

Opinions & Commentaries / Commentaires et opinions

Problems of discourse concerning roles

Raymond Lemay

Roles are of immense importance in the social sciences and to our lives. Role theory is the nexus point between psychology, anthropology and sociology. Role theory is mentioned in 10% of all sociological studies and countless psychological ones, which might illustrate how important roles are in our lives and, as we are coming to find out, in SRV. The obviousness of roles, though, is not something that we should take for granted. How else could you explain the amazement of most students when they first read Shakespeare's famous lines about all the world being a stage? We just don't think of ourselves, in terms of roles. We are mostly grossly unconscious of ourselves, and this is probably the only way in which we can function without becoming totally frozen by self-analysis. Glenn Gould, the famous Canadian pianist, once stated that he refused to analyze his piano-playing from fear that his analysis would lead to a paralyzing self-consciousness. In many ways, we are the same and do not see ourselves playing roles or being in roles, but rather as just "ourselves," whatever that might mean.

Much of the language that is used about roles leads us to the false conclusion that roles are something quite out of ourselves. We "play" a role or we step-in and step-out of a role. The theatre metaphor is everywhere about us, keeping us from integrating the notion that roles are very much a part of our being. People sense that there is a seemingly deceitful aura about the concept of roles. We often suggest hypocrisy in others when we state that they are "playing a role," or we intimate that people are discomfited when they are doing something that is just not part of their nature. We go even further in proposing that some people out and out lie about themselves when they "play a role."

Many people see roles, if they see themselves in them at all, as being specific to certain situations and only a small part of their *dramatis personae*. And in some situations, persons just don't see the role they are playing. Though they might play the role of a scout leader during scout meetings, they are not playing the role of father when they are with their own children: they are just being with their children, people they love very much. If they play roles with people that they don't know very well, they certainly do not see themselves in roles when they are in intimate situations with friends or loved ones.

As soon as one attempts to describe and explain, one is of course limited by the words one uses about the behaviours one chooses to observe or explain. Though symbolic interactionists might want to claim that the sum of all roles makes up personal identity, they will also have to accept that the sum of the roles is obviously greater than the parts. For it is one's very idiosyncratic integration of one's roles that leads to one's own individualistic expression of them.

The problem not only exists for the common man and the SRV trainee but also for the well-briefed and conscientious social scientist. The role of the social scientist is to reduce the complexity of living into explainable and well bounded parts and concepts. There might be a great deal of overlap between the roles such persons play; for instance, the man who is a social worker at work and a father at home and can't help but have his father role influence his professional practice and vice versa. When one multiplies this by the many roles we play in a lifetime, the overlaps become very hard to control for. Therein lies the necessity, for the purposes of research and science, to create artificial boundaries between roles. For roles to be identified and quantified, it is important to reduce them to symbolic representations. However, these bounded concepts are certainly less satisfactory than the fuzzy idea itself.

If for the social scientist a concept is always an inadequate explanation for reality, for the common person the problem is precisely the same but experienced in quite a different way. It is not intellectual disaffection that one has with a concept, but rather the incapacity to equate a finite and arbitrary concept to the multifaceted and totally interactive aspects of daily living. Therefore, no matter how well we explain it, the concept of roles will always fall far short of explaining the lives of human beings. For the social scientist, this leads to constant revision and re-emphasis. For others, this leads to amazement as they observe the "naï veté" of social scientists.

At the outset, few will be in a position to appreciate the insight of roles. Few will appreciate how much roles are tied to the person, form an integral part of the person, and thus understand the importance of explicating as much as possible the richness of the concept through vignettes and clear explanations. One must explain the hierarchy of roles, the overlap of roles, the interactiveness of roles, the everchanging nature of roles, the aspects outside of the person that command roles and script roles and all that is inside the person in roles that acts on the outside, and the effects of one's roles on others. And most importantly, it becomes important to emphasize the totally unconscious as contrasted to self-conscious nature of how we live roles.

If one goes back to Shakespeare and his play "As you like it," a rereading of act 2, scene 7, should lead us to marvel at the remarkable insight that was Shakespeare's. For he was not speaking of the deceit that is at the heart of man's nature but rather he was attempting to come to some understanding of the complexity of one man and the complexity of the world. "And one man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven ages. At first the infant, muling and puking in the nurse's arms, then the whining school boy, with his sachel and shining morning face creeping like a snale unwilling to school. And then the lover sighting sign like furnace, with a woolful balade made to his mistress's eyebrow. Then, a soldier, full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard, jealous and honor, sudden, and quick in quarrel, seeking the bubble reputation, even in the canon's mouth..." One should marvel that this is one person moving from one recognizable but inimitable role to the next and continuously developing and changing, continuously remaining coherent and whole.

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Wolfensberger: Tales from the Twilight Zone

Michael Steer

There can have been few more stimulating places in the world to have studied than Syracuse University during the early-mid-1970's. At that time, some of our field's immortal names daily haunted the stacks of the university's magnificent Bird Library; Burton Blatt, Dean of the School of Education, author of *Christmas in Purgatory* and *Exodus from Pandemonium*; Thomas Szasz, the "Rambo" of the (then) infant anti-psychiatry movement; Sol Gordon, the sensational sexologist; David Krathwohl, co-author of Bloom's *Taxonomy*; Dan Sage of "Sage and Burello"; Biklen, Bogdan and Taylor at the internationally renowned Center on Human Policy and of course the highly controversial Wolf Wolfensberger.

As a faceless and overly obsequious Canadian graduate student, I first "experienced" (as the scent salesladies say) Wolf at a tutorial organised by the Faculty to expose unstructured and unwashed post-adolescent thought processes to new ideas and famous (sometimes infamous) "names."

Syracuse was good at arranging lots of such (semi-idolatrous) occasions for its grad students. In my view it was a particular strength of an otherwise very strong, highly student-focussed program.

The Young Wolf

At first encounter, Wolf was much younger than I had expected him to be. In appearance he reminded me of the TV pictures I had seen of Oppenheimer, the nuclear scientist. His rather ascetic, haunted face, esoteric vocabulary, somewhat guttural accent and indeed his entire manner were all entirely appropriate to the tutorial and to a prestigious academic with his name and reputation. There were perhaps eight students and Professor Dan Sage (my program advisor) at the event, sitting in crescent formation, with an intense Wolf facing them, armed only with a notepad, pencil, enormous energy and a truly formidable mind. Wolf led off and battled ensued.

As an Anglo-Saxon, schooled during the Second World War to dread our Continental relatives, I recall having felt

overwhelmed with Wolf's "german-ness." Most of the sparring between those in the group who had previously managed or been employed in institutional settings and Wolf, who in an absolute and unambiguous fashion stripped all dignity from their past careers, went completely over my head. After all I had been Principal of a residential school for blind children for the preceding five years and he obviously hadn't meant his incredibly pointed comments to refer to me!

The jousting continued for over an hour and on the way back from Huntingdon Hall, stumbling across "the Beach" (a small piece of lawn, littered on sunny days with the bodies of undergraduate basking shark) to the security of the Special Education Division, I recall thinking appreciatively "Wow." As many American graduate students will affirm, a "Wow" scores well on most Likert-type scales of appreciation.

Oh Granny, What Big Teeth You Have

Then the PASS workshops started and so did the rumours. In those days PASS was only in its second edition. Faculty and students in the Special Education Division heard on the whisper grapevine that the PASS 2 conciliation sessions were so protracted and Wolf's expectations so demanding that some participants had become physically sick from exertion at various high or low points in the interminable events. Some it was said had enjoyed seizures induced by paroxysms of rage and there might even have been a few student deaths from unknown but dreadful causes.

The news was intoxicating to Dan my program advisor, whose images of a successful professional preparation program corresponded with certain humiliation scenes from "An Officer and a Gentleman." Into everyone's life a little rain must inevitably fall and despite my heart-rending entreaties, I was duly registered in two of Wolf's sequential units, from which few (if any), it was said had ever emerged with a grade, let alone a "passing" grade. And grades were of course, for potential human service administrators one of the few tangible reasons for submitting to the anguish of graduate school in those days, perhaps still.

The classes were wonderful. Wolf of course was a brilliant lecturer and the extent of his preparation was a lesson in the "seriousness" I had long been searching for in most things to do with the human services. Expectation was extraordinarily high and the peer competition sometimes daunting, but always appropriately fierce. There was a paper to be completed each week and a formidable reading list with spot quizzes which the unprepared might fail and have the failure count as part of the final all-important grade.

The papers were returned each week covered with red-penned highly detailed comments, sometimes more red ink than original submission. The experience was at once enormously instructive and absolutely horrifying. Sometimes, the final comment would be a definitive "RESUBMIT" which meant next week, two papers should be submitted and if, perish the thought, with the same result, compound interest so that the final week's submission might, in theory at least, result in each class member submitting a dozen or so reworked papers. But this was only part of the tribulation.

For the first time in my life, I had to sit still for lengthy periods of time, listen hard and think quickly. Above all, I knew that I had to be prepared, stay very organized, read aggressively for retention and with alacrity. The course load was a particularly heavy one, since like most of my peers, I was also enrolled in four other classes during the semester, including one in advanced statistics and techniques of research; both "guillotine" courses with (all importantly) high failure rates.

The best classes were the Sunday marathons which Wolf gave as "make-ups" for some of the regularly scheduled classes he missed because of his gigantic public speaking commitment. We would meet on campus at 8.00 or 9.00am and "go hard" all day and into the early evening, with Wolf's wife Nancy bringing in vast quantities of pizza for lunch.

Wolf would take about an hour to warm up and then go into high gear for the remainder of the day. At one of the sessions I recall Wolf having concluded a teaching module that had been brimming with arcane content and had asked for questions about the concepts on the overhead transparency, which like the eye of the Cyclops had been a dominating feature of the presentation. A hiresuit young person sitting in front of me asked if Wolf would explain the final issue of an unbelievably dense and lengthy list. Wolf's quick response was "Mr. Blackman, your understanding of this issue would depend upon your complete conceptualization of the desiderata - I will move on." I recall again thinking "Wow" - and moving on.

Invincibility

On another occasion, Wolf dwelt at length on the notion of “Invincibility.” The focus of the lecture was on institutions, their longevity and the notion that in our battle to do away with them, we “might never, ever win.” The institution preservation movement, with its stranglehold at that time on AAMD, seemed invincible. Some things, like the poor and institutions, would (we all believed) always be with us.

To illustrate his point, Wolf told the story of how as a boy he had stood beside the bridge in his native village in Germany watching, as part of a crowd, the returning German Army flushed with the success of its invasion of France. They poured across the village bridge hour after hour, day after day in their trucks or tanks and wearing their “stalhelm” flying their Nazi eagle standards, singing their victory songs to the hysterical cheers of the crowds - “And as the hours and days passed” said Wolf- “The thought suddenly became clear to me - It’s true - It’s true OUR SIDE IS INVINCIBLE! - I felt like standing at attention” said wolf “And shouting with the crowd SEIG HEIL”! And to illustrate his point he did just that, as the classroom door opened and the Dean escorted a small group of wide-eyed visitors into the room. Wolf chose to ignore them, but it was indeed a moment to savour. The point of the story was, of course, that some three years after the incident, the supposedly invincible Third Reich was in ruins. Quite suddenly, the worm has turned and the conqueror was no longer invincible.

On another occasion, Wolf informed us that the class would be unable to meet during the following week because he had an engagement out of State, so that we needed to arrange a mutually convenient date and time to hold a make-up session. After five or six minutes of searching our diaries for a suitable space, we concluded that our individual schedules clashed and that there was not possibility of consensus. Wolf’s response was that in that event we should meet at 4 o’clock on Monday next - to which someone responded “But Wolf, I can’t come then, I have another class at 4 o’clock on Monday.” “You have a class at 4.00am next Monday,” said Wolf. “I am increasingly impressed with this University. It seems to be taking the task of educating you very seriously. I am **trrrruly** impressed. If this is indeed the case I will excuse you from attending my class”!

The Wolf Awakens

In my final year at Syracuse, I was part of a small faculty team chaired by Dr. Jim Winschel whose job was to prepare the Special Education Division’s annual budget submission to the State. It was an exacting task which had to be completed outside of regular class time, generally on weekends and holidays. As the budget submission deadline approached, I was left with having to quickly package the Training Institute’s budget for presentation, but had little data. It was a late Sunday evening and a spectacular up-state New York thunder and lightening storm was raging. I phoned Wolf’s home. Nancy answered and said that Wolf had only just returned from the airport and was in fact upstairs in the “Wolf Den” resting, but since the matter was an urgent one I should drive over and she would interrupt his tormented dreams.

When I arrived at the house, the storm was at its height, rain sheeted down and the sky boomed with thunder and periodically crackled with lightening. Nancy answered the door and escorted me up the stairs to the fabled Wolf Den. I entered. It was a long, corridor-like room papered with tiger-striped wallpaper. There was a desk, chair and bookcase and a picture of Whistler’s sombre mother on one wall. The room was lit with a neo-Gothic lancet window I recall; and I imagined entire shelves of mysterious leather-bound and chained arcana further back in the shadows. At the far end of the room lying on a “camp bed” was the fabled Wolf covered from toe to chin with a white sheet. As I slowly approached him, the lightening crackled across the sky and through the Gothic Window everything was thrown into bright relief. Wolf turned his eyes slowly towards me, bared his teeth in a smile and I once again thought “Wow.”

The debt to Wolf

As an avid reader of Richard Scheerenbergers two lengthy catalogues of the heroes of our field, I sometime ago concluded that it would be difficult to find another name in the entire history of service provision to people with intellectual or developmental disabilities in this, or in any other era, who had made a greater contribution to public policy world-wide, than has Wolf Wolfensberger.

It is difficult to convey to the post PASS-PASSING reader the extraordinary impact of concepts, for example, “age-appropriateness” and the two juxtapositions (deviancy image and deviancy program) or indeed the developmental model which have these days become ordinary, widely accepted (if sometimes misapplied) professional terms.

Wolf's impact on the field, in the early-mid 70's was absolutely phenomenal and today, so many of the seeds that were sewn in those years (sometimes at great personal cost) have borne fruit.

It wish I could adequately describe the intensity of the personal thrill I experienced at an early training event when the "model coherency" concept became suddenly clear to me. It was akin to "pure" excitement. I wish I could adequately convey the feelings I experienced at a very early PASSING event here in Australia some years later, when the difference between "normalisation" and "social role valorisation" suddenly became transparent to me.

I wish I could convey the sense of power that derives from visiting a traditional program for people with disabilities and in a very short time, being able, with reasonable accuracy, to synthesise data from direct observation into a coherent format, so that helpful suggestions can be made to decision-makers on how the current situation might be improved. These feelings are all a small part of the personal debt I owe Wolf.

Wolf's influence can be seen in a variety of human-service programs world-wide - from Aden to Zanzibar (as we used to say when the British Empire was in its declining years) and these "tales from the Twilight zone" might best be appreciated as a small tribute to the human face of one of the few really great teachers, scholars and thinkers of our time.

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L'éloge de l'exubérance: une critique de l'hyperactivité

Raymond Lemay

Vous les connaissez ces enfants. Ces petites Catherine ou ces petits Nicolas qui ne tiennent pas en place et qui, tout partout en même temps, cherchent sans cesse de nouvelles aventures. Pour certains, ces enfants seront des exubérants qui, sans le vouloir, nous donne le sourire et redonne le goût à la vie. Pour d'autres, ces mêmes enfants seront une source de frustrations et de mécontentements. Ces derniers, de plus en plus nombreux que les premiers, les nommeront hyperactifs.

Bon nombre de lecteurs auront été choqués par la notion qu'il peut exister une certaine équivalence entre l'hyperactivité et l'exubérance. L'on voudra sans doute m'arrêter en affirmant, au départ, l'existence d'un dysfonctionnement cérébral à la source même de l'hyperactivité et que ce dysfonctionnement est traitable avec médicament. L'on m'accusera sans doute de tenter de faire une vertu des vices sérieux de ces enfants; un enfant hyperactif est tout simplement beaucoup trop actif et inattentif ou du moins, incapable de rester attentif pour une période de temps significative. Ce que je propose, au départ, c'est que l'on prenne le temps de revoir, si ce n'est que pour un instant, la réalité de ces enfants en se donnant une nouvelle perspective; c'est-à-dire avec des yeux nouveaux de concéder à ces enfants les vertus de leurs vices.

Le concept de l'hyperactivité et le mot hyperactif sont devenus ancrés dans notre culture et limitent donc l'étendue de notre imagination collective. Il est tout probablement impossible aujourd'hui de trouver un groupe de personnes polies qui, constatant le niveau d'activités élevé d'un enfant quelconque, ne commentera pas son hyperactivité relative. "C'est une dynamo" avoueront les uns; "mon Dieu qu'il bouge", commenteront les autres. "Comme il doit épuiser ses parents", diront certains. "Est-il allergique à la fatigue"? demanderont encore d'autres. Mais tous concluront en disant: "il est hyperactif."

D'entrée de jeu, ce sont le bruit et l'énergie qui aura arrêtée notre attention. En voyant ses petits pieds se déplacer, ses jambes courir et ses bras se mouvoir incessamment, auront-ils remarqué ses yeux vifs et éclatants, son sourire engageant et son enthousiasme débordant? L'enfant exubérant veut à la fois, tout toucher, tout voir, tout entendre et tout dire. Tout est

mystère qui invite à l'exploration. Pluie ou beau temps, il n'y a pas un moment qui ne mérite pas d'être goûté à fond. Il est un gourmand, dévorant des yeux et des mains les expériences qui passent. Et, chose tout à fait remarquable, cet enfant réussit presque à mener son projet à bon port.

Je ne parle évidemment pas de ces enfants qui sont déjà sous traitement; ces enfants qui reçoivent déjà ces quelques milligrammes de phénobarbital ou de ritalin à chaque jour. Ainsi munis d'ornières chimiques, les yeux de ces enfants n'ont plus d'éclat et leurs visages sont vidés d'expression. Ces enfants peuvent être attentifs à un seul aspect de la réalité.

L'univers formel de l'apprentissage scolaire s'ouvre donc révélant les mystérieux rituels de l'ordre et du contrôle. Cette socialisation exige une appréciation du minimalisme moderne: peu d'espace et peu de stimulation. Il ne s'agit pas tellement d'être attentif à un aspect de la réalité autant que d'apprendre à ignorer la richesse stimulante de cette fête perpétuelle et enivrante que l'on nomme dame nature. L'école socialise les enfants au café; adolescents, nous ne pouvons plus les réveiller. D'or et déjà, ils auront besoin d'une stimulation chimique pour s'éveiller - comme si la vie, le soleil levant, les oiseaux chantant étaient insuffisants pour réanimer les sens. Etre vertueux, c'est d'être blasé. Pour ces enfants qui, autrement, trouveraient merveilleux les choses les plus ordinaires, l'enseignant doit progressivement trouver des choses de plus en plus merveilleuses pour simplement distraire. Le nez de papa, les oreilles de Fido et le chou dans le jardin offrent à l'enfant exubérant des possibilités extraordinaires. Pour l'enfant déjà socialisé au monde formel, il faudra pirouettes, le cirque de Moscou et un feu d'artifice pour les secouer de la léthargie.

Il est impossible, comme l'a dit Chesterton, de comprendre l'exubérance si l'on est possédé par la nécessité de se tenir réveiller par le café noir de la critique. Et le monde qui nous entoure est de plus en plus critique. Il est de plus en plus formel. Il est de plus en plus officiel. Même la famille qui, déjà, était l'oasis de l'informel est aujourd'hui devenue le creuset de la banalité. Autrefois, nous passions une grande partie de notre vie en famille; aujourd'hui, réchappé dans nos villes dortoirs, c'est le sommeil et les rêves qui offrent un dernier refuge à la spontanéité.

Les exigences de la carrière, d'un entretien domestique hautement "technologisé", et les multiplications des biens matériels de grandes valeurs obligent la formalisation de la famille et de plus en plus de contrôle de la part de l'enfant. L'enfant doit bien se comporter et doit donc se plier aux contingences du monde moderne. Le profil de l'enfant idéal évolue. Tout enfant est forcément tenu de se mesurer contre cet idéal de petit adulte qui se lève en faisant son lit, brossant ses dents, faisant sa toilette du matin, prenant le petit déjeuner bien balancé, quittant pour l'école et, assis à son banc à la journée longue à écouter les vagueries mystiques du corps professoral. De retour à la maison, il y a la petite collation, le jeu minuté à l'extérieur, le souper, les devoirs et le dodo. Seuls les chauffeurs d'autobus scolaires soupçonnent l'exubérance refoulée d'une couche sociale entière.

L'image qui anime notre vision de l'enfant idéal s'illustre bien par cet enfant assis devant la télévision à regarder les dessins animés du samedi matin ou à jouer avec son Nintendo. Cet enfant est passif; il n'est pas sous contrôle mais plutôt amorphe. Une simple photo illustre ce qu'il doit être. Comparer cet idéal à l'enfant qui marche et sourit, redéfinit la passivité en exubérance. Et le malheureux qui court et rit devient hyperactif.

Le monde formel est construit sur une stérilité officielle qui est tout à fait incapable de constater l'exubérance et encore moins capable de le comprendre et de l'apprécier. Il tolère de moins en moins l'exubérance des enfants et ainsi augmente l'incidence de l'hyperactivité. C'est comme si le monde formel ne peut pas exister en la présence des enfants; les enfants se moquent, sans le vouloir, de nos prétentions et de notre humanité de plus en plus contrefaite. Les enfants prennent l'oxygène nécessaire à la croissance du monde officiel. Ainsi, l'élite officiel limite de plus en plus le temps que les parents passent avec leurs enfants. Les enfants sont mis de côté dans des garderies et dans des écoles. On s'assure que l'effervescence de l'enfance ne contamine pas le projet de formalisation. Pour que le monde formel moderne puisse vivre, il a fallu signer l'arrêt de mort de la joie de vivre. Dès la naissance, notre société formalisatrice met l'enfant dans un moule homogénéisant qui cherche à reproduire à un million d'exemplaires le prototype nécessaire au progrès. L'enfant qui reste exubérant est donc un défi de taille

pour le moulin scolaire.

La formalisation infecte tous les aspects de la vie - L'agriculteur du monde formel s'assure que chaque tomate aura une certaine teinte de rouge, une certaine quantité d'eau et une saveur neutre. Que les bleuets seront de tailles monstrueuses et tout à fait sans saveur. Que chaque tulipe jaune sera exactement comme toutes les tulipes jaunes. Dans le monde formel, les tulipes jaunes sont séparées des tulipes rouges.

Se promener au printemps à Ottawa pendant le festival des tulipes permet de mieux comprendre les valeurs de ce monde moderne. Le long du canal Rideau, les plates-bandes de tulipes sont toutes bien rangées, organisées par couleur, catégorisées systématiquement. Ce n'est pas la tulipe que l'on voit, mais l'ensemble. Cette mer de tulipes jaunes bougeant comme des vagues dans le vent, séparé et juxtaposé à la mer de tulipes rouges offre à nos yeux une beauté symétrique. Mais malheur à la tulipe qui n'est pas à sa place ou dont la tête ressort du groupe; elle sera vite décapitée. C'est l'artifice de la beauté de ces jardins systématiques qui séduit et inspire les officiels du monde formel. C'est la symétrie et le système qui est la méthode et la mesure de ce monde; ils ont oublié la magnificence d'un bosquet d'arbres et d'un champ de fleurs sauvages. Les cathédrales gothiques qui sont ni symétriques, ni systématiques, expriment l'exubérance du peuple plutôt que le travail de la raison.

Dans l'exubérance, nous retrouvons tout probablement la clé du génie. Voyons un peu ces modèles d'exubérance géniale qui ont révolutionné le monde. L'hyperactivité musicale de Mozart distrait depuis des siècles et que dire de l'impulsivité musicale de Beethoven. Cet hyperactif, Michel Ange qui, presque après presque, sculpture après sculpture, ne trouvait pas le moyen de contrôler ses énergies. Picasso était un exubérant. Alexandre Dumas ne trouvait pas le moyen d'en écrire moins. Voyez l'exubérance des danse folklorique et même de certaines danses modernes.

Mais qui sont les modèles du 20^e siècle? Jean-Paul Sartre est-il un exubérant? Karl Marx a-t-il le sourire joyeux? On dit encore avec nostalgie que sous Hitler et Mussolini, deux autres méthodiques, les trains étaient toujours à temps. Staline a tué ou enfermé tous les agriculteurs qui ont refusé de se regrouper en collectives agricoles. Nos chefs d'État sont-ils hyperactifs? Non, les héros d'aujourd'hui sont ces professionnels, calmes, posés, d'humeur égale, objectifs. Les vertus du 20^e siècle sont liées à la raison. Il n'y a que très peu de place pour les exubérants et donc, il faut les éliminer dès la naissance.

L'enseignement reflète la culture moderne et ses systèmes, son organisation et ses catégories. Que faire avec ce bleuet délicieux? Que faire avec cette tulipe jaune tachetée de rouge? Elles deviennent des anomalies. Cet enfant qui court d'un émerveillement à l'autre risque de se casser le nez dans une école où l'inspiration des enseignants repose sur des catégories de ciment.

Pour cet enfant que même les murs de ciment ne peuvent retenir, on a trouvé le remède de la ceinture de force chimique qui vient ralentir le pas, vitrer l'oeil étincelant et ternir le sourire éclatant. Face à cet enfant exubérant que les murs ne peuvent contenir, on aurait pu aussi choisir d'ouvrir les portes de la tolérance et de donner l'espace de la patience.

Ces enfants, de plus en plus aigris par une diète à la base d'aspartame, connaissent, malgré nous, l'exubérance si ce n'est que pour quelques temps. Donnons-leur le dernier mot. "Papa veut que je raisonne comme une grande personne; moi je dis que les bonbons valent mieux que la raison".

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