

# 12 The Preparation Of Humanistic Teachers

*I see the facilitation of learning as the aim of education. . . . We know . . . that the facilitation of such learning rests not upon the teaching skills of the leader, not upon his curricular planning, not upon his use of audio-visual aids, not upon the programmed learning he utilizes, not upon his lectures and presentations, not upon an abundance of books, though each of these might at one time or another be utilized as an important resource. No, the facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities which exist in the personal relationship between the facilitator and the learner.*

—Carl R. Rogers, FREEDOM TO LEARN \*

In Chapter 1 it was stated that preparation for teaching in the school of the future, the humanistic school, would consist of education in human relationships. It should be clear now why this is so. In Chapter 7 it was emphasized that it is not teaching methods which make a good teacher, but the person of the teacher. It is thus paradoxical, and difficult to understand, that the emphasis in teacher education has been on methods, as well as on subject matter.

\* (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill, 1967), pp. 105-106.

Teacher education, along with education, has been the object of criticism. Coladarci states that "the contents and procedures of teacher education frequently have no demonstrable relevance to the actual teaching task."<sup>1</sup> Teachers have been highly critical of and dissatisfied with the preparation they have received. Silberman concludes: "That the preparation should be substantially different from what they now receive seems hardly open to debate; there is probably no aspect of contemporary education on which there is greater unanimity of opinion than that teacher education needs a vast overhaul. Virtually everyone is dissatisfied with the current state of teacher education: the students being educated, the teachers in the field, the principals, superintendents, and school board members who hire them, the liberal arts faculties, and the lay critics of education."<sup>2</sup>

Those who have been concerned about student achievement in subject matter areas have focused upon the inadequate preparation of teachers in subject matter content, as well as in the liberal arts in general. Changes have been made toward this end in many teacher education programs. Other than this, there has been very little change in the preparation of teachers for the last fifty years. Although knowledge of subject matter is clearly necessary, it is not sufficient to make a good teacher. More emphasis on methods courses does not seem to be the answer, since there are probably too many now, with much overlapping, and repetition. Yet these two alternatives appear to be the only solutions to the problem of teacher education which have been seriously considered. Neither Silberman nor the other critics of education propose any approach to the preparation of humanistic teachers.

It might appear that the answer would be more courses in psychology, an area in which teachers certainly have too little background. A course in general psychology and one in educational psychology and/or child development is all that most teachers have, and experience with teachers who have just completed their undergraduate education leads one to conclude that they might as well have had none, as far as what they remember or have learned. It seems apparent that something is wrong with the courses.

If one looks at what is taught in these undergraduate courses, one quickly realizes what is wrong. The standard courses have nothing to do with people, with real students in real classrooms. They focus upon research done in laboratories (often with rats) or in special experimental situations. The courses consist of review of research study after research

<sup>1</sup> Arthur P. Coladarci, in Foreword to Seymour B. Sarason, Kenneth S. Davidson & Burton Blatt, *The Preparation of Teachers: an Unstudied Problem in Education* (New York: Wiley, 1962).

<sup>2</sup> Charles E. Silberman, *Crisis in the Classroom* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 413.

study which are irrelevant to teaching since no generalizations can be made to the real classroom situation. There is little attempt to teach principles, or a theory which can be applied in real life situations. To do this would be to depart from a rigorous approach to psychology as a science.

### THE TEACHER AS A PSYCHOLOGIST

The teacher works with human beings. Since teaching is a psychological relationship, a helping relationship, it should be apparent that teaching is applied psychology, and that the basic science of education, and the basic preparation of teachers, is, or should be, psychology. There has been some recognition of this: the psychology of learning has received increasing attention in education. But not without difficulties, however. First, the psychology of learning currently available is, as suggested above, essentially irrelevant to classroom teaching. Bruner and Skinner have attempted to remedy this situation, by working on a psychology (or technology) of teaching or instruction.

But this is not sufficient, because of the second difficulty. The psychology which has been applied to education and teaching is too *narrow* a psychology, being essentially a cognitive psychology of learning and teaching. If teacher education is inadequate to prepare teachers to facilitate cognitive learning, it has been nonexistent for the preparation of teachers to facilitate affective learning.

The psychology appropriate to teaching must then be broader. It must encompass the total behavior of the teacher in interaction with the student. It must focus upon those characteristics and behaviors of teachers which are most important in the teaching-learning relationship, upon those conditions of learning which are more important than subject matter knowledge, methods, or techniques.

These characteristics, as has been emphasized in this book, are the personal characteristics of the teacher—empathic understanding, respect or warmth, and genuineness. It is the person of the teacher which is the most important factor in teaching and learning. It is therefore apparent that teacher education should focus upon the development of the person of the teacher. Teacher education must center upon the feelings, attitudes, and beliefs of the teacher, including attitudes toward himself, or the self-concept.

That good teachers differ from poor teachers in their attitudes and beliefs is shown in studies by Combs and his associates. It was found that good teachers, as compared to poor ones, perceived others as able rather than unable, as friendly rather than unfriendly, as worthy rather than unworthy, as internally rather than externally motivated or controlled, as

dependable rather than undependable, and as helpful rather than hindering.<sup>3</sup> Good teachers also operated from an internal rather than from an external frame of reference; that is, they were sensitive to and concerned about how others saw and felt about things and reacted to people on this basis. In addition, good teachers were more concerned about people and their reactions than about things and events.<sup>4</sup>

These same studies also found that good teachers perceive themselves differently than poor teachers. Compared to poor teachers, good teachers see themselves as more adequate, trustworthy, worthy, wanted and identified with others. Their beliefs about themselves, their self-concepts, are different from, and more adequate than, those of poor teachers.

What does this imply for teacher education programs? It is not our purpose here to deal with the total teacher education program, but only with that part of it relevant to humanistic or affective education. We shall first propose a basis for the psychological preparation of teachers, and then consider some necessary aspects of a humanistic teacher education program.

### HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

It would seem logical that humanistic teaching should be based upon a humanistic psychology.

Humanistic psychology has been developing rapidly in America since World War II. Many prominent psychologists have participated in its development, including Gordon Allport, Sidney Jourard, Abraham Maslow, Clark Moustakas, and Carl Rogers. Although their influence is being felt throughout the field of psychology, it has not reached down to the teaching of undergraduate or, indeed, graduate courses in psychology. Thus, neither psychology nor teacher education students are exposed to this system or point of view, though it is the most relevant and practical approach to understanding human behavior. When the writer has presented this approach to beginning graduate students in education they have responded by asking why they hadn't learned about this theory of human behavior as undergraduates.

The basic characteristic of this humanistic or perceptual psychology is that it assumes an internal frame of reference rather than the external frame of reference of so-called scientific psychology. It is interesting that,

<sup>3</sup> Arthur W. Combs, Donald L. Avila, and William W. Purkey, *Helping Relationships: Basic Concepts for the Helping Professions* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1971), pp. 12-13.

<sup>4</sup> Arthur W. Combs, *The Professional Education of Teachers: a Perceptual View of Teacher Education* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1965), p. 55.

as noted above, the best teachers were found to look at their students in this way, since they had not been taught this point of view. Combs writes: "Apparently, good teachers arrive at this frame of reference with respect to people as a consequence of their experience. If this is true, it is time we introduced it much more widely into our teacher-training programs."<sup>5</sup>

This systematic approach to human behavior provides the necessary theoretical base for a humanistic approach to education, which, as noted in the last chapter is lacking in the writings in humanistic and affective education.

In Chapter 5 we provided an introduction to this theory. The most complete and systematic presentation is found in the book by Combs and Snygg referred to in that chapter.<sup>6</sup> Every teacher education student should be familiar with this book.

### A HUMANISTIC ATMOSPHERE

Teacher education is more than the teaching of subject matter, even the subject matter of a humanistic psychology. It must be concerned with the development of persons with humanistic beliefs about people and attitudes toward them. It must make it possible for the student to develop an adequate self-concept. In short, it must foster the development of self-actualizing teachers.

We have been concerned in this book with the conditions for facilitating the development of self-actualizing persons in our public schools. *These are the same conditions necessary for the development of self-actualizing teachers in teacher education programs. Thus, this book is not only a text for teachers, but for the teachers of teachers.* If we want teachers who are capable of fostering self-actualization in their students, they must be self-actualizing persons themselves, and they can become such persons only by experiencing the conditions which are necessary for the development of self-actualizing persons.

This, perhaps more than anything else, is the defect or lack in teacher preparation programs. We cannot *tell* teachers how to teach humanistically; we can teach them how only by teaching humanistically ourselves. Combs says this in referring to the saying among counselor educators that "students teach like they have been taught rather than the way we taught them to teach."<sup>7</sup> Teacher educators are models upon which teacher edu-

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>6</sup> Arthur W. Combs and Donald Snygg, *Individual Behavior: a Perceptual Approach to Behavior* Rev. Ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1959).

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

cation students base their teaching. Unfortunately, too often they are not models of humanistic education.

### SOME MORE SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

#### *Laboratory and Supervised Practice Experiences*

A universal aspect of teacher education is practice teaching. Though it is necessary, practice teaching is far from adequate as it is presently conducted, as will be noted later. But in addition to necessary changes in practice teaching, teacher education students need some pre-practice teaching experiences, a graded sequence of experiences culminating in practice teaching. One of the reasons that practice teaching is not as effective as it could be is that students are not adequately prepared for it. Teacher education could benefit from examining the methods of preparing counselors or psychotherapists in graduate programs.

Laboratory experiences should begin with *observation*. Courses in child psychology, child development, and adolescent psychology should include experiences in observing children and adolescents—not only in classrooms, but in a variety of situations.

Now it is true that in many instances these courses do include some observation. Combs notes that:

Most teacher-education programs require students to spend many hours observing the behavior of students or teachers. Many instructors put great faith in this technique despite the fact that student teachers often find it distasteful and a waste of time . . .

Many of us have made such a fetish of objectivity in the making of observations that we have blinded students to the real meaning and values of observing. Because we want to develop in students "disciplined observation," to see what is *really* going on, we have insisted that they report exactly what occurred, precisely and in detail.<sup>8</sup>

The kind of report which results is illustrated by the following:

"Jimmy picked up his pencil, examined the end of it. He saw that it needed sharpening so he got out of his seat and walked to the back of the room. He sharpened his pencil, looked out the window for a moment and returned to his seat. On the way back to his seat, he tapped his friend, Joe, on the head with the pencil as he passed him. He sat down and straightened

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

his paper. He looked at the board where the teacher had placed the problem. He read the problem to himself. He sucked on the end of his pencil. He twisted his feet around the bottom of his desk and then he started to write the answer. He worked very slowly and once in a while he would look up and around the room. Once he put his head down on his arm and wrote from that position . . ."<sup>9</sup>

Combs asks: "Is it any wonder that students often find this kind of reporting sheer drudgery?" But the major criticism is that this procedure directs the student's attention to the wrong things. It ignores feelings, attitudes, perceptions, goals and purposes—the meaning of behavior.

Observation should be directed toward these factors, towards trying to see things from the child's point of view. Combs has abandoned requiring "objective" observation and reports:

I now ask them to do what I myself do when I watch a child behaving or a teacher teaching—to get the "feel" of what's going on, to see if they can get inside the skin of the person being observed, to understand how things look from his point of view. I ask them "What do you think he is trying to do?" "How do you suppose he feels?" "How would you have to feel to behave like that?" "How does he see the other kids?" "What does he feel about the subject?" and so on.<sup>10</sup>

The point of view of humanistic psychology must be applied to the teaching of courses in child behavior, especially to the observation of behavior.

A second phase of laboratory experiences should include some practice in taking the internal frame of reference in interaction with individuals. Such training can or should include several aspects:

The first stage of this phase can begin with learning to recognize the existence of various levels of the conditions of empathy, respect, and genuineness. Carkhuff's book provides materials for such training.<sup>11</sup> Collingwood reports a study of eight female junior high school teachers, whose teaching experience ranged from one to ten years. They received eight hours of training in a one week workshop, learning to discriminate and communicate the core conditions using taped stimulus expressions. Following this they spent five hours roleplaying with each other, and five hours discussing the application of the experience to teaching. They were tested before and after the workshop. A significant increase in facilitative func-

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>11</sup> Robert R. Carkhuff, *Helping and Human Relations. Vol. I: Selection and Training* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1969).

tioning was found.<sup>12</sup> Collingwood suggests that the communication of the core conditions is a concrete, operational definition of being pupil-centered, a concept which is usually vague and relatively meaningless. This study by Collingwood supports the results of other studies which were referred to in Chapter 8.

The practice of the core conditions in roleplaying constitutes the second aspect of laboratory experience in developing the conditions. The third stage is actual supervised experience in talking with other people. The scales developed by Carkhuff can be applied to tape recordings of these interviews so that the level of the core conditions can be evaluated.

This kind of experience offers opportunity for the student to engage in self-exploration regarding his beliefs and attitudes, leading to a better understanding of himself and the possibility of change in himself and his self-concept.

A third phase of laboratory and supervised practice is the observation of the teaching situation. This phase should come relatively early in the student's education, so that he may re-evaluate his decision to go into teaching, but not before the student has had the opportunity to learn enough about teaching and human relationships to know what to look for. It could be concurrent with the laboratory experience in the core conditions. Sarason, Davidson and Blatt report on an interesting project of teaching students' observation of a teacher in which fifteen students beginning their junior year participated.<sup>13</sup> One of the things which they learned was that their perceptions, or their observations, were selective, being influenced by the student's own values. It is interesting that the teacher which the group observed (an unusually good teacher) had no discipline problems. The students began to realize that this was related to the nature of her relations with the students. It was obvious to them that she was warm, that she had consistent limits for student behavior, and that she was available to help when needed. One student seemed to sum it up when she said: "You get a lot of talk about how you have to respect your pupils and that there is something about each of them that you can develop. When you watch Miss \_\_\_\_\_ you *know* she respects each one. It's as if she really respects each one and is going to bring out the best in them."<sup>14</sup>

Students should have the opportunity to observe more than one teacher, and for periods of time adequate to get to feel and understand the relationships between the teacher and the students. Such observation should be

<sup>12</sup> Thomas R. Collingwood, "A Further Delineation of the Integrated Didactic-experiential Training Approach for Teachers," Discussion Papers, Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, University of Arkansas. Vol. III, No. 8.

<sup>13</sup> Seymour B. Sarason, Kenneth S. Davidson, & Burton Blatt, *op. cit.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

accompanied by a seminar in which students discuss their observations. Closed circuit TV would be useful to extend the range and variety of teachers and students observed.

A final method of laboratory instruction, which has been recently developed, must be mentioned. This is micro-teaching. This involves the teacher education student practicing a specific method or technique with a small group of four to six students. The brief "practice period"—five to ten minutes in length—is videotaped. The student and an instructor view the playback, analyzing and evaluating the student's performance. The student may then engage in another practice session, which is then evaluated. This can continue for as many sessions as is desired.

This method of instruction would appear to be promising. Certainly the viewing of a videotape of one's performance can be instructive to a teacher. But the way in which this is done in micro-teaching is not necessarily helpful, and indeed the evidence regarding its value is limited, and indicates that results are small and short-lived.

Although it would appear that breaking complex behaviors into simpler components for instruction would be useful, this is not necessarily the case. There are perhaps optimum amounts in which things can be best learned, and micro-techniques such as asking questions, reinforcing student responses, answering questions, or similar small tasks may not be optimum for learning. In addition, one faces the problem of putting these all together in a classroom period.

A further problem is one which plagues our whole teacher education program, one which we have raised before and will raise again in connection with practice teaching. It concerns the basis on which we break the teaching process down, or upon which we choose specific techniques for use in micro-teaching. Silberman puts it as follows:

Neither the techniques the student teachers practice nor their supervisors' analysis of their videotaped performance are related to any concept of education or any theories of teaching or learning. Thus there is no structure to the micro-teaching sessions themselves, no attempt to develop an hierarchy of skills. On the contrary, the education students are merely taught to use various techniques that are not related to one another, still less to any conception of what teaching is about or any notion of which strategies are most appropriate for which teaching objectives, or which kinds of students or which subject matters.<sup>15</sup>

The problem of the effectiveness of generalization to the real classroom is also present. It is not true that four to six students are similar to a group of thirty students, or that teaching in a specific way for five or ten minutes

is similar in any real or fundamental respects to teaching for forty or fifty minutes. Moreover, the so-called "students" in the micro-teaching situation may bear no resemblance to students in the real classroom. In a research study, a student of mine utilized some micro-teaching classes. The "students" who constituted the micro-teaching group were paid college students, who could care less about the whole thing. One sat with his hat on throughout the session, paying not the least bit of attention to the student teacher.

Micro-teaching, in my opinion, is of little value in teacher education. Even if it were changed to eliminate the criticisms considered above, it would appear that there are better, more realistic and more relevant ways to use the teacher education student's time. In the discussion of modeling in the last chapter, it was noted that this means of teaching and learning was efficient, as well as effective, because it involved the learning of wholes, or of patterns and sequences as wholes, rather than of parts which then must be assembled into wholes.

### PRACTICE TEACHING

Practice teaching, which is one of the most important experiences in teacher education, is one of its major problems. Though there is widespread dissatisfaction with the way it is conducted, nothing is being done to change it, and changes in the rest of teacher education are useless if practice teaching is not changed. In fact, if the rest of teacher education becomes humanistic in its orientation, and practice teaching continues as it now is, it can be a traumatic and damaging experience for the student. This experience is similar to the supervised practicum in counseling or psychotherapy and should receive as much attention and support.

The classroom teacher (supervising or critic teacher) with whom the student does his practice teaching is an important influence on the teacher education student, often becoming a model for the student. Yet such teachers are not carefully selected, and are often chosen on the recommendation of a principal or superintendent, whose essential concept of a good teacher may be one who maintains discipline and control. Thus, as Silberman notes, "practice teaching may do more harm than good, confirming students in bad teaching habits rather than training them in good ones."<sup>16</sup>

Not only are supervising or critic teachers not adequately selected, but they do little if any real supervising. They have had no training in supervision, and get little if any help from the college or university supervisor of

<sup>15</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 458.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 451.

student teaching. The teacher education student also gets little if any supervision or help from the college or university coordinator, who is responsible for too many students to be able to give each individual help.

Supervising or critic teachers vary tremendously in how much actual teaching they permit the student teacher to engage in. Too many give the student little opportunity to teach, but much opportunity to become a teacher aide—handing out materials and supplies, writing material on the blackboard, maintaining bulletin boards—and constructing innumerable lesson plans which he is never given the opportunity to use. Thus he never gets any real experience in teaching, and if he does, he

never experiences the 'real thing'—never gets the feel of what teaching is actually like. Because the regular classroom teacher remains responsible for everything that goes on in his room, the student teacher cannot feel the full impact of that responsibility. Neither can he experience the full responsibility of being a teacher. He is, after all, a visitor in someone else's classroom, and visitors are not welcome to rearrange their host's furniture, alter his schedule, revise his curriculum, or change the atmosphere he has labored to create. Nor is the student teacher likely to be able to make those kinds of changes if he wanted to.<sup>17</sup>

Not only do student teachers get little if any feedback from the supervising teacher or their college or university supervisor,<sup>18</sup> but they are not given adequate instruction prior to entering practice teaching on what is expected of them in their assignment, or informed just what the criteria are on which they will be judged and evaluated. This is in part because the teacher education program and its instructors have no consistent theory of instruction or, more basically, theory of human behavior, in or out of the classroom. Silberman's indictment may be too harsh but it is not without substance. Referring to college and university supervisors of practice teaching he writes:

Lacking any conception of teaching, and without having thought about the ends or means of education, supervisors of student teaching tend to focus on the minutiae of classroom life, e.g., the fact that a child in the third row was chewing gum, rather than on the degree to which the student teacher was able to achieve his teaching objective, or relate to students, or evoke their interests, or what have you. Without any conception of teaching, moreover, the supervisors frequently disagree among themselves as to what constitutes good or bad teaching. Indeed, individual supervisors are frequently

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 460.

<sup>18</sup> See Sarason, Davidson, and Blatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–106, 110–114, for reactions of student teachers to their practice teaching.

unable to agree even with themselves, applying different criteria to different student teachers, or to the same student on different days.<sup>19</sup>

It is apparent that supervisors cannot tell students what the criteria are by which they are being evaluated if they are not clear what those criteria are themselves, or disagree on them. The need for a systematic theory becomes apparent again. If students know what they are supposed to do, they might be successful in doing it. They can then be aware of whether or not they are successful, or the degree or extent to which they are successful. They can, in effect, evaluate themselves, give themselves feedback, and change their behaviors.

If instructors and supervisors can agree upon a humanistic approach to education, then there are instruments which can be used in evaluating student teachers. These are the measures described and provided in Chapter 8.

It is possible that the concept of practice teaching as being a one-time experience is inadequate. Combs suggests a graded series of experiences in the classroom. The beginning student would function as a teacher-helper or aide a half day a week, and would progress to the place where he would be in full charge of a classroom for at least a four-month period.<sup>20</sup>

There is much that can be done to improve practice teaching and its supervision. Again, the model is to be found in the teaching of counseling or psychotherapy. The student must be given the opportunity to engage in practice teaching where he has responsibility for the teaching situation; one cannot learn to be responsible unless he has the opportunity. He must be adequately prepared, so that he knows what he should do and what he is expected to do by his supervisors. This involves more than a series of how-to-do-it rules; it must consist of a theory and a system of principles to be applied to specific situations. Given these things, the student is able to evaluate himself—with the aid of audiotapes, or videotapes, and instruments to obtain feedback from his students. The supervisor then can become a facilitator for the student's development, not simply an evaluator assigning a grade to the student.

#### ENCOUNTER GROUPS AND GROUP TRAINING IN TEACHER EDUCATION

If the essence of successful professional work with people is the effective use of the self as an instrument, then teacher education should focus on the

<sup>19</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 453–454.

<sup>20</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

development of the teacher as a person, and as a person who can offer the necessary conditions of learning and self-actualization to others. The discussion of teacher education so far has related to this concept of teacher education. People feel or see themselves as adequate or able, worthy, wanted, acceptable, etc., when they are treated that way. Thus, the general atmosphere of the teacher education program contributes to the development of an adequate and helping self. Individual counseling can and does help, though to make it available to, or to require it of, all students would be prohibitive. It should certainly be available for those who need and want it. But perhaps the most direct and most effective method for developing teachers who can facilitate the personal development of their students is the experience provided by the basic encounter group.

In Chapter 11 we emphasized the basic encounter group as a method of humanistic education in the schools. If such an approach is helpful to students below the college level, it should be helpful to college students, and particularly to teacher education students. It is a most effective way to help students to greater experiences of self-fulfillment, "to perceive themselves in more positive ways, to confront themselves and the world with openness and acceptance, and to develop a deep sense of identification with the human condition"—or in short, to become what Combs calls "adequate personalities."<sup>21</sup>

Borton suggests that "it is helpful for teachers to have had some experience in exploring their own feelings before working with students on a feeling level," and that this can be obtained through a group experience. He warns that teachers should be careful about the qualifications of the leader.<sup>22</sup> For teachers in the field, group experiences should be provided by qualified leaders in workshops or in-service training programs. But teacher education students should be provided with this experience, under competent leadership, as part of their preparation.

Several of the humanistic critics of education recommend a group experience for teachers in training. Rogers sees it as being as important as the classroom situation for the education of teachers and administrators.<sup>23</sup> Dennison supports the idea of group therapy for teacher education students.<sup>24</sup> Knoblock and Goldstein suggest that a group experience is not only useful for the personal development of the teacher education student, but as preparation for classroom management. They write:

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>22</sup> Terry Borton, *Reach, Touch, and Teach* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970), p. 199.

<sup>23</sup> Carl R. Rogers, *Freedom to Learn* (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill, 1969), p. 141.

<sup>24</sup> George Dennison, *The Lives of Children* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), p. 257.

It is our rather strong belief that guided experience in understanding one's own group behavior and the management of groups is a necessary prerequisite to effective functioning with groups. While there are texts written on dynamics of classroom groups, without a personal frame of reference for group participation the application of sound techniques remains elusive.<sup>25</sup>

Silberman, while warning against the potential dangers of sensitivity training, sees a place for a group experience for teachers.<sup>26</sup> Silberman apparently fails to recognize the difference between the active probing and cracking of defenses used by some extremists in the field and the encounter group experience described by Rogers and referred to in the last chapter.<sup>27</sup>

In addition to a group experience, teachers should also have some preparation in conducting groups. Experience in an encounter group, as Knoblock and Goldstein suggest, is helpful, even necessary, but not sufficient. Some understanding of the nature of groups and the group process, beyond that presented in Chapter 11, is necessary.

Goodman contends that "the only profitable training for teachers is a group therapy and, perhaps, a course in child development."<sup>28</sup> He also writes: "I see little merit, for teaching this age [the first five grades], in the usual teacher-training. . . . Since at this age one teaches the child, not the subject, the relevant art is psychotherapy, and the most useful course for a normal school is probably group therapy."<sup>29</sup>

If teachers are to be involved in conducting the kinds of groups discussed in the last chapter, whether classroom size groups of the kind suggested by Glasser, Moustakas, and Seeley or the smaller basic encounter groups, they need preparation. Such preparation is possible at the undergraduate level.

### THE CONTINUOUS INTEGRATIVE SEMINAR

Encounter groups are concerned with personal development and interpersonal relations. Students should also have the opportunity to participate in seminars in which they can, with the instructor, and with each other,

<sup>25</sup> Peter Knoblock and Arnold P. Goldstein, *The Lonely Teacher* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1971), p. 40.

<sup>26</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 502.

<sup>27</sup> Carl R. Rogers, *Carl Rogers on Encounter Groups* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970).

<sup>28</sup> Paul Goodman, "No Processing Whatever," in Beatrice Gross & Ronald Gross, (Eds.) *Radical School Reform* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1969), p. 100.

<sup>29</sup> Paul Goodman, quoted in George Dennison, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

consider, evaluate, and integrate their total experience in teacher education, including content, laboratory, and other experiences, and their personal development in terms of ideas, beliefs and attitudes. This seminar should be a continuing one from the beginning of their college education to its end, including the practice teaching experience. It need not consist of the same group of students, or the same instructor. It should be small enough for discussion, say 15 to 20 students.

Combs proposes a continuous seminar of from 15 to 30 students, remaining constant, and meeting 2 hours per week throughout the student's education.<sup>30</sup> However, as students left the group for whatever reason, including differing rates of progress through the program, they would be replaced by beginning students, so there would be students at differing levels.

Glasser also recommends a continuing four-year seminar for teacher education students, which would include observation of teachers at every level. Practicing teachers would be invited in for discussions. With a full year of practice teaching, Glasser feels that few other education courses would be necessary in teacher education.<sup>31</sup>

The seminar provides an opportunity for students to think and talk about their observations, laboratory experiences, practicum, and their reading. The seminar described by Sarason, Davidson, and Blatt illustrates the value of such a seminar in conjunction with observation of classroom teaching.<sup>32</sup> One of the purposes of this seminar was to start the students thinking about the way children are usually taught in the schools and the way *they* were learning in the seminar and observation. These writers suggest a series of seminars, the first beginning as soon as students have decided on a teaching career. This seminar would not be professional in nature, but focused on an understanding of the observational process, and will develop an attitude of critical inquiry toward self, others, and problems. Child psychology courses would also have an observational seminar. A third kind of seminar would concern itself with what is covered in conventional methods courses.<sup>33</sup> Former students who have become teachers, or practicing teachers could be involved in these seminars.

### SUMMARY

In this chapter we have been concerned with the preparation of humanistic teachers. Such teachers will of course need some preparation in

<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 119-121.

<sup>31</sup> William Glasser, *Schools Without Failure* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 10.

<sup>32</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

subject matter areas, but the emphasis in their preparation should be in human relations.

A major defect in the psychological preparation of teachers is that they are not provided with a systematic theoretical approach to human behavior. Such a theory, which is highly practical, is to be found in humanistic psychology, especially in the perceptual approach to behavior of Combs and Snygg. This should be the focus of the psychological preparation of teachers.

The importance of a humanistic atmosphere in teacher education is emphasized. It is essential that the methods of teacher education should exemplify the nature of what is being taught.

In addition to the didactic aspect of teacher education, an experiential aspect is necessary. This should include a graded series of laboratory experiences, beginning with observation. Practice teaching is also part of the experiential curriculum, but it must be modified and expanded if it is to be maximally effective. More adequate supervision is necessary.

A further aspect of the experiential curriculum is a group experience, which should exist in addition to a continuing seminar, to integrate the total educational experience of the student. Finally, the teacher education student must be prepared for leading groups of the kind described in the last chapter. While the experience of being in an encounter group is necessary, some didactic or course work in group methods and procedures is also required.

Davis says that "it may be that humanistic education can only exist in a humanistic society."<sup>34</sup> But it might also be contended that we can only achieve a humanistic society by developing a humanistic educational system. We must start somewhere, and society is too large and pervasive a place. Essentially, we can only work with individuals in developing humanistic—or self-actualizing—persons. It would appear that the most effective place to start is with the education of teachers. This, of course, assumes that the educators of teachers are themselves humanistic, which is perhaps unrealistic. But we must assume that somewhere there are humanistic persons to start with, and hopefully we are more likely to find them among educators than in most other groups. Perhaps this book can help to facilitate the development of humanistic educators—including administrators—as well as humanistic teachers.

<sup>34</sup> David C. Davis, *Model for Humanistic Education: the Danish Folk Highschool* (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill, 1971), p. 105.