogue with Gayle, keep a calm demeanor, staying with "safe words" as much as possible to avoid any explanation or argument in the process. Just keep using the combination of *patient waiting*, *distraction*, *repetition*, and *clear direction*, until Gayle finally disengages from the doll activity, and proceeds to follow your direction.

In resolving this issue, remember that there are only two reasons why a child disobeys: (1) doesn't know how or (2) can't. With an openly defiant-angry response, the (2) reason (can't) is most likely, which implies a detrimental influence of the adult personality. So, as indicated before, controlling your personality then becomes a matter of using *patient waiting*, and avoiding any negative projections of impatience, fear, or anger from you.

**Food Disorder**

When 3-year-old Brian refuses to eat the good food put on his plate at dinner time, his mother encourages him to "try" it. In response, however, Brian angrily dumps his plate of food and milk on the floor, screaming the food is "yucky" and insisting on his favorite macaroni and cheese. *What to do?* Answer in **Observer**, May 2021.



Lee Havis and Priya Saxena in presentation of IMS "Technology of Scientific Education" on 3-D platform in the 18th World Education Summit - 2021, held on March 12, 2021.

**Public Education** Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 3

Nevertheless, a growing number of parents and educators are finding and using the technology, and coming to see its incredibly effective results for themselves. As this trend of knowledge and practice with the technology continues, public education will likewise change to serve each child as an independent, individual life in harmony with cosmic laws of nature.

**Independent Individual Life**

"...the mission of education...allows the child and the adolescent to live an independent individual life...the creation of a better society."

Dr. Maria Montessori  
from *Education and Peace*, p.106

Dr. Montessori's *new education* has a two-fold purpose, to advance the child's individual, natural development, and to bring about a better society for all. So, educators who want a better society will logically also want to see public education change to bring about the more intelligent, responsible citizens that are necessary for this result.

Given the long history and development of a conventional, limited form of public education, however, reforming its purpose and practice must involve reforming society as well, which is a long and uneven process. The logical first step is moving towards greater competition and choice for parents and educators to function outside the current state monopoly and censorship that stifles any genuine alternatives to its own form of operation. Happily, in some jurisdictions, the idea of removing compulsory schooling is also being considered as well.

In fact, reform and redirection of public education has already been taking place for years through the growing "home school" movement. And, as more educators and public figures join in this grassroots movement in support of each child's independent individual life, public education will likewise gradually come to serve this purpose as well for the benefit and well-being of all.