

MYTHS, MORALS AND HYPOCRISY
Society and Education
from Victorian times to the Present day

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Education
in
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by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Illustrations	
Tables	
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: THE MYTH OF VICTORIAN SOCIETY	6
Moral dilemma of the home and family	
CHAPTER 2: ALWAYS JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER!	32
Social Realism in the Arts	
CHAPTER 3: TOWARDS AN EDUCATION SYSTEM WHICH SERVES ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY	64
Sowing	
Reaping	
A New Seed	
CHAPTER 4: TYPECASTING!	90
A School Project	
CONCLUSION	97

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

No.		Page
1	Family Photographs - The Victorian Ideal	i
2	Family Photographs - The Victorian Ideal	ii
3	<u>Ramsgate Sands</u> William Powell Frith	iii
4	<u>The Christmas Hamper</u> Robert Braithwaite Martineau	4
5	The Respectable Household	5
6	The Disreputable Household	5
7	<u>The Marriage of the Prince of Wales</u> William Powell Frith	9
8	<u>A Mother and Child</u> Charles Robert Leslie	12
9	<u>The Doctor</u> Luke Fildes	13
10	<u>The Doubt - Can these dry bones live</u> Henry Alexander Bowler	13
11	<u>The Widow's Mite</u> John Everett Millais	14
12	<u>Faithful</u> Charles Edward Perigini	14
13	<u>A First Night at the Palace Theatre</u> Alfred Stevens	16
14	<u>A Conversation Piece</u> Soloman Joseph Soloman	16
15	<u>Found Drowned</u> George Frederick Watts	18
16	<u>The Outcast</u> Richard Redgrave	18
17	<u>Pressing to the West</u> Hubert von Herkomer	19
18	<u>Travelling Companions</u> Augustus Leopold Egg	21
19	<u>To Brighton and Back for 3/6d</u> Charles Rossiter	21
20	<u>Omnibus Life in London</u> William Maw Egley	22
21	<u>Children Selling Matches at Night</u> William Daniels	24
22	<u>On Strike</u> Hubert Von Herkomer	26
23	<u>St Martin-in-the-Fields</u> William Logsdail	26
24	<u>Poverty and Wealth</u> William Powell Frith	31
25	<u>The Railway, First Second and Third Class</u> Ill.London News	34
26	<u>The Poor Sempstress</u> Richard Redgrave	35
27	<u>The Poor Teacher</u> Richard Redgrave	35
28	<u>The Last Half Hour</u> George Cruikshank	37
29	<u>The Awakening Conscience</u> William Holman Hunt	38
30	<u>Work</u> Ford Madox Brown	40
31	<u>Derby Day</u> William Powell Frith	41
32	<u>The Railway Station</u> William Powell Frith	42

33	<u>Eventide</u> Hubert Von Herkomer	44
34	<u>Newgate - Committed for Trial</u> Frank Joll	44
35	<u>Applicants for Admission to a Casual Ward</u> Luke Fildes	47
36	<u>Wife Beater</u> John Tenniel	49
37	<u>A Wife Murderer</u> J. F. Sullivan	49
38	<u>Snobs at the Seaside</u> Punch	49
39	<u>Honour where honour is due</u> Ruskin	50
40	<u>A few specimens of the crowd</u> Illustrated London News	50
41	<u>The General Post Office at one minute to six</u> G. Elgar Hicks	52
42	<u>High Life and Low Life</u> E. Landseer	53
43	<u>Before Waterloo</u> Henry O'Neill	53
44	<u>Florence Nightingale and Bridget McBruiser</u> Punch	54
45	<u>The last cab at the railway station</u> Punch	54
46	<u>Free Seats</u> Hal Ludlow	55
47	<u>Front Pew</u> Hal Ludlow	56
48	<u>Comparison of an Irishman with a terrier dog</u> James Redfield	59
49	<u>Oliver Twist, Bill Sykes and Associates</u> Geroge Cruikshank	60
50	<u>The Ragged School</u> John Barker	63
51	<u>The Schoolroom</u> William Bromley	63
52	<u>Rachel with the Judge</u>	89
53	<u>Group with the Arab</u>	89
54	<u>Research drawing for personal work</u>	91
55	<u>Notebook work for tapestry design</u>	92
56	<u>Notebook work for tapestry design</u>	92
57	<u>Tapestry in Progress</u>	96
58	<u>Tapestry in Progress</u>	96

LIST OF TABLES

No.		Page
1	School attendance rates	70
2.	Socio-Economic Status of 1986 Entrants to Higher Education	74
3.	Distribution of New Entrants by type of Higher Educational College entered and by type of last Post Primary School attended	76
4.	Distribution of 1985/6 Leaving Certificate Class and 1986 New Entrants to Higher Education by School type	77
5.	Socio-Economic Status of New Entrants by Field of study in HEA-Designated Colleges	79
6.	Socio-Economic Status of New Entrants by Field of study in Non HEA-Designated Colleges	80



1 Family Portrait Idyllic Childhood





2 Family Portrait Respectable Adulthood





3 'Ramsgate Sands' W. P. Frith
The Victorian Family Holiday



INTRODUCTION

There can be no security to society, no honour, no prosperity, no dignity at home, no nobleness of attitudes towards foreign nations, unless the strength of the people rests upon the purity and firmness of the domestic system. Schools are but auxiliaries. At home the principles of subordination are first implanted and the man is trained to be a good citizen.

Lord Shaftesbury quoted in C. Potter, "The First Point of the New Chapter: Improved dwellings for the people", Contemporary Review XVIII November 1971 pp.555-556.

An individual's background, particularly his social class and home environment will affect his overall development in all areas. As a teacher the particular area of development which interests me is educational: looking at the individual's aspirations and achievements in the school environment; considering how schools cater for the widely differing backgrounds, both cultural and economic of the student body.

I am concerned with the family and with social class simply because the home is the first social institution that the child faces and must adjust to. As educators we need to consider how the families of the different 'classes' in our society affect the child rearing process. It is of the utmost importance to be aware of this, as these formative pre-school years spent within the immediate family and then the close community of other relatives and friends play an irrevocable part in the development of the child's character and mind.

I formed the idea of doing my major project on this theme as an outcome of my early interests in psychology and sociology which have grown during my four years in the Education Course, and within this context I have focused on child development. Once I started to

teach, these aspects of the course became even more important to me as I saw what I had learnt in College actually taking place in the classroom. Parallel to this, I became a lot more aware of the social issues concerning children, particularly abuse of the child, which has come to public attention so much in recent years. For my degree project I have considered child abuse on a more intellectual level not on the more publicised aspect of severe physical abuse.

This interest led me to consider the origins of abuse and I found these roots very strongly in Victorian society coupled with the impact of industrialisation, the aftermath of which I believe we are still feeling today.

I also found that abuse of children was considered to be a class-related issue, another misconception which our society still carries. The more I looked at Victorian society, the more I realised that our society, a hundred or more years later, has still not progressed very far. Its moral hypocrisies, attitudes to all aspects of life and its obsession with appearances are all elements of our social structure today.

The class system, in particular, which emerged during Victoria's reign, is an issue which we are still struggling to come to terms with. My opening quotation from the eminent Victorian politician Lord Shaftesbury shows that they were starting to become aware of the importance of the home, not as they had originally conceived it to be, somewhere of perfect harmony and security, but as a place where the future of society is formed. Social reformers such as Ruskin had campaigned endlessly to make the Victorian middle and upper classes open their eyes to what type of society they really lived in and to remove forever the blinkered "I'm alright,

Jack" attitude which had prevailed. In the following two chapters I describe the fabric of Victorian society in all elements with particular reference to the social contrasts which have been so influential on all aspects of my personal and school work for this year. Within this I also consider what developments we have or have not made.

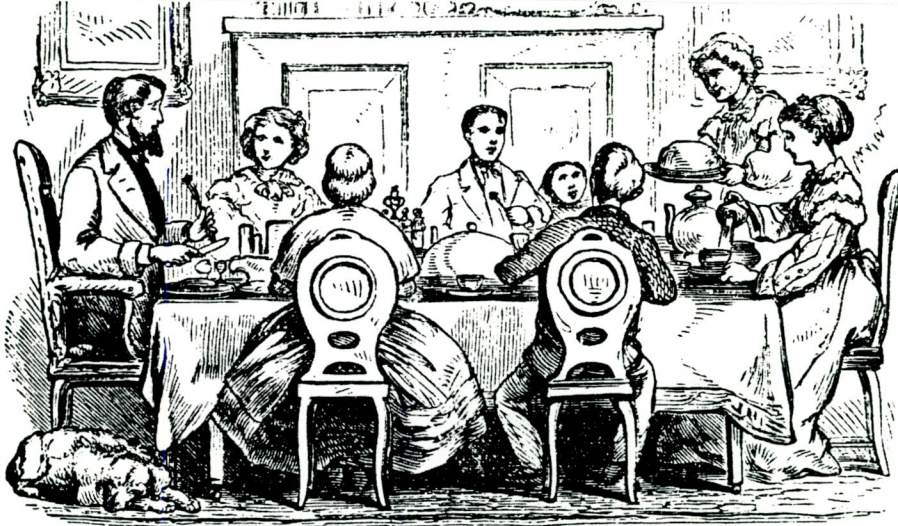
In my fourth chapter I look at how education has developed between then and now, and consider our new Junior Certificate syllabus. Also in that Chapter, I deal with actual approaches to teaching and developing ideals towards a more child-centred form of education. It is an extremely important chapter, as it will demonstrate how essential the role of the teacher is at all levels in encouraging the development of the individual. Overall development is my real concern, not merely the academic. However as we live in a society where the academic result is what is considered important, the job of teachers is far from easy if they want to encourage overall development. It takes a huge amount of energy on their part if they want to create a good classroom environment where students are learning continuously and on more than just the level of how many facts can be absorbed within a given time limit.

The integral part of any society is the home. Our notion of the home has its base most strongly in the Victorian tradition of the ideal family (see fig 4) which is demonstrated in the next chapter.



4. The Christmas Hamper R. B. Martineau
The Ideal Victorian Family Christmas





5. The Respectable Household



6. The Disreputable Household

Social contrast shown through table manners



CHAPTER ONE

THE MYTH OF VICTORIAN SOCIETY

Moral Dilemma of the Home and Family

If one had to select for some time capsule just one photograph with which to evoke both the essential fabric of Victorian society and its self image, there could surely be no better choice than a snapshot of the family. From the regal pose of Victoria, Albert and progeny, and the languid grouping of the rural, aristocratic family taking tea on the lawn, down through the bourgeois family in the drawing room ... to the slum family sullenly peering out at the alien photographer in the dismal court.

Wohl, Anthony S. ed. The Victorian Family
London, Croom Helm 1978 p.9.

The ideal of the Victorian family is perhaps the most complete and elaborate myth of the time. Ruskin described the family home as "... a sacred place, a vestal temple, a temple of the Hearth watched over by household gods", Wood, Christopher, Victorian Panorama London, Faber and Faber 1976 p.59.'

This was a view which the majority of people tended to hold whether or not they had their doubts. A lot of this was probably due to the enormous influence Queen Victoria had over her subjects. She held herself and her family as a model to the nation! "Her prejudices and her convictions were so exactly those dominant in her age that she seemed to embody its very nature within her." (Kingsley Martin)¹. Under her influence the Victorian people liked to think of themselves as the harmonious and respectable paragons of family life. Of course this did not hold for quite every one of her subjects, Florence Nightingale knew "... nothing like the petty grinding tyranny of a good English family"² and Samuel Butler takes

an even harsher line saying "I believe that more unhappiness comes from the source of the family than any other."³

There was a very strict code of authority in the Victorian family with the father holding the main position even though he tended to have very little to do with the day to day running of the household often knowing little or nothing about his children. One particular father of sixteen children the Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould found himself in an embarrassing situation when "at a parish Christmas party he asked a little girl, 'and whose little girl are you?' the girl burst into tears and replied 'I am yours, Daddy'".⁴

Another hypocrisy, evident largely in the upper middle and upper classes, despite the supposed strong family unit, was the sending away of boys to public boarding schools such as Marlborough, Harrow, Eton and Rugby, as early as the age of nine. The fourth Earl of Desart said "when nine ... I was sent ... to school ... my parents being rather disturbed as to what to do with me when ... in London."⁵ Public schools were described thus: "Most boarding schools in the early nineteenth century had dismal teaching, harsh discipline, bad morals and wretched quarters. Their half term years were long and their two vacations short."⁶ Most fathers who sent their sons to these institutions of learning had already been through them themselves and generally found it disagreeable, so why did they continue the tradition?

The general attitude to education during the Victorian age was not particularly approving and it was regarded as being somewhat suspect. This feeling was summed up by Oscar Wilde through the character of Lady Bracknell in "The Importance of Being Earnest":

"Fortunately in England, at any rate, education produces no effect whatsoever. If it did, it would prove a serious danger to the upper classes, and probably lead to riots in Grosvenor Square."⁷ Dr Arnold of Rugby felt that "What we must look for ... first, religious and moral principles, secondly, gentlemanly conduct, thirdly, intellectual ability."⁸ In Chapter Four I will be looking specifically at the spread of and improvements made to the educational system of Britain and Ireland between then and now.

The Industrial Revolution more than anything else changed irrevocably the structure of the family unit. Whereas previously women of the lower social classes had gone into service to save a dowry before getting married, the nineteenth century saw the emergence of the working wife. Not only the mother but also the children of the families who sought a living in the industrial towns went to work. In 1833 in Stockport, a cotton mill town, 21% of the operatives at the mills were children under the age of fourteen.

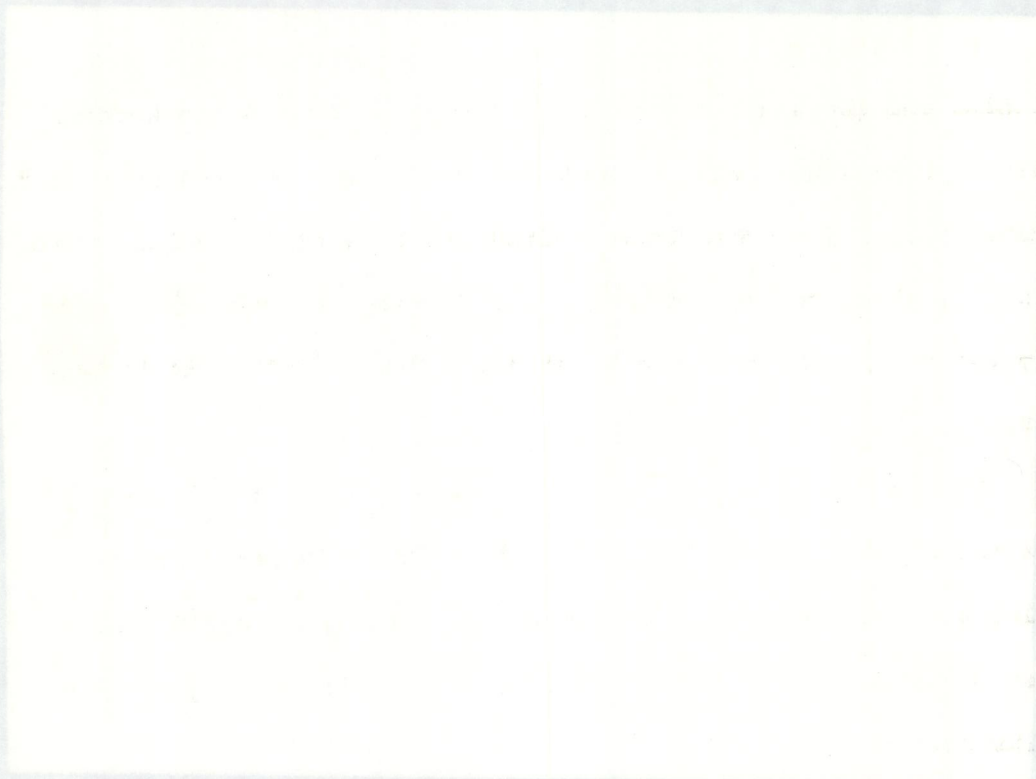
During the course of the century however reforms brought this group down to 8% by 1861. While this was decreasing the number of working women was increasing: in 1841 55%; 1851 60% and 1861 65% of the operatives of the new power looms were women. Although there were less children working, there did not appear to be an increase in school attendance. In the same area, of children between five and fourteen in 1851 only 45% and in 1861 only 55% actually attended school.

Four things were more integral to the Victorian family than anything else. The first of these is the "white" wedding (in the original sense), a tradition we have maintained perhaps more strictly than any other. From the Victorians we take not only the



7. The Marriage of the Prince of Wales W. P. Frith

The White Wedding



idea, but all the traditions that go with it, such as the bride in the white dress and veil, bridesmaids, best man, Mendelssohn's wedding march, choral singing, wedding breakfast with champagne, cake, presents on display and last but not least the honeymoon abroad. How much of this great celebration of marriage was snobbery and one-upmanship in the display of wealth?

"A Victorian husband liked his bride to be pure, innocent, faithful and above all ignorant."⁹ Florence Nightingale appears again as a dissenter saying "Why have women passion, ignorance and immoral activity - these three things and a place in society where no one of these can be exercised? ... Marriage is but a chance, the only chance offered to women to escape and how eagerly it is embraced."¹⁰

The obvious follow-up to marriage and the second element integral to the notion of the Victorian family is pregnancy and childbirth, the only place that the Victorian woman could find a sense of worth, but at what a cost to their personal dignity and wellbeing.

Despite the Victorians suffocating love of children they tended to find the issue of childbirth unsavoury and indelicate, something neither discussed nor recorded at any great length. It has been described as "one of the great testing grounds of a woman's life, childbirth was a trial of a woman's strength, her femininity and her spiritual condition." Here Queen Victoria herself was a pioneer of the improvement of the female condition through her acceptance of the use of chloroform.

She did not put up with the "sacred pangs" of childbirth any more than she had to, writing that Dr Snow "gave me the blessed

chloroform and the effect was soothing, quieting and delightful beyond measure."¹² Elizabeth Longford claims that Queen Victoria's greatest gift to her people "was a refusal to accept pain in childbirth as woman's divinely appointed destiny."¹³ Despite chloroform removing the pain, childbirth was fraught with danger and the women's manuals of the time advised "let me examine myself, and try to see what my spiritual state is in the light of God, before my hour of suffering and danger draws near."¹⁴

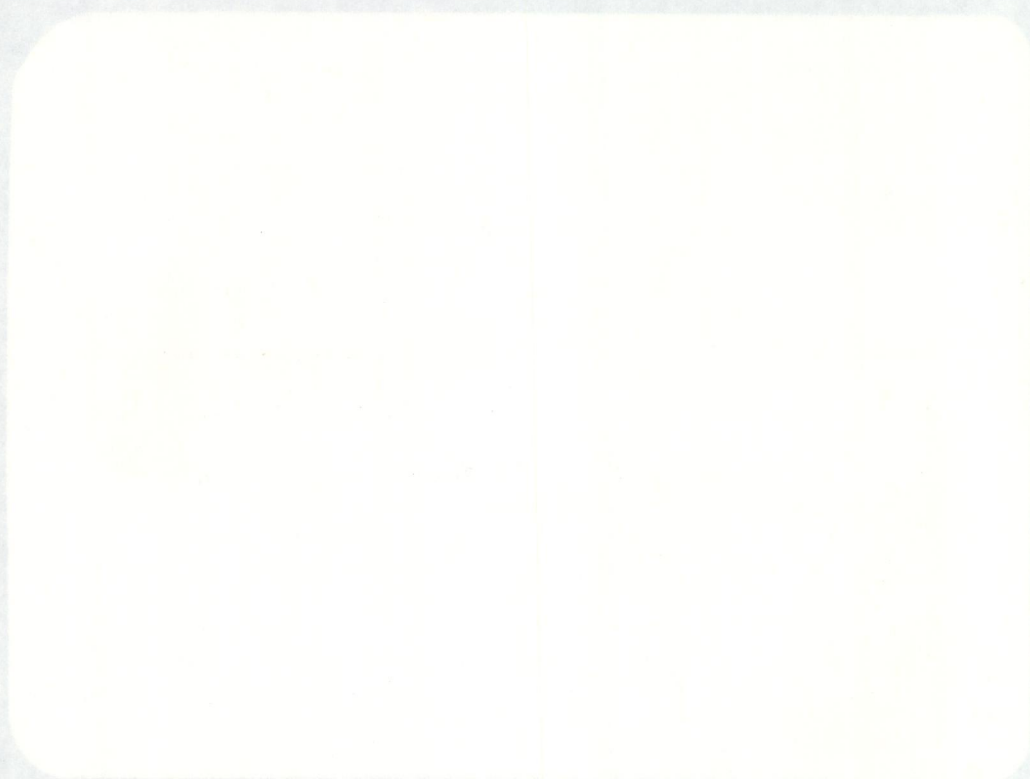
A constant reminder of these dangers was found in the fact that Queen Victoria was on the throne at all, a place she would not have seen if it had not been for the death of George IV's daughter Queen Charlotte whilst giving birth to her stillborn child. In letters to the Princess Royal while she was expecting her first child, Victoria wrote "What you say of the pride of giving birth to an immortal soul is all very fine, my dear, but I own that I cannot enter into that, I think much more of our being like a cow or a dog at such moments: when our poor nature becomes so animal and unaesthetic"¹⁵ and "It is indeed too hard and dreadful what we have to go through and men ought to have an adoration for one, and indeed to do everything to make up for what after all they alone are the cause of."¹⁶ This last quotation echoes of the attitude shown in the common story of an English mother telling her daughter "to lie still and think of the empire on her wedding night."¹⁷

Sickness and death made up the final two integral elements of Victorian family life. Disease spread quickly and unmercifully in slum areas and were made all the more serious as there was no such thing as sick pay, injury compensation or life assurance. Cholera killed 130,000 people in 1848. Whereas sex is the cliché of the



8. A Mother and Child C. R. Leslie

The Perfect Mother





9. The Doctor Luke Fildes



10. The Doubt - can these
dry bones live
H. A. Bowler





11. The Widows Mite
J. E. Millais

12. Faithful
C. E. Perigini



20th Century death was for the 19th century. Like the white wedding the 19th Century saw strict adherence to the black funeral.

Mourning was a serious and expensive business. It is estimated that in 1843 £4/5,000,000 was spent on funerals "a good send-off". This obsession soon led to overflowing churchyards and the need for cemeteries and cremations. The St Martins-in-the-Fields burial grounds of 200 square feet was reported to contain between 60 and 70,000 bodies. Child mortality was shockingly high in Manchester. In 1840 57% of children died before the age of five! The Victorian widow became a cult and companies such as Courtaulds made a fortune out of selling black crepe. Victoria added very much to this cult with the strict mourning she took on after Albert's death in 1861. She remained in mourning for 10 years and to the end of her own life, another 30 years, she preferred to wear black.

Along with death came a fascination for murder, particularly among women, for women who had done away with husbands or lovers. Between 1830 and 1847, 40% of all the women executed for murder had killed their spouse. Respectable married women avidly followed the trials of women such as Madeline Smith in 1857 who poisoned her lover by putting arsenic in his cocoa.

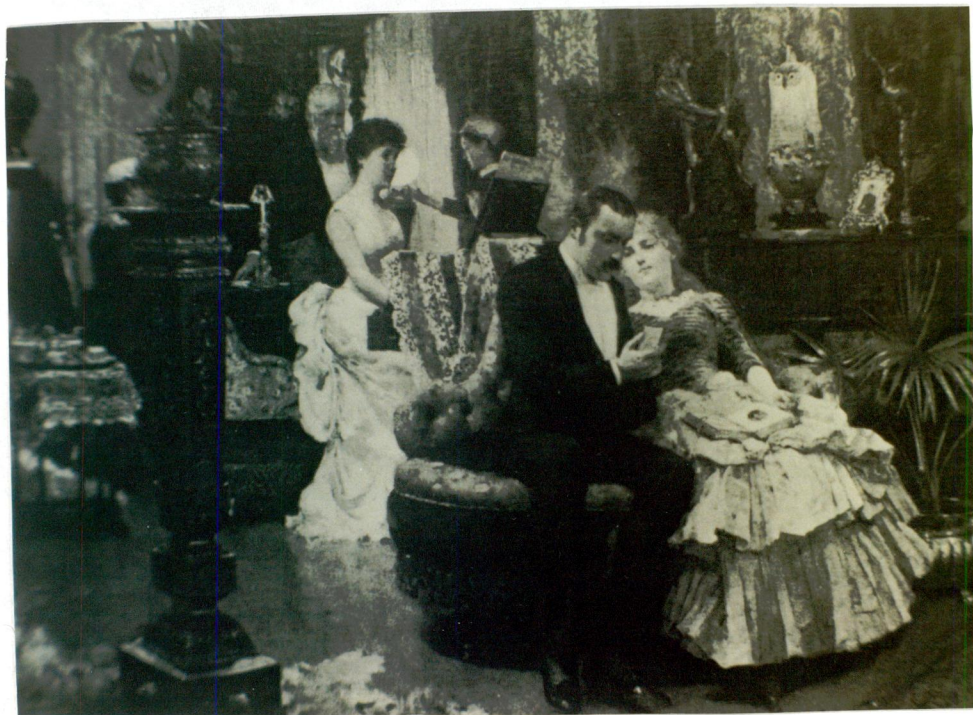
The trials to be sure gave everybody an obvious occasion to indulge in the morbid thrills of exotic tales, but more importantly, as their behaviour demonstrates, the women found in them an opportunity for release of frustrations and vicarious fulfilment of inarticulate desires. The accused murderess it appears had acted out what many of these women, in their most secret thoughts, had hardly dared to imagine.¹⁸

Despite the generally high morals of the society, the upper classes in particular managed to have plenty of fun. Unlike the

Middle and Upper Class Enjoyment



13. A First Night at
the Palace Theatre
A. Stevens



14. A Conversation Piece
S. J. Solomon

Handwritten text on a yellowed, rectangular piece of paper. The text is written in a cursive script and is mostly illegible due to fading and the age of the document. It appears to be a single paragraph or a short letter.

Handwritten text on a yellowed, rectangular piece of paper. The text is written in a cursive script and is mostly illegible due to fading and the age of the document. It appears to be a single paragraph or a short letter.

riotous pub culture of the lower classes, the dinner party was very much in vogue higher up the social scale. These tended to be very elaborate affairs, generally consisting of eight courses or so, followed by the gentlemen consuming large quantities of port and smoking many cigars. The snobbery contained within the class system was rife as shown by Oscar Wilde, again in 'The Importance of Being Earnest': "Never speak disrespectfully of society, Algernon, only people who can't get in to do that."¹⁹

The theatre was a part of the social scene which saw a great revival during the nineteenth century due largely to the support and patronage of the Queen and Prince Albert with actors and actresses receiving honours by the end of the century. However, the respectable mother would still shudder at the idea that her daughter would think of going on stage especially if it was the music hall stage which burst on the stuffy Victorians like "a woman in a raffish hat at a vicarage tea party."²⁰ The younger "arty" set epitomised by the artist Sickert were firm followers of this type of theatre, but no self-respecting respectable middle-class person would dream of attending.

These places were considered to be dens of iniquity and vice, the ultimate of which was of course sex, the Victorian horror. The crushing weight of middle/upper-class morality fell on the female offender, unfaithful wives, unmarried mothers, mistresses and prostitutes, while as long as a man was discreet he could do as he pleased. Mrs Caroline Norton, a campaigner for womens' rights said "The faults of women are visited as sins; the sins of men are not even visited as faults."²¹ Other elements which revolutionised Victorian society were travel and the post. Rowland Hill's

The Fallen Woman



15. Found Drowned G. F. Watts



16. The Outcast R. Redgrave



The Path of Emigration



17. Pressing to the West H. Von Herkomer



invention, in 1840, of the penny post not only revolutionised business but also meant for the first time, that ordinary people could keep in touch with friends and relatives; especially those among the 10,000,000 people who left the then British Isles between 1850 and 1860 in search of a better and more prosperous life in a class-free society; or, in the case of the huge number of Irish emigrants among that number, to escape famine.

Most exciting for Victorians was their first train ride described by Charles Greville:

The first sensation is a slight degree of nervousness and of being run away with, but a sense of security soon supervenes, and the velocity is delightful. Town after town, one park or chateau, after another are left behind with the rapid variety of a moving panorama, and the continuing bustle and animation of the changes and stoppages make the journey very entertaining.²²

This was an entertainment affordable to all as long as you did not mind the discomfort of third class travel. The cheap 3s/6d return fare for an excursion to Brighton first took place in 1844:

London Bridge: 8.30 in the morning with forty five carriages and four engines; went on to New Cross where six more carriages and another engine were added; then carried on to Croydon for another six carriages and yet one more engine. This amazing 'steam caterpillar' arrived in Brighton not long after 1 pm disgorging nearly 2,000 passengers.²³

Before the invention of the underground in 1863 the cheapest public transport around London was the omnibus described by the Illustrated London News as

... a drab interior, the stern and trying incidents of which will be recognised by thousands of weary wayfarers through the streets of London. There crowded together higgledy piggledy is all the miscellaneous assemblage of old women, young missus, city swells, babies, baskets, crinolines, umbrellas etc, which ordinarily fill up the measures of these convenient vehicles.²⁴

The Joys of Travel



18. Travelling Companions A. L. Egg



19. To Brighton and Back for 3/6d C Rossiter





20. Omnibus Life in London W. M. Egley



Another common sight on the Victorian streets was the street traders (see Fig 21) a significant addition to nineteenth century life if only in terms of the sheer volume of them. Mayhew in writing in "The London Labour and London Poor" estimated "18,000 itinerant and stationary street sellers of fish, vegetables and fruit ... "25. He also concluded that about 30,000 people were employed in other street trades such as cat-meat men, bone grubbers, old clothes merchants, play-bill sellers, turncocks, lamplighters and scavengers. This exodus of people onto the streets was indicative of the harsher side of life encountered by the thousands of people who had travelled to the cities in search of work.

In 1851 half of the population were in cities, three-quarters by 1907. Whether or not they were lucky enough to get any kind of work, these huge numbers could not afford any kind of decent lodgings. As a result overcrowding became rife with large families living in small unsanitary rooms. These conditions were extremely unhealthy and personal hygiene was minimal. A natural result of this was illness and disease such as the spread of cholera mentioned previously and the weaker elements of society usually fared the worst. In these bad conditions, infant mortality was particularly high, between 1839 and 1840, 153 deaths in every thousand were infants, rising to 156 by 1896 and 163 by 1899 according to Many of these children died out of neglect or ignorance on the part of overtired or drunk parents. Despite statistics such as these the members of the middle and upper classes still endeavoured where possible to turn a blind eye, particularly where any hint of immorality may have been apparent. Many of the infant deaths were due to infanticide by parents too poor or by young girls in service



21. Children Selling Matches at Night W. Daniels



or deserted, etc, who could not survive with a child in tow. Some people however were beginning to realise and accept that such things could be true and were no longer acceptable.

Disraeli said "infanticide is practised extensively and legally in England as it is on the banks of the Ganges."²⁶ Even today in America, a mother managed to kill eight of her nine children over a fourteen year period without detection until 1985. The issue of incest was another Victorian horror ignored by the mass of middle class society. In our society realisation of how serious it is has finally hit home but there is either too much or too little being done to prevent it.

In her autobiography, Beatrice Webb confessed that when writing of her sweat shop experiences

... the code of decency obliged her to omit all references to the prevalence of incest in one room tenements. The fact that some of my workmates, young girls who were in no way mentally defective, who were, on the contrary, just as keen-witted and generous hearted as my own circle of friends - could chaff each other about having babies by their fathers and brothers, was a gruesome example of the effect of debased social environment on personal character and family life ... The violation of little children was another not infrequent result ... to put it bluntly, sexual promiscuity and even sexual perversion, are almost unavoidable among men and women of average character and intelligence crowded into the one room tenements of slum areas.²⁷

The 1901 census showed that 42.5% of Finsbury's population lived either in one or two room flats. This would have been true of most East End areas of London as well. Stephen Marcus in The Other Victorians says

Pornography exists in order to violate in fantasy that which has been tabooed ... and incest occurs in it with about the same frequency as marriages occur at the end of the English novel.²⁸



22. On Strike
H Von Herkomer

The bad side of city life

23. St Martins-in-the Fields
W. Logsdail



Henry Mayhew also expressed opinion on this rather distasteful side of life "In the illicit intercourse to which such a position frequently gives rise" referring to families living in one room flats "... it is not always that the tie of blood is respected. Certain it is that, when the relationship is even but one degree removed from that of brother or sister, that tie is overlooked."²⁹ These wretched living conditions and the type of behaviour that could result from them eventually came to the attention of parliament through Lord Shaftesbury:

It is impossible, my lords, to exaggerate the physical and moral evil that results from this stage of thing ... I would not for all the world mention all the details of what I have heard or seen, in these scenes of wretchedness. But there are to be found adults of both sexes, living in the same room, every social and domestic necessity being performed there: grown-up sons sleeping with their mothers; brothers and sisters, sleeping very often not in the same apartment only, but in the same bed. My lords, I am stating that which I know to be the truth, and which is not to be gainsaid, when I state that incestuousness is frightfully common in various parts of this metropolis - common to the greatest extent and range of these courts (in and around the city).³⁰

It is these issues of severe contrast between the different levels of Victorian society which I believe we are still trying often unsuccessfully to deal with today. It is this with which I became fascinated and which led me to the idea of basing not only my written project, but also my school and personal work for the year, on.

Within my personal work the link is particularly interesting for me as I am exploring the theme through tapestry. Working with materials similar to those of the mill-workers in the cotton industry and other fabrics, I create the idea of social contrast being displayed through the "fabric of society". Initially I had been making studies of buildings which interested me either for

their features or the contrasts in condition and appearance. As the drawings developed and became more abstract the importance of colour increased, becoming symbolic of the different elements of society and serving to show their contrasts. The colours in the tapestry such as the rich deep and bright reds, pinks, purples and golds echo the style of sumptuousness in the middle and upper classes. These brilliant areas also contain a certain twisted feeling due to the use of knotting. This contrasts with the hues of browns and greys with no decoration and little relief which make up the background, creating the impression of the prevailing attitudes of the higher social classes cloaking the darker side of society. The work gives the feeling of how that society ignored and put to one side anything which it found distasteful. The areas of the tapestry which are open highlight the shallowness of these attitudes in society. Hick's painting, discussed in the next chapter, "The General Post Office at one Minute to Six", is the main artistic influence for my work as it contains the strong feeling of conflict which interests me, especially in terms of colour and its excellent physiognomical contrasts. It places the socially contrasting figures side by side to heighten this in a similar way to how I have used colour.

My personal work for this year is the most involved tapestry I have done, yet despite any difficulties I encountered I have really enjoyed the challenge of completing it. This tapestry is not only the first abstract work I have done, but also my first large scale and "non-design" based piece. As I mentioned above the motivation was Victorian society and the stark contrasts in the living styles of the different classes. I had originally planned to use visual images of housing directly in the tapestry but it became simplified

because of my strong interest in colour which can be used very effectively to portray Victorian society. Initially I had not wanted to lose the images of buildings but in retrospect the direction I have taken is much more effective and the progression towards the more abstract composition I have used has been extremely beneficial to my work.

Footnotes

1. Wood, Christopher Victorian Panorama, p.59
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Wohl, Anthony, S. The Victorian Family, p.60
5. Ibid, p.61
6. Ibid
7. Wilde, Oscar The Importance of Being Earnest, Madrid, Alhambra 1985, p.41
8. Wood, Christopher, Victorian Panorama, p.30
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10. Ibid, p.79
11. Wohl, Anthony S. The Victorian Family, p.24
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14. Thoughts, Prayers and Thanksgivings for Mothers cited in The Victorian Family, p.26
15. Dearest Child: Letters between Queen Victoria and the Princess Royal (1858-1861) cited in The Victorian Family, p.30
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24. Ibid, p.216
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26. Rose, Lionel Massacre of the Innocents, p.56
27. Webb, Beatrice, My apprenticeship cited in The Victorian Family, p.90
28. The Other Victorians cited in The Victorian Family, p.186
29. Wohl, Anthony S. The Victorian Family, p.131
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26. Poverty and Wealth W. P. Frith
Social Contrast



CHAPTER TWO

ALWAYS JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER!

Social Realism in the Arts

I am concentrating not only on Victorian home and family life but also on the cultural scene of the time. During the Victorian age British art veered away from all that was happening in the rest of Europe, particularly France, in terms of realism, Impressionism, etc, although one could say that their elements were found in the English style. The style that emerged was peculiarly English and became quite internalised.

It is known as modern-life painting and it is perhaps most interesting to us now, not only because it served to record elements of the lifestyle but because of how carefully it chose to record those elements. By and large they were designed to appease the upper and middle classes and pacify any feeling of unrest among the lower orders. Therefore the dominant theme in this type of work tended to be centred around moral issues and the family/home. Some more revolutionary elements were found within literature and the work of a certain group of social realist painters during the mid-century.

Victorian art and literature was not only dominated by social pressure but also by the emergence of a new side to science. "The formulation of physiognomical and pathognomical distinctions formed one of the main preoccupations of Victorian genre painters."¹ Phrenology was another aspect of science brought into the art of the period. It is now discredited; defined by the Oxford Dictionary as

"a would be science of mental faculties supposed to be located in the various parts of the skull and investigatable by feeling the bumps on the outside of the head." Physiognomy is described in the same edition as "the art of judging character from appearance, especially from the face: the face as the apex of the mind."

The chosen title for this chapter is based on this Victorian obsession of allowing first impressions of a person's face tell them what the individual's character was. The rules of physiognomy were adhered to very strongly not only by artists and writers but also by the ordinary people of all classes. Firstly, I am going to consider the modern-life genre, then look at its connections to physiognomy and the art of caricature., and finally how the rules of it became apparent in literature. The work of Dickens in particular serves as an excellent example of using the rules of "science" in the arts. In relation to Dickens I will also consider how he was linked to social realism through certain of his works.

The main concern of the vogue for modern life painting of the period was to represent society in as flattering a way as possible. This, however, did not mean that the artists were not aware of the social evils of the time nor that they did not ever try to deal with these issues in some form or another. Redgrave was the first real pioneer of this style in art. He, for one, was very concerned about his society and the theme of suffering womanhood was particularly important to him due largely to the fact that his own sister had died that most graceful Victorian death of pining away in 1829 after being sent away to become a governess. His son described him as having "longed to fight for the oppressed and help the weak, and could do it only with his brush."² His first work in this vein



THE RAILWAY—FIRST CLASS.

(Continued from page 25.)
 "Alas!" for the lady who could testify for
 a. At the hotel-quarters of resort in the town of Epworth—where
 wisdom, during the meeting week, you might as well have sought for a
 and for yourself or a stall for your horse, as for that *same* nature that
 Douglas looked for with his lantern—only one guest slept the night be-
 fore the thirty and three horses constituted the cavalry de-
 But, what of that?
 "The great mistake of this is to suppose the line."



SECOND CLASS.



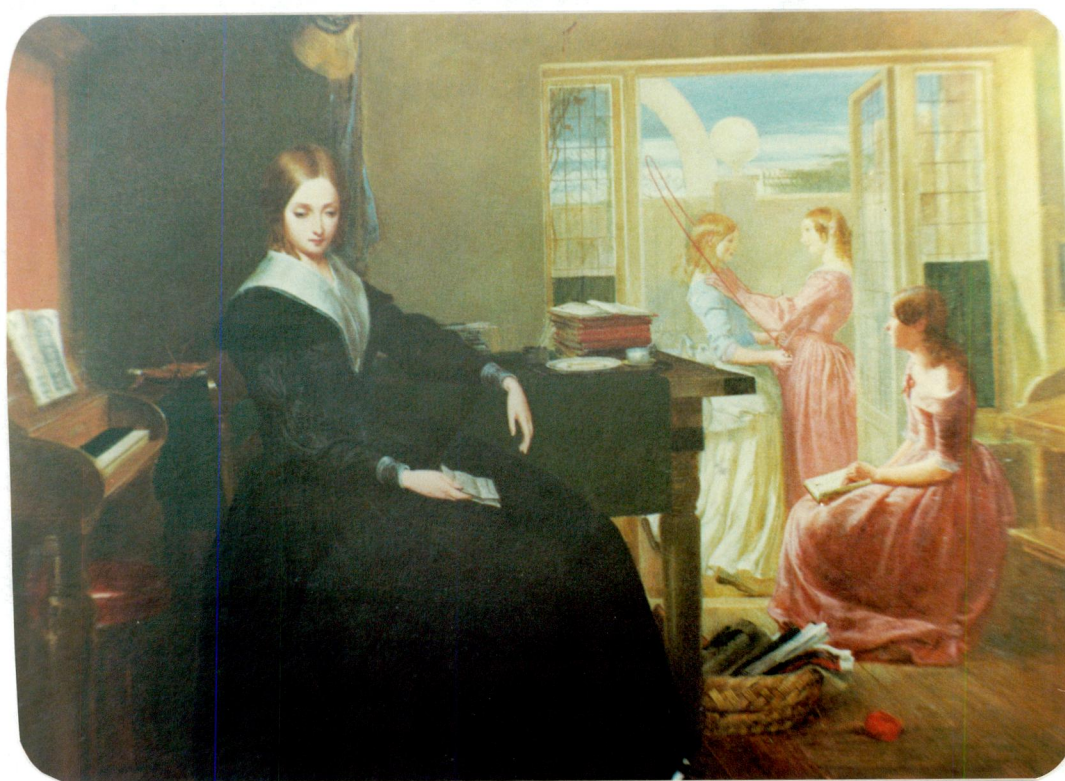
THIRD CLASS.

25. The Railway - First, Second and Third Class





26. The Poor Sempstress R. Redgrave



27. The Poor Teacher R. Redgrave



showing the advance into modern dress "The Poor Teacher" (see fig. 27) was most likely inspired by his feelings for his sister. It was so well received that he followed up with "The Sempstress" (see fig 26) and "The Outcast" (see fig. 14). These works show the type of social realism acceptable to Victorian society, not challenging and with a tendency to sentimentality. The Pre-Raphaelites, although they did not have much success with modern subjects, were very instrumental in making them acceptable to other artists. In their short-lived magazine, The Germ, J L Tupper in 1849 wrote "Why teach us to hate a Nero or an Appius, and not an underselling oppressor of workmen and betrayer of women and children? Why to love a lady in a bower and not a wife's fireside?"³ Many of the Pre-Raphaelites did try their hand. Rossetti's attempt was "Found" which remained unfinished to his death while he returned to painting ladies in bowers. Burne-Jones persisted in his painting of angels. Millais and Arthur Hughes were generally too poetic or historical, each of them only having one painting which can really be considered; Millais' "Rescue" and Hughes "The Long Engagement". Holman Hunt and Ford Maddox Brown on the other hand were the two of this movement who seriously attempted modern life subjects. Hunt brings moral and biblical symbolism to his work, "The Awakening Conscience" (see fig. 29) one of the first Victorian works to deal with prostitution. The use of symbolism saved him from attack by most critics. Ruskin however perceived it "as drawn from a very dark and repulsive side of domestic life."⁴ Ford Maddox Brown's "Work" (see fig. 30) is hailed as a masterpiece of the style with intense symbolism, encompassing different forms of work and moralistic contrasts



28. The Last Half Hour G. Cruikshank





29. The Awakening Conscience W. Holman Hunt



between labour and idleness, even the posters on the walls are making moral comments."⁵

Frith is one of the, if not the most, important of the modern-life artists. He is most memorable for his three panoramic masterpieces of Victorian life. "Ramsgate Sands" page ii bought by Queen Victoria, survives as an epic example of the nineteenth century family holiday. "Derby Day" (fig. 31) was so popular with the public that it needed a protective rail around it. These paintings also earned large amounts of money. "The Railway Station" (fig. 32) sold for £4,500, shows a wonderful collection of all aspects of life from criminals to boys going off to boarding school and even a wedding party. Despite public approval the critics hated these works.

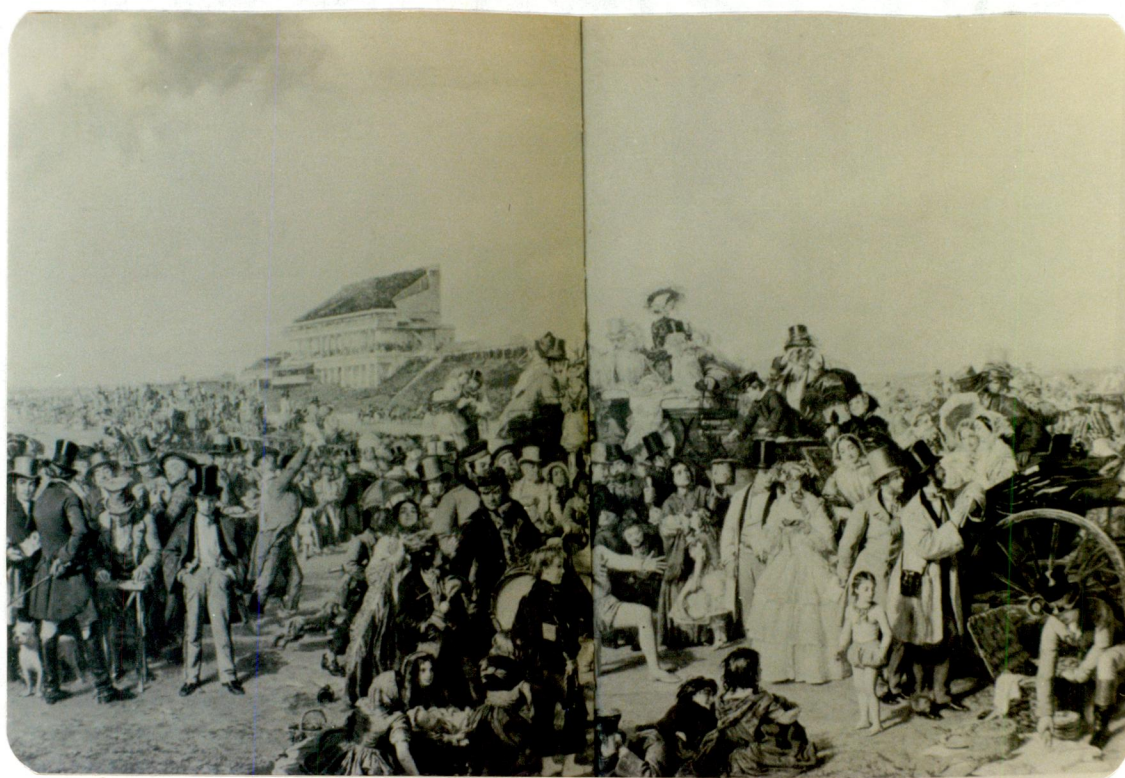
It seems that all Victorian critics thought of their own age as hopelessly ugly and unpicturesque. They seem to follow the ideals, set out in Reynolds' "Discourses", that great art must only deal with sublime generalities; to descend into the realm of particularity was a step downwards. The financial rewards earned by artists such as Frith did however encourage so many of the history painters to attempt some modern life scenes. Abraham Solomon's "First Class - The Meeting 1", "First Class - The Meeting 2" and "Second Class - The Parting" and A. L. Eggs "Travelling Companions" (see fig 18).

Frith also tried moralistic works which were very much inspired by Hogarth, however they lack the satirical quality of the former's work becoming somewhat sentimental. Despite this they serve as excellent examples of Victorian attitudes towards gambling and other vices. Frith's own attitude towards gambling was "Instead of the



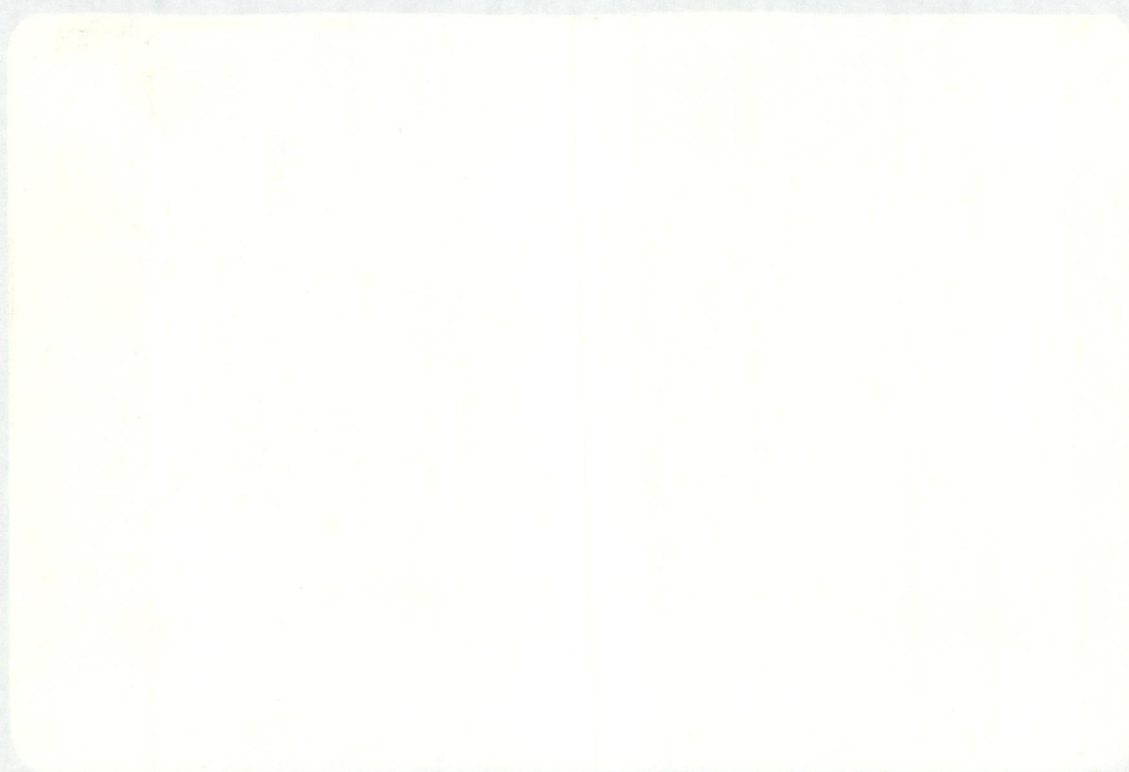
30. Work Ford Maddox Brown





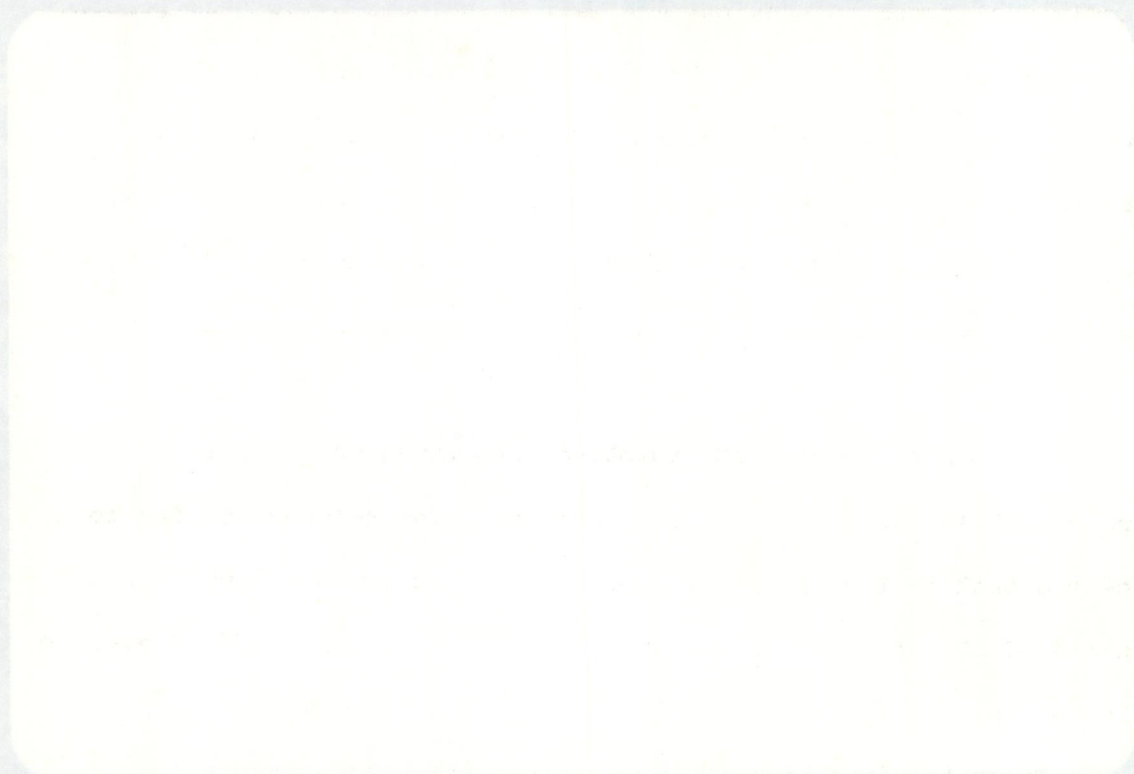
31. Derby Day W. P. Frith

The Social Outing





32. The Railway Station W. P. Frith



noisy, eager gamblers I expected to see, I found a quiet, businesslike, unimpressible set of people trying to get money without working for it ... quite time I thought that a stop should be put to it."⁶ His "Race for Wealth" series of paintings serve as his condemnation of this vice, and his "Road to Ruin" series condemns the tricksters and conmen of the time. In both series the individual comes to a sticky end, either through suicide or prison.

The critics were not the only people who thought their age ugly, most people did including the artists. Modern dress was one of the worst obstacles they had to overcome. Millais said "Just imagine Van Dyck's Charles I in a pair of check trousers."⁷ This was why the Pre-Raphaelites tended to use medieval dress and ornament.

One can be excused for thinking that these modern-life paintings are realistic but they are not. The painters tended to be held back by two important limitations, their own attitudes and those of the Victorian public. "Nothing disagreeable should ever be looked at."⁸

Facts had to be tailored to fit current tastes, hence an unwillingness to face up to the more unpleasant aspects of society such as poverty and seduction. Themes such as these were handled with extreme care as in Hunt's "Awakening Conscience" or the endless paintings of picturesque flower girls. The attitude towards pregnancy discussed in the previous chapter is echoed very clearly in the fact that although motherhood was a constant theme, a pregnant woman is never depicted in a Victorian painting.

The brief spate of social realism in art appeared in the 1870s and it included the work of three painters in particular Fildes

Social Realism



33. Eventide H. Von Herkomer



34. Newgate - Committed for Trial F. Holl



(1872) "Applicants for Admission to a Casualty Ward" (fig. 35).

This work caused uproar, but was praised by a foreign critic as "opening a new path in art as Courbet had done in '51 with the "Stonebreakers."⁹ However British critics were not so friendly.

His 1876 "The Widower" received this comment from The Times:

The painter, we submit, is under a mistake who brings big dirty boots, squalling and scrambling children, parental and sisterly love into such contact ... it is a great pity painters do not bear in mind the fact that their pictures are meant to adorn English living rooms, and that intense painfulness, overstrained expression and great vehemence of momentary action or short-lived attitudes are all qualities that make pictures unpleasant to live with.¹⁰

Herkomer's 1878 painting "Eventide" (fig 33) of a womens' workhouse in Westminster and his "Hard Times" of 1885 are excellent examples of social realism. He returned to this type of subject matter again in 1890 with "On Strike" (fig. 22). Fildes and Herkomer opted out of the mode for the more secure and moneyed genre of portrait painting. Holl was the one artist to whom social realism was more than just a passing fancy. Although as he was also a successful portrait painter and he tended to receive less crushing reviews it was probably easier for him to persevere. Queen Victoria who, after Albert's death, was obsessed with the theme of widowhood bought his "No Tidings from the Sea", a moving rendering of the dangers of fishing for a living.

Perhaps the best piece of social realist work of the time was painted by him of "Newgate - Committed for Trial" (fig. 34). Holl was inspired to do this after a visit to Newgate and he went to great pains to keep it as realistic as possible, even the clothes worn by models were genuine coming from East End pawnshops and rag and bone men.

As early as 1841 British artists had been noted as attempting a far wider range of human actions and expressions than the Dutch genre painters ever had. The French philosopher Taine in his Notes on England quoted in Artist as Anthropologist also praised the English artists he "could not imagine anyone equalling artists like Mulready or Leslie in collecting within the compass of twelve square inches a larger heap of psychological observations."¹¹ The whole momentum of artistic observation was swinging to the human face not only being a thing of physical beauty but a mirror to the soul. "The Arts Journal" in 1866 said "faces should be individual; they should each tell a story, contain lines of history, and marks of joy and sorrows."¹² Chesneau said that the English artists had "no other aim than that of admitting the spectator to the inmost soul and private thoughts."¹³

The Victorian interest in human nature was heightened by the development of the pseudo-sciences of physiognomy and phrenology. It was recommended to the reader as an immediate way to decipher "by true and reliable signs, what each man's dispositions, temperament and capacity are."¹⁴ It was also described as a "science which teaches us to unfold and fathom people's habits, tastes, passions and natural abilities."¹⁵

Physiognomists felt that their science was of use not only in written interpretation but that artists should aim:

... to give life and character to the individual, to bring out each group in its particular light, to represent the natural attitude of the body, to secure the expression of the face and to delineate the manifestations of the mind, in the expression as well as the contour of the head."¹⁶



35. Applicants for Admission to a Casualty Ward L. Fildes



J. C. L. Carson recognised that already:

Painters and sculptors generally observe nature pretty closely, but no person every yet found them giving the same sort of head to Nero and to a Howard, to a Socrates and to an idiot ... They know right well that different characters have different heads and a great part of their success depends on the power they have of making the heads speak proper character. The man who would give a narrow base and a small posterior development of brain, with a high noble forehead to a Bacchus, a Vitrellius, or a Pope Alexander VI, could have a poor chance of election at The Royal Academy.¹⁷

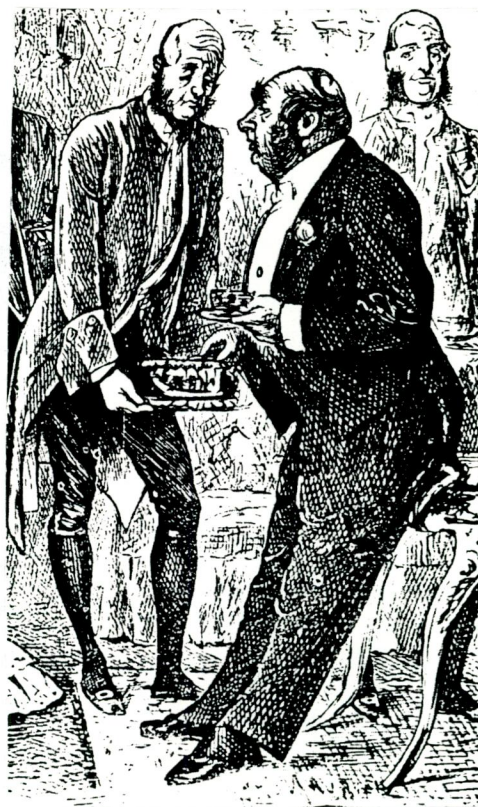
Nowhere did the rules of physiognomy come to the public attention more than in Punch magazine or the Illustrated London News. In these publications the Victorian obsession with class became the overriding element contained in their physiognomical caricatures.

Class was an emotive subject. Victorian critics reacted to certain class types in art with a vehemence one would associate only with real life issues. Recognition was immediate and judgment uncompromising.¹⁸

One only has to glance at an illustration from either of these periodicals to realise how little difficulty there must have been in distinguishing between the classes, a fact that was heightened not only by the stark contrasts in dress but also in the use of physiognomies by the artist. A book of the time proposes that

"the forehead, eyes and orbits are not relatively so large and developed; also the bridge of the nose is more often sunken; the chin is more often receding; and the lower part of the forehead is less prominent in the lower than the better cultivated class."¹⁹

Physiognomy also served to strengthen racial prejudice. "In Ireland, a mixture of this type - lazy, improvident and bibulous - with the descendant of the small dark and treacherous ancient race of Iberians has produced the lazy, rollicking, merry Irishman of the caricaturist typified by "broad faces and noses. The latter feature concave at the base, dark hair and merry twinkling dark grey



39. Honour Where Honour is Due G. DuMarier



40. A Few Specimens of the Crowd



eyes ... In fact all varieties of the lower-class vagabond, Irish or not, are cast in the same physiognomical mould."²⁰

G. E. Hicks "Post Office " (fig. 41) is a perfect example of physiognomical beliefs being put into practice. All of the low class characters are clearly defined by a low forehead and even a projecting jaw, eg the newspaper boy on the right of the helpful official, the housemaid and boy behind him and the porter behind them again. Street urchins are invariably represented with pug noses, low foreheads and bull-dogs jaws. The higher class couples to the far left and centre on the other hand have fine features and straight profiles. The characteristics of the perfect gentleman are ... "erect without being rigidly so; his neck and head spring from the shoulders; his limbs are beautifully in proportion to each other, and to his body ... his hair is soft and curly; the head finely shaped, broad at the top of the forehead, swelling slightly about the brows, the eyes rather deeply set."²¹

The penalty for artists who did not observe physiognomy when working was extremely harsh criticism, eg Henry O'Neill's "Before Waterloo" (fig. 43) was condemned thus, "that so many English folks of the class in question have been assembled with so little that was beautiful or noble in their features ..."²² Ford Maddox Brown's work was criticised for raising the physiognomical characteristics of some of the subjects. The critic found that while admiring the shock-headed boy in the foreground, his sister appeared ".... a puzzle. Looked at in herself, she seems to be a member of the class to which the boy belongs; but then how much to account for the comely, well to do boy in her arm ...?"²³.

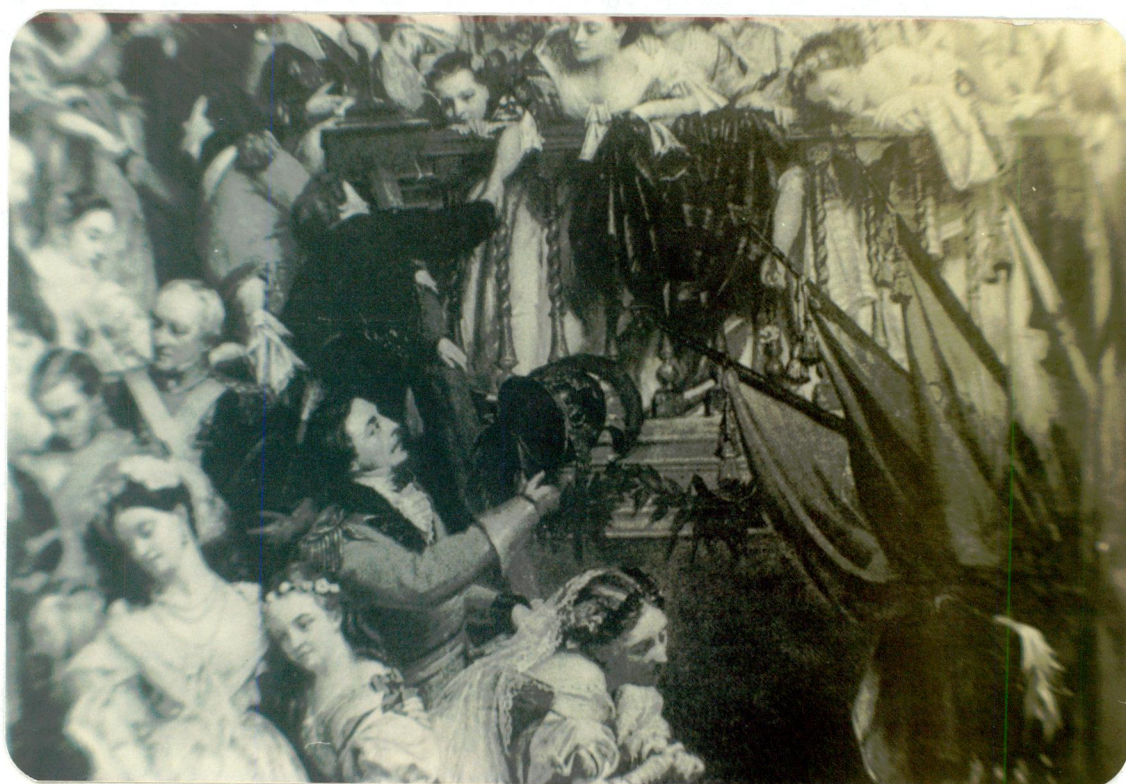


41. The General Post Office G. E. Hicks





42. High Life and Low Life E. Landseer



43. Before Waterloo (detail) Henry O'Neill



Physiognomy and Social Class



44. Florence Nightingale (left) and Bridget McBruiser



45. The Last Cab at the Railway Station





46. Free Seats Hal Ludlow





47. The Front Pew Hal Ludlow



Physiognomical rules were not reserved for people alone.

Landseer's "High Life" and "Low Life" (fig. 42) contrasts two dogs excellently. One critic describes the characteristics in "High Life" and "Low Life" (fig 42) contrasts two dogs excellently. One critic describes the characteristics in "High Life" as "chiefly borne out by the character of the dog's head; which is of a mould suggestive of a race far above currish and mongrel extraction and association whereas the bull terrier in "Low Life" had a "heavy shock head ... that of a prize fighter."²⁴

Although the class distinctions were very harsh, occasionally the lower classes were allowed good features as in "the virtuous poor or the respectable workman." Redgraves, "The Poor Sempstress", shows this as do two illustrations from The Illustrated London News: "Free Seats" (fig. 46) shows a good looking widow and her son who although she has good working class features lacks the extreme refinement of the rich lady in the "Front Pew" (fig. 47). Frith's panoramic "Derby Day" and "The Railway Station" are superb in their physiognomical qualities. The huge praise Frith received from critics stemmed partially from the fact that despite the drabness of subject and everyday clothes in "The Railway Station", they were acknowledged to have been overcome by the skill with which he exploited the dramatic and the anthropological possibilities of the situation.²⁵ Frith himself commented on the painting of "Derby Day" that it provided him "...the opportunity of showing an appreciation of the infinite variety of everyday life."²⁶ He also admitted to being a physiognomist "of the opinion that the face is a sure index of character"²⁷ and "from long study of 'the human face divine', I

have acquired or think I have - a knowledge of the character and disposition that certain features and expressions betray."²⁸ Many artists and writers, Firth and Dickens for example, found a police court "an excellent place to gain a good knowledge of physiognomy. Certain forms of crime will have certain forms of face. The face of the drunkard, of the petty thief, of the most daring night thief, of the garrotter, of the street pickpocket, of the embezzler, of the defaulting clerk, and so on...."²⁹. In Dicken's work like nowhere else in literature there was a very strong influence of physiognomy " ... emphasis was helped by the speaker's square wall of a forehead, which had his eyebrows for its base while his eyes found commodious cellarage in two dark caves, overshadowed by the wall. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's mouth, which was wide and thin, and hard set ... The emphasis was helped by the speaker's voice, which was inflexible, dry and dictatorial. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's hair, which bristled on the skirts of his bald head, a plantation of firs to keep the wind from the crust of a plum pie, ... The speaker's obstinate carriage, square coat, square legs, square shoulders."³⁰ Compare this to the style of Hardy who hardly gives such a complete description of character through the physical features. "She was a fine handsome girl - not handsomer than some others, possibly - but her mobile peony mouth and large innocent eyes added eloquence to colour and slope."³¹

In Great Expectations, Pip describes his sister and her husband with strong contrasts.

Joe was a fair man, with curls of flaxen hair on each side of his smooth face, and with eyes of such a very undecided blue that they seemed to have somehow got mixed with their own

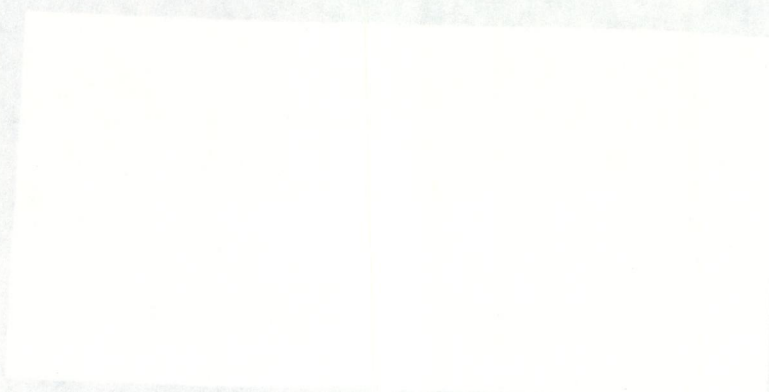
Racial Prejudice in Physiognomy



48. Comparison of an Irishman with a terrier dog
James Redfield



49. Oliver Twist, Bill Sykes and Associates
G. Cruikshank



whites. He was a mild good-natured, sweet-tempered, easy going, foolish dear fellow.³²

Mrs Joe with black hair and eyes, had such a prevailing redness of skin, that I sometimes used to wonder whether it was possible she washed herself with a nutmeg grater instead of soap. She was tall and bony, and almost always wore a coarse apron ... that was stuck full of pins and needles ... ³³

It would seem that Dickens also influenced the creations of the illustrators of his novels, George Cruickshank, the illustrator for Oliver Twist, was not a lover of physiognomy yet his illustrations received praise for their level of physiognomical detail" (see fig. 49), the mild but high minded Oliver Twist with his fine Greek nose, the artful dodger and his brother pals with their characteristic snubs and celestials"³⁴ and Ruskin described him as having "provided" the "perfect exemplifications of well-established physiognomical beliefs."³⁵

Dickens was also something of a social realist, many of his works dealing quite strongly with issues that shocked Victorian morality. Oliver Twist deals with prostitution, murder and the plight of the homeless children taken in by characters such as Fagan who lived by having the children pickpocket for him. Great Expectations also deals with deserted children and the need for money and improved social position. Hard Times takes a very strong stance on the plight of people affected by industrialisation and on the dogmatic, parsimonious Grandgrind character. Also of interest is Dicken's concern with education. He completely undermines the totalitarian education system showing it to decrease moral fibre.

The actual science of physiognomy and the Victorian's belief in it fascinates me, particularly when coupled with caricature work by the earlier artists such as Hogarth, Daumier and the illustrations

from Punch magazine and the Illustrated London News. This led me to the choice of my school project as the making of three dimensional free standing figures which examine caricature and typecasting in today's society.

Footnotes

1. Cowling, Mary. The Artist as Anthropologist, p.87
2. Wood, Christopher Victorian Panorama, p.10
3. Ibid, p.17
4. Cowling, Mary. The Artist as Anthropologist, p.151
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6. Wood, Christopher Victorian Panorama, p.43
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12. Art Journal 1866 cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.169
13. English Social Painting 1885 cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.270
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15. Fowler, L. M. Utility of Phrenology cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.8
16. Fundamental Principles of Phrenology 1868 cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.124
17. Ibid, p.120
18. Human Nature, its Principles and the Principles of Physiognomy cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.66
19. The Origin and Character of the British People cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.129
20. 'Apollo' 1871 cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.3
21. The R.A. Athenaeum 16 May 1868 cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.263
22. "Celebrated Pictures exhibited at the Manchester Royal Jubilee Exhibition, London 1885" cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.25
23. Murray, H. The British School of Art cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.136
24. Ibid, p.232
25. Ibid
26. Fritt, "A and R" cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.269
27. Ibid
28. Ibid
29. "Human and Animal Character" 1892 cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.3
30. Dickens, Charles, Hard Times, p.47
31. Hardy, Thomas Tess of the D'Urbervilles, p.51
32. Dickens, Charles Great Expectations, p.6
33. Ibid,
34. Warwick, Notes on Noses cited in The Artist as Anthropologist, p.103
35. The Artist as Anthropologist, p.116.



50. The Ragged School John Barker



51. The Schoolroom W. Bromley



CHAPTER THREE

TOWARDS AN EDUCATION SYSTEM

WHICH SERVES ALL ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY

The consistent tendency of working-class or manual worker's children to perform less well in school, and to leave school sooner than children of non-manual workers, calls for explanation and it seems reasonable to look for that explanation in the working class family.

Banks, Olive Sociology of Education, p.67

The connection between having poor parents of low status and low test scores has been the enduring problem of the sociology of Education.

Tyler, William Sociology of Education Inequality, p.99

The stringent and uncompromising class system which we have retained since the nineteenth century, unfortunately does not exclude prejudice in our education system. In fact education is perhaps where the differences of the socio-economic levels of our society show more than any other. Not only in the subjects taken by individuals while at school but also in terms of the school leaving age, participation in higher education, and of course what type of school the individual attends. The opening quotations demonstrate the level of concern, regarding this issue, felt by contemporary sociologists. One has only to glance at the tables analysing college entrants and participation reproduced later in this chapter to see how the inequality of education continues to manifest itself in Ireland today.

SOWING

To gain a better understanding of the Irish education system we first need to consider the history of that system. For this I am looking again at the nineteenth century, prior to which we did not have an education system to speak of. The Victorian middle and upper classes either engaged tutors or sent their children to boarding schools such as those mentioned in Chapter Two. But the new working-class did not have the luxury of being able to provide their children with such a constant and reliable education.

The first type available in Ireland was the Hedge School which generally had neither school building nor set curriculum and certainly did not have compulsory attendance. Needless to say this was not supported by the British Government. Throughout the first quarter of the century there developed a number of schools run by voluntary organisations such as the London Hibernia Society and by religious orders such as the Christian Brothers and the Loreto Sisters. In 1811 the Kildare Place Society set up religiously neutral schools for the poor. They received government support but the fact that they were non denominational did not encourage attendance. There was no control over the numbers of children in classes and many children did not live close enough to a school to attend, therefore if an education was received it might well have to have been very rudimentary.

In 1824 there were 11,000 schools for over a half-million children taught by 12,000 teachers.

When a system of national schools was actually set up, the curriculum was rigid. Between 1872 and 1899 this consisted of the "three rs", spelling and needlework for girls, agriculture for boys, geography and grammar after fourth class for both. The worst thing about these schools was the 'fact based results programme' which governed them. It was called this because the teachers' salaries were supplemented by results fees which were paid to them on the basis of grades obtained by their pupils at annual examinations, carried out under the supervision of inspectors of the National Education Board.

Under the results system, the children were driven, not led. It was all hard work forced upon them by their teachers and the course pursued in the schools appeared to be based on the ground principle that you can be educated whether you please or do not please ... The teacher really taught the children what to think and say, and not how to think and find suitable expression for the thought ...¹

The growing awareness of this, due largely to the findings of the Belmore Commission, led to the Revised Programme set up in 1900. Under the instruction of W. J. M. Starkie, education was moved away from a concentration on the accumulation of vast quantities of knowledge to gaining an understanding of knowledge; the emphasis was shifting from quantity to quality. Perhaps the influence of Rousseau was starting to appear here. "I prefer to call the man who has this knowledge master rather than teacher, since it is a question of guidance rather than instruction ... The art of teaching ... consists in making the pupil wish to learn."²

The actual curriculum was also called into question for this revised programme, it had been found that:

This system of National Education is wanting in two requirements central to every system of education. One of these is of course the freedom of religious training not of the intellectual faculties but of the eyes, the hands, the fingers, such training as will serve to prepare the school-boy for what is to be his work in life."³

This issue of a more technical training seems very obvious now, but then teaching subjects of absolutely no relevance to the future trade of the children seemed to be the preferred thing to do. The revised programme included the three rs, drawing, elementary science, singing and physical education.

Under the new code the teacher adopting the so-called heuristic method - a very old method, revived under a new name - endeavours first of all to awaken and excite the interest of his pupils. But he does not proceed, as under the results system, to allay and satisfy the interest thus aroused. But he rather supplies them with the means of doing so for themselves. The children thus really educate themselves, the teacher contributes as his share forms, time and guidance.⁴

Inequality shows itself even more in intermediate education. Prior to 1878 there was no state aid at all for this level. In 1871, of the 584 superior schools, with a population of 21,225 students, only 50% were Catholics, a ridiculously low number considering that 77% of the population was Catholic.

The Intermediate Education (Ireland) Act of 1878 saw the first grant of £1,000,000 taken from the Church Disestablishment fund. The annual income from this was to be used to administer an examination system in which there were three grades, junior, middle and senior. However this act contained no provisions for salaries, teaching and conditions of employment, neither did it allow funds for the building or equipping of schools. In this Intermediate system there was a very strong bias towards certain subjects, i.e.

Greek, Latin and English received	1,000 marks
French	700 marks
Celtic	600 marks
German, Italian, Art, Music and sciences	500 marks

This was not evened out until the 1900 Intermediate Education Act which not only made marks for all subjects equal, but also gave school boards the power to make rules, subject to parliamentary approval, and control could now be exercised over the provision of teaching staff, equipment and suitability of premises.

Despite these attempted reforms, the curriculum remained largely based in the classics. The introduction of the technical subjects which had seemed to make education more relevant for the lower or manual classes became useless as "By 1904 the board admitted that most of the teachers had failed to gain any connected grasp or knowledge of the subject."⁵ Public opinion, including that of parents, did not consider handwork to be of educational significance and in 1905 it was dropped as an obligatory subject. "... one of the main reasons for its failure was its identification with technical education. Teachers were adamant that technical training had no place in the national school."⁶

Technical education, despite exclusion from the national school, had been developing throughout the century with the foundation in 1825 of Mechanics Institutes around the country and in 1860 Schools of Design such as the Crawford School in Cork were founded. Government legislation in 1852/3 led to the establishment of a department to be responsible for the expansion and administration of art and science education. However, the importance of a sound introduction to these subjects at school level

having been overlooked, did not encourage individuals to consider applying to these schools or institutes. Also of importance to note about these schools is the strong bias against the Irish language, in favour of English and the classics, etc.

This last element was immediately rectified with the emergence of the Irish Free State. The Irish language was allotted a much more important role in education and a strong Irish emphasis was introduced to history, geography, music, etc. The emphasis veered so much towards learning Irish, that other subjects started to suffer. The 1926 conference led to a wider representation of subjects in the curriculum. The period between the 1960s and the 1980s saw more change in Irish education than any other. The 1966 Investment in Education Report included an assessment of existing schools. This report showed that the number leaving school early was still very high.

In one cohort of 55,000 pupils, 17,500 left after primary (11,000 of these without the primary certificate), and 13,500 left secondary with the junior certificate. One element which had caused concern was the age of pupils in primary school, who when at the age of 13 or so should have moved to post-primary but kept failing and were held back. In 1964, 37,176 pupils over the age of 13 were still in primary school. By 1978/9 they had managed to reduce the number to 6,866.

Also gradually improving in Ireland was the number of students staying on in school. This was helped by the raising in 1972 of the school leaving age to 15. The emergence in 1963 of a three year junior cycle in vocational schools, the opening of comprehensives in

1966 and by 1974 good representation of non fee paying secondary and community schools nationwide, led to the increase in students in post-primary schools mentioned above.

	<u>1964</u>	<u>1984</u>
<u>Primary</u>	<u>496,000</u>	<u>575,800</u>
Aided	475,000	563,000
Non-aided	21,000	12,000
 <u>Secondary</u>	 <u>129,500</u>	 <u>324,500</u>
Junior Cycle	99,000	208,000
Senior Cycle	26,000	100,000
Other	4,500	16,500

TABLE 1

Aine Hyland, History of Education

Another factor which would have contributed to this improvement in attendance was the introduction in 1970 of guidance counsellors or teachers on the school staff. They were qualified to help students not only with personal problems but also of greater importance to the school, with career choices, advising on subjects and examinations of most use to the individual. This evidence shows the increase in the number of students participating to leaving certificate level.

So what is there for them upon completing these grades? What inequalities remain in our system? Why is there still a higher proportion of lower/manual class children leaving school early? The root is within the history of Irish education; but with that

knowledge what can be or is being done to create an environment more conducive to encouraging the overall development of pupils irrespective of their class background?

REAPING

With the development of public or national education described above, the role of the family regarding the child's socialisation and education had changed. Also contributing to this change was "the advance of industrialisation ..." which "... has progressively removed from the family its educational function."⁷

The whole structure of a child's first six or seven years has changed immeasurably. The advent of kindergartens, playschools and the increasing popularity of Montessori schools have perpetuated this and removed even more of the influence of the family on the growing child. However the family, despite whatever elements concerning child development it may have lost in recent years, does remain the single most importance influence on the young child and it is still almost wholly responsible for its socialisation." The first five or six years of life are the critical foundation years and even when at that age the child starts school he continues to live with and be influenced by his immediate family environment."⁸

Therefore one cannot even consider overlooking the huge importance of family influence on the child especially regarding their education. "The family exerts a profound influence on the response of the child to school."⁹

John Coolahan in his book Irish education cites an important problem faced by the child when leaving primary school.

"The transition to second-level schools sometimes causes considerable difficulty for pupils. As well as the normal problems of coping with a wider range of subjects, choosing subjects, dealing with different teachers for various subjects and new approaches to study and examinations, there is often a significant change in the curricular and educational policies. 10

This is a time when the support and attitude of parents is crucial to the child's own acceptance of his new school situation. Decisions made at this stage are the basis of his whole secondary education and whether or not he will continue third level.

There is an inequality in our education system which can be seen when one looks at Table 2. This table shows the proportion of entrants to college based on class; determined by parental occupation. The unskilled manual workers' children, when compared with those of the professional class, although they make up a larger percentage of the population have a representation of only 1.3% at college level compared with the 12% attained by the professionals. This is generally not an inequality that can be controlled by an specific discriminatory group as there are grants available and many of the universities and colleges work solely on a points system which should eradicate any possibility of personal discrimination taking place. So how can this happen?

There is an indirect way in which this discrimination takes place. An individual's chances of entry into college are determined at an early age by (a) parental attitudes which are an important factor, and (b) the type of school to which the child is sent.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF 1986 ENTRANTS TO HIGHER EDUCATION & NATIONAL POPULATION UNDER 15 YRS IN 1981 WITH PARTICIPATION RATIOS BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP FOR 1986 AND 1980				
Socio-Economic Groups	Higher Education Entrants in 1986	National Population Under 15 yrs in 1981	Participation Ratio 1986	Participation Ratio 1980
	%	%		
Farmers	20.8	14.3	1.45	1.04
Other Agricultural Occupations	1.4	2.9	0.48	0.21
Higher Professional	12.0	4.0	3.00	3.93
Lower Professional	9.2	4.3	2.14	2.29
Employers & Managers	18.2(15.8)*	9.2	1.98(1.72)*	2.75
Salaried Employees	6.2	2.7	2.30	2.93
Intermediate Non - Manual Workers	9.8(12.3)*	10.2	0.96(1.21)*	1.11
Other Non-Manual Workers	5.7	12.8	0.45	0.50
Skilled Manual Workers	12.9	25.4	0.51	0.51
Semi-Skilled Manual Workers	2.5	5.9	0.42	0.49
Unskilled Manual Workers	1.3	8.2	0.16	0.11
TOTAL %	100.0	100.0	-	-
N	14,388	969,951	-	-

TABLE 2



The tradition of secondary school pupils, rather than those from vocational or community schools, gaining a majority of university places has not changed. 48% of vocational school students in third-level are attending RTCs and 22% are attending university; whereas 39% of students from secondary schools choose university. Overall 77% of new third level entrants had been secondary school students, 12% were from vocational schools, 5.4% from community schools and 2.3% from comprehensives (see Table 3).

Table 4 shows even more clearly the level of inequality regarding who goes to college. The most important aspect to note is the transfer rate which shows the percentage of each of the Leaving Certificate classes enrolling in third level education.

An interesting factor to note is that the fee-paying secondary schools which contain only 6.8% of the total amount of students taking the Leaving Certificate have a representation of 9.4% entering third level, which is the highest transfer rate at 45%; compared with the 34% transfer rate attained by non-fee paying secondary schools.

The type of post primary school chosen by the child's family plays a very important part at this level. Children who are sent to both types of secondary school tend to achieve higher grades and remain in school to the Leaving Certificate, than those attending vocational or community schools.

In secondary schools in 1986, less than 5% of the chosen cohort had dropped out before the Intermediate Certificate (now Junior Certificate) and almost 85% remained to complete the senior cycle. By contrast the vocational schools had lost 9% by third year, and

Distribution of New Entrants by Type of Higher Education College entered and by Type of last Post-Primary School Attended*							
College Type	Second- ary	Voca- tional	Compre- hensive	Com- munity	Other Schools	TOTAL	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	N
Universities	39.1	22.3	28.3	25.8	78.3	37.0	6,134
NIHEs	6.8	6.0	13.6	8.1	3.6	6.8	1,132
DIT	11.4	16.9	11.8	18.8	10.7	12.5	2,065
RTCs	35.1	48.2	36.8	39.6	3.4	36.2	5,995
Colleges of Education	5.6	4.9	6.9	5.0	1.7	5.4	901
Other Colleges	2.0	1.6	2.6	2.9	2.2	2.0	338
TOTAL %	100	100	100	100	100	100	-
TOTAL N	12,854	2,023	389	887	412	-	16,565

TABLE 3

Clancy, Patrick, Who Goes to College, Dublin Higher Education Authority, p.31



DISTRIBUTION OF 1985/86 LEAVING CERTIFICATE CLASS AND 1986 NEW ENTRANTS TO HIGHER EDUCATION BY SCHOOL TYPE					
School Type	Leaving Certificate Class Enrolments 1985/86		New Entrants to Higher Education 1986		Transfer Rate
	N	%	N	%	%
Fee-Paying Secondary	3,386	6.8	1,526	9.4	45.1
Non Fee-Paying Secondary	33,225	66.6	11,332	70.2	34.1
Vocational	8,364	16.8	2,015	12.5	24.1
Comprehensive	1,299	2.6	388	2.4	29.9
Community	3,613	7.2	888	5.5	24.6
TOTAL	49,887	100	16,149*	100	32.4

TABLE 4

Clancy, Patrick, Who Goes to College, Dublin Higher Education
Authority, p.32



had only 43% of the original number remaining until the leaving certificate year.

Parental attitude is particularly important in these figures, as more often than not children conform to their parents' expectations whether it is the school their parents choose for them or how long the parents feel they should remain in the school. The value that parents place on education has a profound effect on their children's level of participation.

The last tables (Tables 5 and 6) for consideration here are concerned with the specific courses chosen according to socio-economic status, especially with regard to whether or not students remain within the type of field that their parents chose.

The largest enrolment groups for the two major Dublin universities (TCD and UCD) are the higher professional and employer and managerial classes. As one might expect law, medicine, dentistry and economic and social studies are the courses most chosen by students from higher professional families. Children from families of skilled manual workers tend to choose construction studies and general engineering.

What these statistics show above all is the continuing code, whereby children are staying within the socio-economic niche of their parents. Children from families of low socio-economic background tend to go to vocational or community schools whereas children from white collar/professional families attend secondary schools, where the rate of students taking the Leaving Certificate and entering third-level is higher. Children who attend vocational schools and go on to college do not choose universities but tend to remain within their technical/manual background.

TABLE 5

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF NEW ENTRANTS BY FIELD OF STUDY IN HEA-DESIGNATED COLLEGES																			
Socio-Economic Groups	Field of Study	Arts	Education	Art & Design	Social Science	Economic & Social Studies	European Studies	Communications and Information Studies	Commerce	Law	Science	Engineering	Architecture	Medicine	Dentistry	Veterinary Medicine	Agricultural Science & Forestry	Dairy Science	TOTAL
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Farmers		14.7	31.8	5.4	16.0	8.1	28.8	18.6	17.7	14.5	17.0	18.0	4.9	14.3	23.3	37.5	50.7	54.8	17.5
Other Agricultural Occ.		0.7	3.4	-	-	0.7	0.8	1.7	1.2	0.6	1.2	1.7	-	0.8	-	4.2	1.4	-	1.1
Higher Professional		16.1	1.4	14.1	17.0	27.0	9.3	8.5	13.2	29.1	17.2	18.6	31.7	29.9	27.4	20.8	9.2	-	17.1
Lower Professional		11.6	12.8	21.7	10.0	8.8	4.2	13.6	9.3	11.2	11.2	10.7	7.3	13.3	15.1	16.7	7.7	-	11.1
Employers and Managers		19.1	10.1	30.4	22.0	30.4	11.9	21.2	17.8	21.2	15.4	15.2	17.1	16.3	15.1	8.3	9.9	9.7	17.4
Salaried Employees		7.9	4.1	4.3	5.0	8.1	10.2	10.2	10.0	6.7	8.5	7.7	9.8	8.3	4.1	4.2	7.0	6.5	8.1
Intermediate Non-Manual Workers		14.3	8.1	4.3	14.0	10.1	13.6	15.3	14.7	7.8	13.3	12.0	17.1	8.5	5.5	6.3	7.7	16.1	12.7
Other Non-Manual Workers		4.5	4.7	3.3	4.0	1.4	7.6	2.5	3.7	2.2	3.2	3.8	2.4	2.3	1.4	-	2.8	3.2	3.7
Skilled Manual Workers		8.6	18.2	14.1	8.0	2.0	9.3	5.1	9.1	3.9	10.2	9.7	9.8	5.3	6.8	-	3.5	9.7	8.7
Semi Skilled Manual Workers		2.3	5.4	2.2	3.0	2.7	4.2	2.5	3.1	1.7	2.2	2.4	-	1.0	1.4	2.1	-	-	2.4
Unskilled Manual Workers		0.2	-	-	1.0	0.7	-	0.8	0.2	1.1	0.5	0.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.3
TOTAL	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	N	2,145	148	92	100	148	118	117	916	179	1,209	887	41	398	73	48	142	31	6,793

Clancy, Patrick, Who Goes to College, Dublin Higher Education Authority, p.88

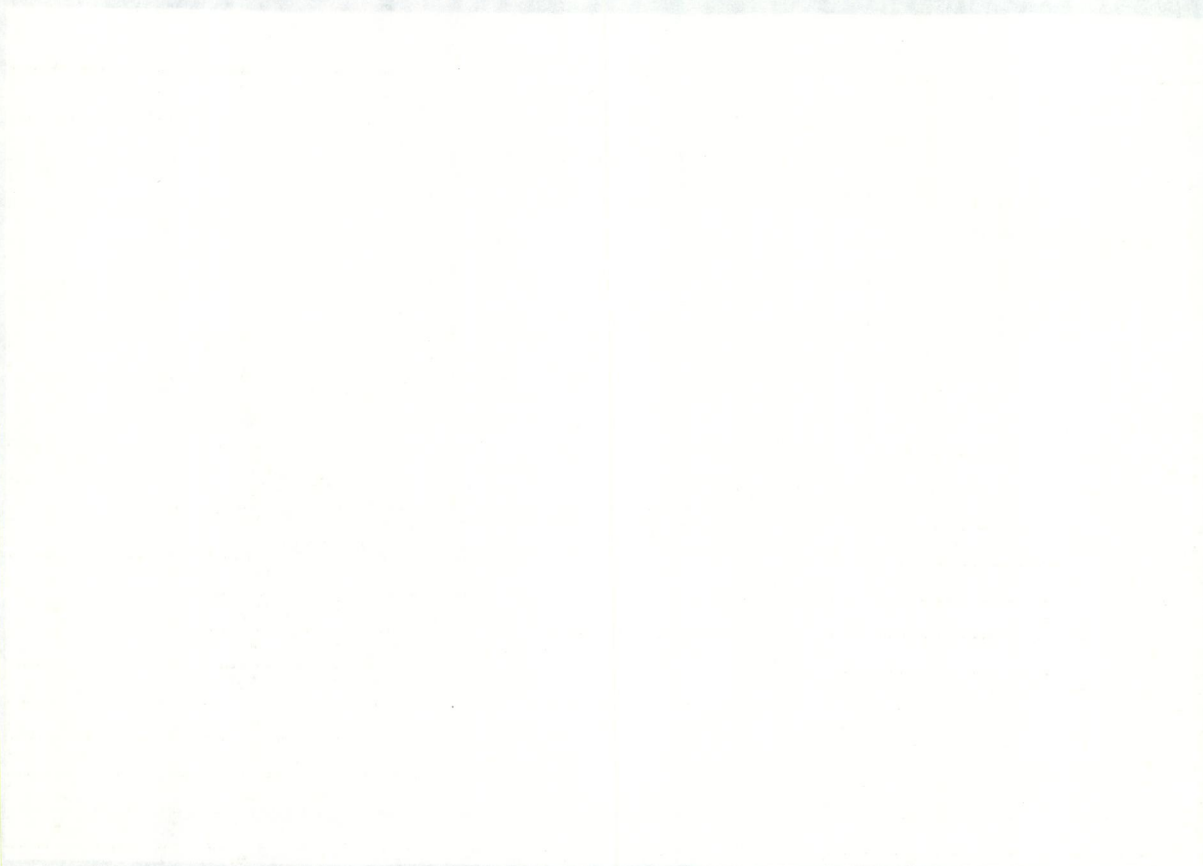


TABLE 6

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF NEW ENTRANTS BY FIELD OF STUDY IN NON HEA-DESIGNATED COLLEGES										
Field of Study	Construction Studies	General Engineering	Science	Art & Design	Computer Studies	Business, Administrative & Secretarial Studies	Hotel, Catering & Tourism	Education	General Studies	TOTAL
Socio-Economic Groups	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Farmers	19.8	22.1	31.3	12.8	21.3	24.1	19.3	32.2	17.8	23.8
Other Agricultural Occ.	0.6	2.0	2.3	2.3	1.2	1.3	3.1	0.7	2.5	1.7
Higher Professional	7.6	7.0	6.4	16.2	7.3	6.8	8.4	4.7	8.7	7.4
Lower Professional	6.7	6.3	5.9	10.7	6.6	6.6	8.4	14.4	7.1	7.5
Employers and Managers	16.1	16.9	16.3	19.4	14.8	21.1	29.2	18.5	17.8	18.8
Salaried Employees	4.4	4.9	3.9	6.0	2.6	4.9	4.2	3.8	4.1	4.5
Intermediate Non-Manual Workers	7.8	7.1	6.5	7.7	8.4	7.4	3.7	8.6	7.5	7.2
Other Non-Manual Workers	7.8	7.9	7.0	7.5	8.9	8.2	5.5	4.8	9.1	7.5
Skilled Manual Workers	23.5	20.1	16.0	13.6	20.1	14.8	15.9	9.6	18.3	16.6
Unskilled Manual Workers	2.6	2.4	2.6	1.7	4.0	2.3	0.8	1.1	3.3	2.3
Semi-Skilled Manual Workers	3.1	3.4	1.7	2.1	4.9	2.4	1.6	1.6	3.7	2.6
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
TOTAL N	540	1,604	999	469	427	2,249	383	708	241	7,620

Clancy, Patrick, Who Goes to College, Dublin Higher Education Authority, p.89



The progress we have made in the last one hundred and fifty years is minimal. There may now be more opportunity and more aid but if individuals do not avail of these things they are useless. The process of progress in this area will have to be gradual, starting with education. We need to revise our approach to equality of education. But that alone will not create an environment where these inequalities no longer exist.

Hymen said "The working class by and large do not see (educational) credentials in terms of personal fulfilment or even as a means of acquiring personally satisfying jobs."⁴¹ The tradition stemming from the last century of the working class requiring tangible rewards and job security, above personal satisfaction, maintains the concept of education being superfluous, above attaining the basic certificate needed for obtaining work.

It appears to me that radical change in the early socialisation of the child could overcome many of the difficulties inherent in this situation. It is important that parents should introduce children to educational toys and picture books at an early age. They should also bring them to visit places of interest. Developing the visual perception level of the toddler sets him on a course where because he is more immediately aware, it will become easier for him to learn and develop at school.

A positive attitude towards the child's education is also an extremely important factor. The motivation of students has long been a question in educational development. In 1943 Maslow proposed his theory of a system of needs/gratifications which were necessary to development. He showed that "deficiency needs" such as health, safety, security and esteem had to be gratified before one could

move on to the higher levels of "growth needs" such as learning. This becomes clear in practice when it is related to the attitudes towards education held by the different social classes. These attitudes are directly linked to the individual's living conditions. Despite improvements in living conditions, some areas of society are not aspiring to the "growth needs" as they still have appalling standards and one cannot expect to create an environment conducive to learning where there is squalor or pest problems.

For example, currently in the London Borough of Hackney, a high catchment area for the working class, a serious problem of cockroach infestation affects 5,000 to 7,000 homes (at least 15,000 to 20,000 people). This type of situation coupled with the overcrowding experienced by many families will obviously affect a child's ability to learn.

The middle classes are not necessarily any more aware of encouraging socialisation but many factors in their style of living make their job easier. Initially they generally have already overcome the deficiency needs through better housing. They tend to have more books and periodicals and the monetary ability whereby they can afford to bring children on holidays and to places of interest. They also are the class which sends their offspring to Montessori and/or to play school where from an early age the child is encouraged to learn. More space in the home also allows the child freedom to study or play.

William Tyler puts forward the "good home" theory which states that:

the environmental stimulation of the home is independent of its position on a scale of social or material advantage; rather, the processes of socialisation, the value orientations of the family, and the level of parental involvement tend to be the most important predictions of success. ¹²

Therefore, while one cannot overlook the advantage held by the middle classes and the sometimes bad living conditions experienced by the working class, the attitude taken by the parents is all important in determining their child's response to schooling, the development of his sense of personal responsibilities and subsequently how well he will achieve.

A NEW SEED

It is in fact nothing short of a miracle that the modern methods of instruction have not yet entirely strangled the holy curiosity of inquiry, for this delicate little plant, aside from stimulation stands mainly in need of freedom, without this it goes to wrack and ruin without fail.

Albert Einstein¹³

The idea of a non-restrictive learning environment is not new and I have shown where an attempt towards it was made already in the Irish education system. To make it successful one needs to consider a re-education of society at large.

Rousseau, in putting forward his ideas, had stated how strongly he felt about opportunity in education "the education of all must be one and the same, and that the supervision of this education must be public not private ... public training is wanted in all things of public interest."¹⁴

Ideally the first step in this re-education would be a multi-class school system including the elimination of privileged education so that all may have equal opportunity.

In the transfer rates of Irish students from school to college we see that students from private schools although a minority have a stronger chance of getting into university. As long as this tradition continues it hampers the re-education of society.

Teachers should receive in their training an understanding of how not to create stereotypes among their students. William Tyler states "Since there is nothing inherently 'deficient' in the child from a poor background it must be the teachers who are teaching him to 'act dumb' and consequently to fail."¹⁵ This condemnation is

very strong, perhaps too much so, but even still it should be taken into account when considering a teacher's tendency to encourage their students towards "appropriate goals".

Rousseau is right when he says "... the most dangerous period in human life lies between birth and the age of twelve."¹⁵ By the time a student enters secondary school most of his goals are decided, not perhaps specifically his chosen career, but the general direction his life will take. He further describes adolescence as "the crisis which forms the bridge between the child and the man."¹⁶

I believe that the role of the teacher needs to be re-considered to take into account the pressures and complications that their students face. The teacher should be a person who is capable of being a social worker, a friend, a surrogate parent and a role model as well as fulfilling the curricular requirements.

To be these things is simpler than it seems initially. It involves transferring some of the energy used in teaching the chosen subject to other areas in order to encourage overall development. The concept of 'whole person' learning is taken up by Carl Rogers:

Education had traditionally thought of learning as an orderly type of cognitive, left brain activity". This area of the brain, " ... goes step by step, ... accepts only what is sure and clear. It deals in ideas and concepts ... but to involve the whole person in learning means to set free and utilize the right brain as well ... It is intuitive. It grasps the essence before it understands the details ... It is aesthetic rather than logical. It makes creative leaps. ¹⁷

Educational theory needs to undergo a re-organisation which will create a situation where "learning combines the logical and the intuitive, the intellect and the feelings, the concept and the experience, the idea and the meaning. When we learn in that way we

are whole."¹⁸ In attempting to develop holistic learning most advocates believe physical fitness is also extremely important. Not in terms of being extremely athletic but that a healthy body means a healthy mind. Rousseau felt strongly that it had to be a significant part of the learning process, and in Freedom to Learn, Rogers states that from experimenting "self reports indicate that being physically in shape increases energy levels in the classroom."¹⁹ To bring this about, learning students should also be more active in the classroom. Instead of the old method whereby the teacher doles out pages of facts throughout the class time; there should be more trial and error learning.

It needs to include the development of students' own autonomy and reasoning powers through worksheets, questionnaires, discussions, debates and seminars. Doing this does not mean disregarding the curriculum, it should be adapted to be taught through these means. It, as a possible system, means more work for all involved but the rewards make it worthwhile.

Third level students who were exposed to Carol Rogers learning programme in America said:

I have made considerable gains." "I learned my strong points and weak points ... this allowed me to grow as a person. I could build and improve on what I learned about myself." "I learned as much about myself and what I want to do with my life this semester as I have in the past three years." "I've learned to be more optimistic. ²⁰

A shift to this "freedom" based learning which will encourage overall development of the individual, will initiate a population of people who are above all, aware of their own self-worth, their value to themselves and others; the ability to take responsibility for

themselves and their right to have the freedom to make their own choices concerning what goals they want to achieve.

As I stated this would be a gradual process which would serve to re-educate all levels of society simultaneously and would in time serve to overcome many of the inequalities we carry from our Victorian forefathers.

Footnotes

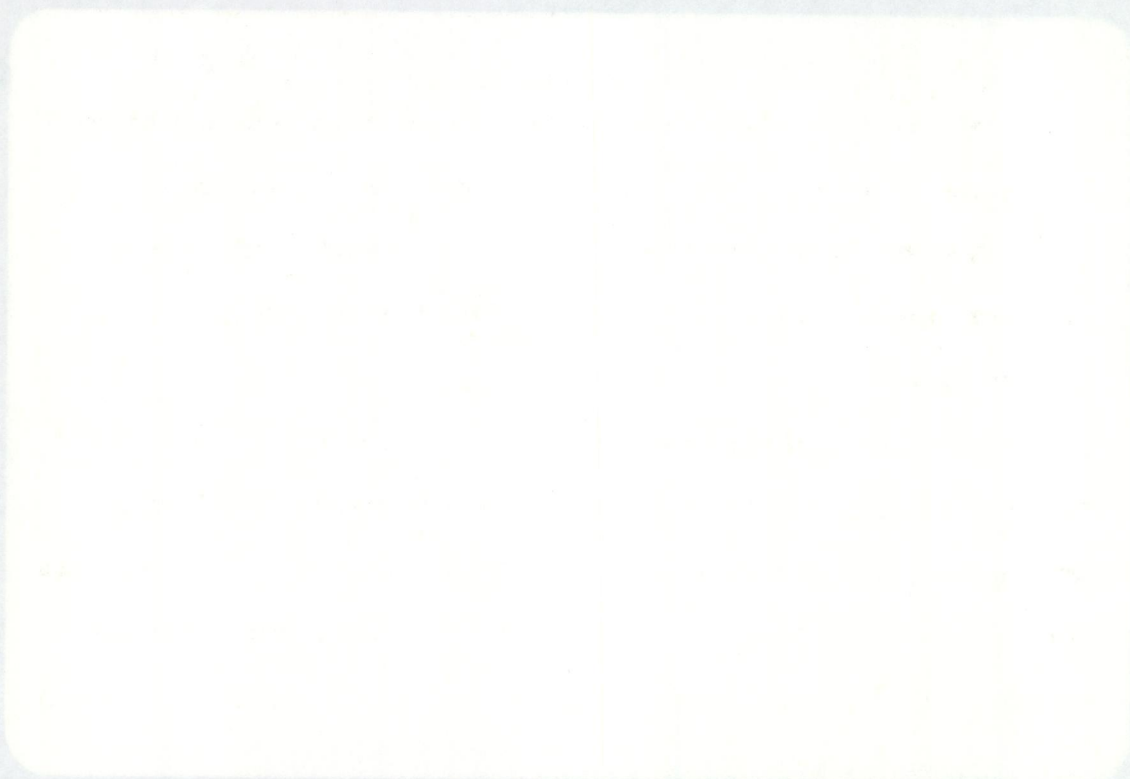
1. 69th Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland. Appendix section 1, p.11.
2. Rousseau, Emile, cited in Doctrines of the Great Educators, p.114.
3. Walsh, P. J. William J. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin cited in The Belmore Commission and Technical Education Aine Hyland, p.221.
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16. Rusk, Robert R Doctrines of the Great Educators, p.57
17. Rousseau, Emile cited in Doctrines of the Great Educators, p.124
18. Rogers, Carl Freedom to Learn for the 80s, p.159
19. Ibid, p.166
20. Ibid, p.167
21. Ibid, p.174-6.



52. Rachel and the Judge



53. The Group and the Arab



CHAPTER FOUR

TYPECASTING

A School Project

The idea for my school project stemmed mainly from my interest in the Victorian "science of physiognomy", as it led me to consider how much we still use its essence in our judgement of people in modern society. I felt that it would be interesting to see how students in a private school approached the idea of typecasting.

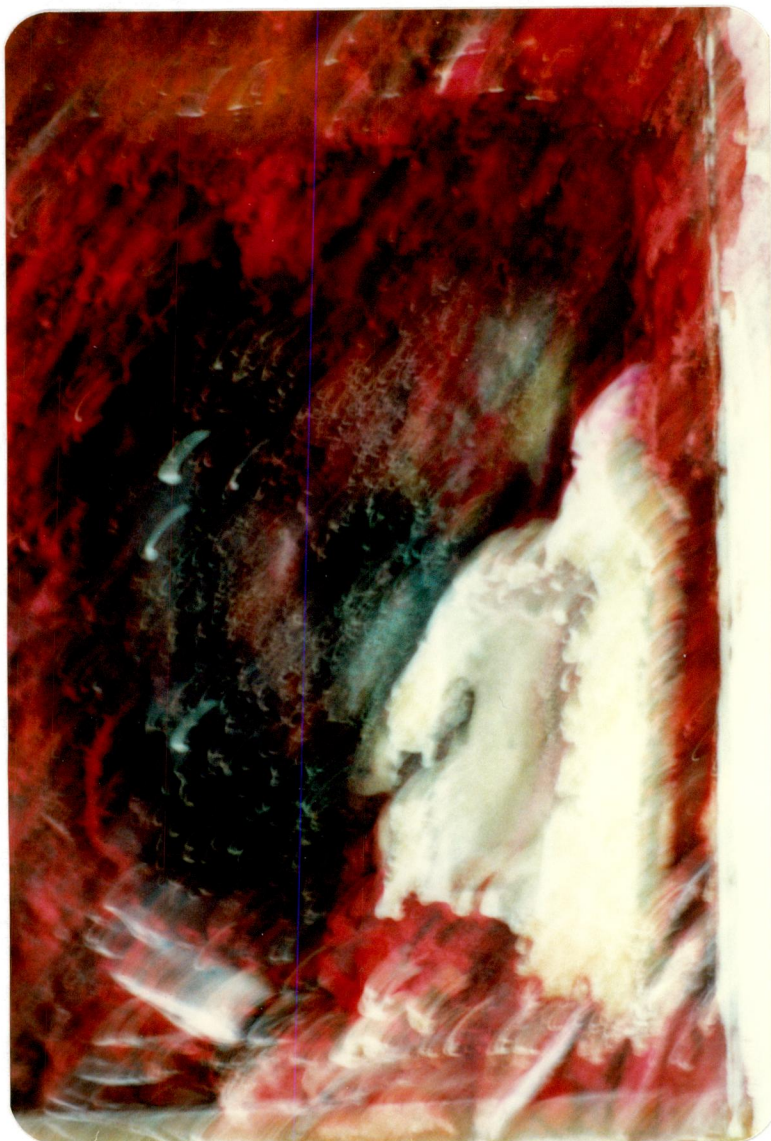
When I introduced the project to them I asked them to choose a "type" of person to portray by making a three dimensional figure. They were very animated by the concept and each group fixed very quickly on what element of society they were going to represent. It was their level of social awareness which struck me most, as they chose (a) a judge to be represented in a very unflattering way, relevant at the time of the upheaval in the British judicial system; (b) a tramp, which considers the unfortunate side of modern society and (c) an Arab, based in reality on Saddam Hussein which was of particular interest as it was at the outbreak of the Gulf War that they made these choices.

I decided on a three dimensional project because it tends to create a very active and lively working environment. I let them choose a group to work in as I wanted to see how they coordinated to achieve a productive working system. It would also take them far too long as individuals to make figures such as these while I wanted to keep a good momentum going.



54. Research drawing for personal college work



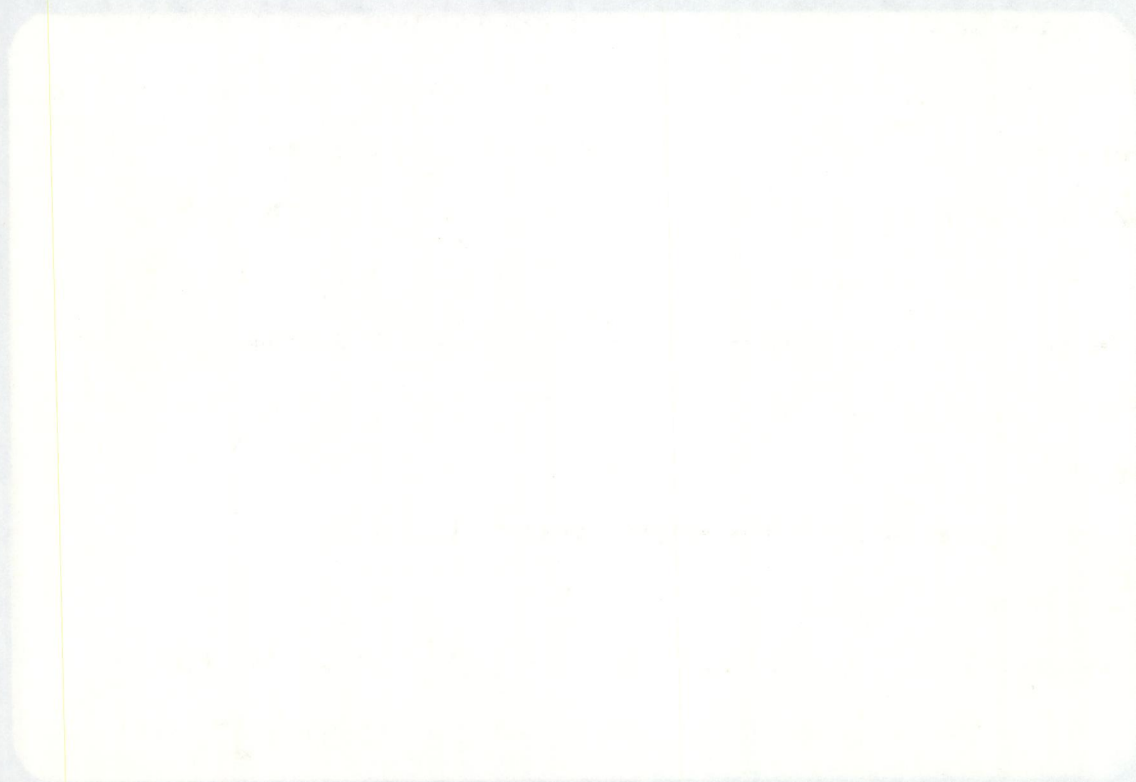


Notebook work leading
to tapestry design for
college

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The use of three dimensional figures was significant not only in terms of creating an awareness of typecasting but also to develop their understanding of human anatomy and form. This was done by the time spent discussing anatomy especially joints and what makes the body move. I likened the chicken wire framework to the bone and muscle structure and the foam layer to the skin. The back-up work of drawing was very important in terms of their understanding of proportion and preparing them for the creation of form in the actual building of the figure. There were problems for them to overcome during the construction; balance in particular, but they came up with the idea of supporting the figure with lengths of wood inside the legs. When it came to clothing the figures they were again careful choosing the items very well. The group who made the judge excelled here by making a wig, cloak and a book to complete the overall look of the figure. To finish the project took longer than I expected largely due to a lot of trial and error work when creating the hands and faces of the figures in foam. The students were very particular about what they wanted with regard to facial features and I gave them the freedom to make these choices for themselves. I believe that the approach I took and that by giving them more of the responsibility without letting it get out of control paid off as they consistently worked hard to finish the figures off, making them as descriptive of the chosen "type" as possible.

The project was not only geared towards developing an understanding of form and typecasting but also to develop observational skills in the students. For this we spent the first term drawing from life using different techniques to sharpen their

observation. Initially they worked in paint showing direction and movement in the figure. We then moved to studying shape and form in the face, hands and the whole figure looking at light and shade on the model. They were then able to use what we had studied about form when it came to designing and making their figures. This understanding of form was heightened by making the figures as they had to physically deal with problems of anatomy, in particular when it came to distorting the proportions of the body for emphasising their level of caricature. The work I showed them of caricatures from Victorian magazines was especially interesting because of the study of physiognomy. This made them consider their choice of facial features very carefully. With the figures completed we are making a stage or background in which all three can be placed. This will be built from cardboard and is going to be based on a courtroom. It will serve to develop their sense of scale regarding figure and environment which will be of use to them for further observational work. I hope to have the construction completed before the final week of term so that we can make drawing studies from the scene including both the figures and the background. This will be done so that they can put into practice the observation of the spacial quality between figure and environment which is something they will need no matter what choices they make for their Junior Certificate.

I feel this year in both my teaching and my personal work I have developed a lot. As both have been going on simultaneously it has been fascinating to see how although the 'products' are totally different the thematic link between them has remained. I had not expected the students participating in my school project to draw on

such strong social contrasts without a lot of direction from me. The fact that they did was great and how they then worked so wholeheartedly on the project I think that they really gained an awful lot from it on all levels. It did develop their overall awareness specifically their observation and understanding of form and also their understanding of the harshness of judgement that one can make of other people wholly by appearance. The problems encountered only seemed to have led to a further understanding for all of us. The balance of the figures was very important as they had to consider how a human figure balances and from that try to relate it to the figures they were making. If I was doing the project again I would make the understanding of balance a priority along with form as I have seen how important it was in making the figures. I also feel that the level of responsibility I gave them was very useful for them as they quickly learned to make group decisions. I didn't stand back and watch and I was actively involved at every stage but the fact that I directed them rather than instructed them the whole way made the project more successful.



Tapestry in progress

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58



CONCLUSION

All the prejudices and inequalities inherent in nineteenth century society are still embodied in education

Despite:

changes in legislation

the introduction of non-fee paying schools and

the availability of grants for third level training

the actual approaches to education maintain the old attitudes and hold back the progress necessary to create a society, where through education, real equality of opportunity will exist.

Re-education of the human element is the only way to change this.

Until this happens, notwithstanding how it may seem to the misinformed observer subjected to political propaganda ...

Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose!

(The more things change the more they stay the same.)

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