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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In considering the status of religious instruction in relation to education, it is common to find that religious teaching is often mentioned as a paradigm case of indoctrination. J.P. White, who defines indoctrination as the intention of the teacher to implant unshakeable beliefs in the student, admits that it is "difficult to see how one could teach religion without indoctrinating,"¹ since he characterizes religious beliefs as 'fixed' beliefs. Thomas Green notes that "one of the clearest failures to teach, is found in the Church."² Green defines indoctrination as the "intentional propagation of an illusion",³ and as religious beliefs are not based on factual evidence (that is, he classifies them as non-evidential beliefs), religious instruction is thus a case of indoctrination. Anthony Flew categorizes religious instruction as indoctrination, when the respective doctrines, "not known to be true are regularly being taught as if they were, in institutions whose present main aim is to produce unshakeable convictions of the truth of

¹J.P. White, "Indoctrination and Intentions", in Concepts of Indoctrination, ed. by Isaac Snook (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 129.

²Thomas Green, "Indoctrination and Beliefs," in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 40.

³Ibid., p. 38.

these doctrines."¹ I.A. Snook suggests that indoctrination is most likely to occur in the areas of political, social and religious studies, as these are areas in which the evidence is inconclusive, "where knowledgeable and sincere men differ, and where people are prone to hold their views tenaciously regardless of evidence or argument."² Snook concludes that since all religious propositions are doubtful (in the sense of inconclusive evidence), this is sufficient to indicate that teaching for belief in them is always indoctrination.³

Gregory and Woods also cite religious teaching (specifically Catholicism) as a paradigm case of indoctrination. They note that it is partly the nature of the subject matter and partly the method involved which leads them to consider Catholicism as indoctrination: "While no particular method is necessary to the concept of indoctrination, method is nevertheless logically involved in so far as the indoctrinary transaction necessarily involves lack of regard for the rationality of the person being subjected to indoctrination."⁴ It is this irrational aspect which they also detect in Catholic instruction.

¹Anthony Flew, "Indoctrination and Doctrines," in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 76.

²Isaac Snook, Indoctrination and Education (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), p. 73.

³Ibid., p. 74.

⁴I.M.M. Gregory and R.G. Woods, "Indoctrination: Incultation of Doctrines," in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 170.

The above writers, using general criteria of truth and reason, conclude that religious instruction is a process of indoctrination. There are yet others who, while not using the term 'indoctrination', consider the negative aspects (in the sense of lacking reason or rationality) of religious instruction. Bertrand Russell refers to non-religious people as "free-thinking", and suggests that the harmful effects of religious instruction are based "partly upon the particular doctrines taught and partly upon the mere insistence that various doubtful propositions are known to be true."¹

In his treatise On Liberty, John Stuart Mill contends that religious doctrines are inherited, not adopted, and as such lose their vitality and worth. He writes that the lack of open discussion on issues affects the worth of the opinions held in that, "not only the grounds of the opinion are forgotten...but too often the meaning of the opinion itself. The words which convey it cease to suggest ideas, or suggest only a small portion of those they were originally employed to communicate...only the shell and the husk of the meaning is retained."²

Even Margaret Mackie, who in fact believes that religious

¹Bertrand Russell, Education and the Social Order (London: Unwin Books, 1967), p. 63.

²John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (Oxford University Press, 1859), p. 49.

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instruction and open inquiry are not mutually exclusive, nonetheless writes: "Those who strongly support the teaching of religion would probably continue to do so even if it were demonstrated that religion prevents or hinders education. There is nothing inconsistent in this attitude."¹

The evaluation of religious instruction, as considered by the aforementioned writers, is not in reference to a particular religion or to particular methods of the transfer of religious information. What is being dubbed 'harmful' is the very concept of religious instruction; that is to say, there can be no such thing as 'harmless' religious instruction (unless what is being referred to is the study of theology or the examination of all religions, without the intent of propagating one over the others. Religious instruction as I will use it, unless otherwise noted, will refer to the intention of inculcating a particular religious orientation.). As far as instructing a specific set of religious beliefs, the claim put forward above is that such instruction is inimical to the process of education (the term education as defined, for example, by the Peters criteria), and hence its inclusion in the curriculum cannot be justified.

The implications of this conclusion about religious instruction are of the utmost significance, especially for a person who admits to maintaining a faith in a particular religion.

¹Margaret Mackie, Educative Teaching (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1968), p. 110.

For if he were sincere in his intention of 'educating' his students, it would supposedly be impossible for him to pass on his own religious beliefs, without harming the students' education. The teacher's dilemma is that if the students do not receive their teacher's orientation to life, which the teacher feels is the most valid one, the students' orientation to life will take on a completely different form. Moreover, the teacher's efforts to withhold opinions of any sort, as Rousseau would have him do, would not necessarily guarantee the absence of religious sentiments, but possibly their appearance in another form. Thus, by not imposing his own views on the students on this specific issue, other views are being imposed on the students. In fact, G.S. Counts argues that, "the big question therefore is not whether we should impose anything on the child in the process of education, but what we should impose."¹ Counts emphasizes his point by suggesting that, "If we do not want to impose anything on the individual, we should not allow him to learn a language until he becomes twenty-one years of age and then let him choose the language which he prefers. If we want to avoid imposing anything on our children, we should alter the architectural style of the building every day."² It seems to me that Counts' argument is not only well-founded, but leads us to re-examine on several grounds the conclusion mentioned above. First of all, if we do not consciously attempt to impose a

¹G.S. Counts, "Should the Teachers Always be Neutral?", Phi Delta Kappan, 51 (Dec., 1969), 188.

²Ibid., 187-188.

specific religious outlook or set of beliefs on our students (a process considered as indoctrination by the above writers), it still seems inevitable that an imposition will occur. For example, if the entire subject of religion is ignored, it is possible for the students' normal fears and uncertainties to take the form of unbridled superstitions. On the other hand, if all religions are impartially presented and theology introduced, it is possible that the students will gravitate to a specific religion, but because each had been treated only superficially (due to practical considerations such as time, manpower, and the inevitable inability to present the different viewpoints equally), their knowledge and understanding of that specific religious perspective could very probably reflect a somewhat simple and incomplete grasp of the beliefs involved. The potential harm of holding a view on such tenuous grounds is described by Mill as follows:

A person who assents undoubtingly to what (others) think true, though he has no knowledge whatever of the grounds of the opinion, and could not make a tenable defence of it against the most superficial objections..., naturally thinks that no good, and some harm, comes of its being allowed to be questioned.¹

It would seem quite likely that such a person might prove to be not only suspicious of different views, but possibly hostile to those people holding such views. Mill continues: "This is not knowing the truth. Truth thus held is but one superstition the more, accidentally clinging to the words which

¹Mill, On Liberty, p. 45.

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enunciate a truth.¹

A further issue that is raised by Counts' argument, concerns the consideration of what constitutes indoctrination. It seems to me that if the definition is maintained in the sense in which it is applied to religious instruction by Snook, White, Green and the others noted above, then indoctrination is a process which always occurs. However, in applying their general definition that indoctrination deals with the passing on of unshakeable beliefs which cannot be proven. (that is, based on faith rather than on evidence), it is unquestionably more convenient to claim that religion is based on faith, than it is to show that, for example, science (often considered the rational equivalent to the religious perspective of viewing the world) also might ultimately involve a commitment based on faith. The most obvious religious beliefs pertain to the existence of a god - a theory easily and popularly criticizable, because the notion is itself impossible to empirically prove. On the other hand, scientific data appears to be based solely on inductive information which is empirically substantiated. In fact, however, the scientist must also be considered guilty of a leap of faith if he concludes from his limited empirical observations that the world is a macrocosm of his laboratory and of the theories he has so far established. Mackie correctly states that just as there

¹Mill, On Liberty, p. 45.

is an unexplained portion of religion (which is filled with faith), so too is there an unexplained portion of any subject. However, today the unexplained portion of religion is more easily susceptible to criticism, whereas the unexplained portion of science is more accepted. This leap of faith (in extreme form) has been referred to as 'scientism', which mistakes the nature of science and takes it to be somehow a revelation of the 'real' reality of things.

In his book, The Social Purposes of Education, K.G. Collier refers to the unique faith involved in science. He suggests that the scientist "assumes that the events he observes do occur in ordered sequences; that his mind is equipped to grasp them; and that it is worth the effort to discover them."¹ Furthermore, Whitehead writes that, "the world of science is an abstraction, arrived at by confining thoughts to purely formal relations which then masquerade as the final reality....The concrete world has slipped through the meshes of the scientific net."²

It seems then that if we are to be consistent in the above writers' evaluation of why religious instruction is indoctrination, it might be necessary to categorize instruction in science (and possibly in any subject) as indoctrination. It

¹K.G. Collier, The Social Purposes of Education (London: Routledge and Kegan, Paul, 1959), p. 149.

²Will Herberg, Judaism and Modern Man (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 21.

further seems that if we are not to proceed with such a blanket categorization, then it would be necessary to re-evaluate the considerations of what actually constitutes a case of indoctrination.

In his book, The Catholic Way in Education, McGucken accedes to the notion that indoctrination is omnipresent in education:

Every educational institution makes use of indoctrination. Children are indoctrinated with the multiplication table... love of country... principles of chemistry and physics, and mathematics and biology.... The Catholic educator makes no apology for indoctrinating his students in these essential matters.¹

The question arises as to whether there is a difference between indoctrination and imposition, and if there is a difference, where is it delineated? It seems that telling a student that there is a God, and telling him that '2 plus 2 equals 4', are distinguishable - but if they can be distinguished, is the distinction based on the nature of the subject matter, or on the method necessary to transfer these beliefs, or on underlying beliefs which maintain the validity and importance of transferring the subject matter? Clarification of these matters would seem to lie in the direction of determining acceptable criteria of indoctrination and of education, and then considering how these criteria apply to particular case studies under examination.

¹Snook, Concepts, p. 177.

J.S. Junell has written that indoctrination is "widely practiced because in its least sophisticated form it constitutes far and away the easiest way to teach."¹ Indoctrination eliminates the need to supply alternatives. And so Snook's observation noted earlier - that indoctrination is most likely to occur in the areas of political, social and religious studies, in which the evidence is inconclusive - is not altogether surprising. However, it does not follow that instruction in any of these areas necessarily constitutes indoctrination. Furthermore, it is clear that within an area, particular viewpoints lend themselves more to an indoctrinary process of instruction than do others. For example, in the political sphere, it seems more likely that indoctrination will occur in an authoritarian state than in a democratic state. The same can apply in the area of religion: while it may be acceptable for indoctrination to occur in a religion which relies on a passive and servile congregation, another religion may require all of its members to be intellectually and rationally involved, thus eliminating an indoctrinary climate.

The particular case I intend to examine is Jewish religious education - that is, to determine whether this is necessarily a case of indoctrination. As noted earlier, the significance of this problem is underlined when it is considered

¹J.S. Counts, "Do Teachers Have the Right to Indoc-
trinate?", Phi Delta Kappan, 51 (Dec., 1969), p. 182.

that the characteristics generally attributed to indoctrination are negative ones, which are not appropriate to the educative process. In fact, if a process is viewed as indoctrinatory, it is generally thought to imply one or more of the following traits:

- that the procedure of the transfer of information was not conducted in a rational or logically consistent manner (eg., peer group or authority figure pressure was exerted, either consciously or unconsciously)
- that because only pre-determined information is accepted as valid, the process is narrow-minded and not concerned with truth
- that the information transferred is based solely on tradition rather than on evidence or reasons
- that the process does not take into account the principle of respect for persons in that it does not seriously consider nor tolerate criticism
- that the intention of the indoctrinator is that the student hold onto the beliefs inculcated regardless of future evidence to the contrary
- that information which is based on faith or on a purely theoretical foundation, is presented as being factually true

If Jewish religious education is necessarily a case of indoctrination, this would suggest that it is characterized by one or more of the above traits, which seem inimical to education, a conclusion which would compel the concerned educator to either, 1) exclude Jewish religious instruction from the curriculum; or 2) adopt changes in the instruction which would eliminate that trait which characterized it as indoctrination. For example, instead of presenting the Genesis version of creation as acceptable, it would be presented as a theory with no

more merit than Darwin's theory of evolution.

In fact, with regards to religious education, Snook sees the following as the way in which indoctrination can be avoided:

- 1) it would be necessary to remove the propositional element of religion, making it simply a 'stance toward the world'
- 2) it would be necessary to change the method and/or content so radically that it could not be said that the teachers intend the pupils to hold beliefs regardless of the evidence¹

Snook's suggestion involves serious implications when it is considered that the function of Jewish religious education is to orient the student to a specific perspective of reality and way of life. If Jewish religious instruction, on the grounds that it is indoctrinary and hence not acceptable as a healthy educative process, were either excluded from the curriculum or fundamentally altered, then a different perspective and way of life would be engendered. Even though the concerned educator sincerely believes the basic assumptions of Judaism, if Jewish religious education is a case of indoctrination, he would be unable to adequately educate (in the Peters sense of the term) his students in Judaism. The moral authority of Judaism seems to revolve around the issue of whether or not Jewish religious education is necessarily a case of indoctrination.

¹Snook, Indoctrination, p. 76.

It is not the purpose of this paper to justify the validity or 'good' of Judaism in comparison with other religions or faiths (including faiths in non-religious ideals). Because Judaism as a system of beliefs is ultimately based on faith (in what is good), it is impossible to absolutely justify it on the basis of rational reasoning. However, as Collier notes, "The essential function of analysis and reasoning cannot be to prove the validity, but to clarify the nature and implications of one's value judgements."¹ The purpose of analyzing Jewish religious instruction with reference to valid criteria of indoctrination, is to determine whether such instruction is necessarily a case of indoctrination.

Although I have referred to various criteria of indoctrination in the preceding pages, the attempt to resolve the thesis issue involves a systematic examination of common criteria of indoctrination. These include the method involved in the instruction, the content transmitted, the intention of the instructor, and the evaluation of the process as inappropriate to education (that is, indoctrination as a negative process). Although the latter criterion seems more of a conclusion than a criterion, because it is often viewed as a criterion, I will briefly examine this characteristic to clarify its usage. While it will be necessary to consider all the criteria which might serve to establish an accurate and complete definition

¹Collier, Social Purposes, p. 155.

of indoctrination, it does not follow that all of these criteria need be equally useful in determining whether Jewish religious instruction is indoctrination.

It seems to me that it would prove useful to examine the nature of indoctrination 'per genus et differentiam'; that is to say, to consider criteria of what is definitely not indoctrination - the criteria of education (in the Peters sense of the term, to be later elaborated). Not only would a differentiation of these two processes make each process more clearly understood, but in examining case studies, the verification of a specific case as not being indoctrination, could be confirmed by its also shown to be a case of education. (That there exists a third categorization - the imparting of enabling beliefs - which seems to include criteria from both indoctrination and education will be considered.)

The validity of the criteria of both indoctrination and of education established will then be determined by their application to obvious cases of both processes. Once confidence in the criteria is established (and the way in which the criteria can be applied illustrated), I will then apply them to the teaching of certain aspects of science and the scientific method. (The selection of the teaching of science as a 'controversial' process which is not neatly or easily categorized by the criteria of indoctrination and education, is based on the fact that in comparing the assumed anti-rationalism of religion, it is often science which is held as its opposite.)

Finally, Jewish religious instruction will be examined in consideration of the available criteria, to determine by which categorization it is best described.

My procedure, then, is as follows:

- 1) a clarification of the criteria of indoctrination (and, briefly, of education)
- 2) the application of the criteria to trial cases
- 3) a consideration of 'enabling beliefs'
- 4) an examination of Jewish religious education

CHAPTER II

CRITERIA OF INDOCTRINATION

Indoctrination as a Negative Process

I. A. Snook writes that underlying the controversy among philosophers and educators as to which criteria best serve to define indoctrination, is another dispute,

which ultimately is perhaps of greater significance for the theory and practice of education. It is whether 'indoctrination' is necessarily pejorative or to put it in another way, whether indoctrination is necessarily a bad thing, or might sometimes be ethically or educationally justifiable. Decisions on this, of course, are intimately connected with what the writer takes 'indoctrination' to mean.¹

In fact, while many of the writers on the subject suggest that indoctrination is sometimes necessary, they all ascribe negative connotations to the term, and agree that indoctrination as an end in itself is contrary to their conception of education. The general definition of education in this sense involves the process through which the student's capability to think rationally is developed to its potential; while indoctrination is the process through which the student's capability to think rationally is diminished. It would seem to follow then that the acts or opinions of an educated person are worthy of respect and consideration, while, on the other hand, one should not take seriously the opinions of an indoctrinated person.

¹Snook, Concepts, p. 3.

Professor Ernest Horn wrote in 1937 that, "To brand any act of teaching as propaganda or indoctrination is to damn it in the eyes of the educational world."¹ Writing in 1972, Richard Gatchill suggested that, "If anything, indoctrination is in even greater disrepute today."² Although the term was not always negatively regarded, and was synonymous in the Middle Ages with the term education (which was in turn synonymous with the implanting of Christian doctrine), the term indoctrination gradually assumed the connotations of a coercive form of education. With the evolution of social democracy, indoctrination, linked to authoritarian education, was dissociated from the concept of democratic education. In 1919, William Kilpatrick asserted that,

Indoctrination is fundamentally and essentially undemocratic. It intends to anticipate choice. It inherently uses the individual as a means to an end, and this danger is present whenever any type of authoritarianism prevails.³

This view was agreed to and expanded by other progressive educators such as Frances Weyland Parker and John Dewey, when terms such as 'imposition', 'inculcation', and 'indoctrination' became antonyms of the new education. Kilpatrick summarized the situation as follows:

¹Ernest Horn, Methods of Instruction in the Social Sciences (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), p. 81.

²Richard Gatchill, "The Evolution of the Concept", in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 9.

³William Kilpatrick, "Education of Adolescents for Democracy", Religious Education, 14 (June, 1919), p. 130.

With the development of democracy and the coming of modern rapid change, it was increasingly felt that education could no longer be content with inducing uncritical belief, but must instead develop responsible thinking on the part of all as a necessary preparation for democratic living and citizenship and an unpredictable future.¹

The problem that arose, both for the Progressivists as well as for their critics, was concerned with the role of the schools in the planning of a new and improved society. In The American Road to Culture, Professor George Counts, among the more vocal supporters of the fact and necessity of 'imposition', asserted that indoctrination for liberal-mindedness was just as progressive as the Progressives and much more stable. Although his arguments with regards to imposition were quite readily received - "Even the Progressive Education Association became absorbed in the Thirties with what was to become a permanent preoccupation with planning for a more constructive social order"² - it was the term 'indoctrination' which was rejected by the Progressives as educationally undemocratic. B.T. Pittenger, the then Dean of the University of Texas School of Education, was among those who did not object to the term indoctrination. In his 1941 book, Indoctrination for American Democracy, Pittenger asserted the necessity of indoctrination in American education.³ Nonetheless, the term indoctrination in the

¹William Kilpatrick, The Philosophy of Education (New York: MacMillan Co., 1963), p. 122.

²G.S. Counts, The American Road to Culture (New York: The John Day Co., 1932), p. 12.

³B.F. Pittenger, Indoctrination for American Democracy (New York: MacMillan Co., 1941), p. 1.

bad sense gained increasing conceptual support, especially among educators and educationists. Gatchill refers to other terms that have arisen to describe the process of cultural transmission in a pluralistic society - for example, R.B. Raup's "community of persuasion", Theodore Brameld's "defensible partiality", and Herskowitz's enculturation and socialization.¹ These terms have come to represent what might be considered 'good' or 'defensible' indoctrination, referring to the transmission of cultural values and traditions, which would enable the new members to function within the society. This does not require unanimity, so much as an awareness of the various customs. The term indoctrination, however, became firmly associated with the methods used by a society to assure the continuity of its political and social philosophy - without regard for the open search for the validity or truth of that philosophy.

That indoctrination is a negative process is emphasized by the fact that it is often used to describe a process of information transfer whose content is not in accord with a person's own views. Snook notes this, suggesting that there is a strong tendency to reserve the term indoctrination for the activities of those whose beliefs we dislike.² For example, while it is commonly agreed by many North Americans that school-children in the Soviet Union are indoctrinated as far as politics,

¹Richard Gatchill, "The Evolution of the Concept", in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 15-16.

²Snook, Indoctrination, p. 18.

religion and economics are concerned, North American children, who are taught the merits of western democracy, western religion and capitalism, are considered to be 'educated' in these areas. Although there are certainly substantial differences in the social environment (and the ensuing overt and covert influences) of American and Russian schools, ultimately it can be shown that each process is considered as indoctrination by the other, to a large extent because of the disagreement with the content of the political and social philosophy it is attempting to maintain. Yet a further example: while Alexander Solzhenitzyn is considered by many North Americans to be an example of a person who was not successfully indoctrinated, North Americans who are Communists are considered examples of people who were successfully indoctrinated by Communist influences. The official view in the Soviet Union would no doubt consider the opposite as the correct view of the situation.

Upon a more objective analysis, it can of course be seen that there are situations which might possibly be considered as indoctrinary which are common to both spheres of influence. For example, it is just as unlikely for an avowed communist to procure employment in a North American elementary school, as it is for an avowed capitalist to teach at a Russian elementary school.

In these cases it seems that indoctrination is determined by the specific nature of the content and by the specific beliefs of the critic - that is, the instruction of that subject

matter with which one disagrees, is necessarily a case of indoctrination. In fact, this is not a very adequate nor useful characteristic of indoctrination, since in this light, the term indoctrination becomes nothing more than a derogatory reference for name-calling. This brings to mind John Wilson's observation, that the important point is not so much whether we call something indoctrination or not, but whether a particular process increases or diminishes rationality, in the sense of appreciation of and control over reality.¹ Ultimately, then, this criterion must be rejected, for it seems that if this were an acceptable criterion, anything and everything could be considered as indoctrination, as long as there were conflicting sides to a situation. To the atheist, religious education might be indoctrination; to the believer, education which excludes the concept of God, might be indoctrination. The problem is that defining a process as indoctrination on the basis of this description or criterion, does not give us any significant information about the process - other than there is something about the process which is disliked by some. This would not be useful in the consideration of whether a specific case study is indoctrination.

Nonetheless, this is a popular, if rationally invalid, criterion of indoctrination. What I mean by popular is that it seems that people will often label a process as indoctrination solely on the basis of this criterion. The claims of the

¹John Wilson, "Indoctrination and Rationality", in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 21.

process as unreasoned or untruthful are many times quite vague, as in the cases listed above. The serious concern of whether a process is indoctrination or not, must rest on less parochial and less ambiguous grounds than the ones on which this criterion is based. As mentioned earlier, this 'criterion' seems to be more of a conclusion, based on other criteria. That indoctrination is a negative process is determined by characteristics which would lead us to such a conclusion.

Education as a Positive Process

While the indoctrinated man is someone who is generally considered to have been subject to a negative and not altogether healthy process, the educated man is one who is generally thought of as having been through a positive or respectable process of information transfer. R.S. Peters admits that there exist varying views of education which emphasize different elements (such as the traditional perspective vs. the child-centred perspective), but he nonetheless suggests that it is possible to agree on a general consideration of the term, which takes into consideration all of the criteria generally ascribed to education. Peters proposes that, "an educated man is one who has achieved a state of mind which is characterized by a mastery of and care for the worthwhile things that have been transmitted, which are viewed in some kind of cognitive perspective."¹ As opposed to the concept of a man being trained in a limited respect (for example, having received instruction in biochemistry to the exclusion of the humanities, etc.); Peters suggests that "the concept of education presupposes not only the development of beliefs but also the differentiation of mind in respects which can be developed to the exclusion of others."²

Peters outlines a set of criteria of education, to

¹R.S. Peters, Ethics and Education (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1966), p. 46.

²Ibid., p: 47.

which it will be useful to refer in the course of the examination of indoctrination:

- (i) education implies the transmission of what is worthwhile to those who become committed to it.
- (ii) education involves knowledge and understanding and some kind of cognitive perspective, which are not inert
- (iii) education at least rules out some procedures of transmission, on the grounds that they lack wittingness and voluntariness¹

Snook, in attempting to distinguish indoctrination from the concept of education, makes use of Peters' criteria of education. Snook agrees that whereas reference to the educated person is considered as a compliment, reference to an indoctrinated person is not.

Kilpatrick writes that education is, "designed to free the whole personality of the learner for the fullest living, for the best and most independent exercise of all his powers, for the control of his own destiny...the ability to use the mind effectively...the absence of external restraint."²

Gerald Johnson suggests that the aim and "end of education is the comprehension of truth"³; Ralph Loewe refers to education as a human process⁴; Dr. Max Rafferty, former

¹Peters, Ethics, p. 45.

²Kilpatrick, Philosophy of Education, p. 121.

³Gerald Johnson, "A Question of Tensions", Harvard Educational Review, 36 (Fall, 1966), p. 526.

⁴Ralph Loewe, ed., Rationalism, Judaism, and Universalism (London:Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), p. 252.

California State Superintendent of Public Instruction, proposed that, "the aim of education is to give young people the intellectual tools which the race over the centuries has found indispensable in the pursuit of truth"¹; Ashley Montague adds that, "the functions and purposes of a genuine education... (are) to nourish and to cause the individual's uniqueness and creativity to grow"²; John Magee concludes that to educate includes the qualification of good intentions on the part of the educator.³ Magee employs the following criteria to test whether a process could be considered education:

- 1) teachers must believe that the doctrines they are teaching are true
- 2) teachers must believe that teaching these beliefs to students were doing them some good
- 3) teachers must use methods consistent with teaching (as opposed to conditioning, threats, imposition of unshakeable beliefs) to obtain their consent
- 4) teachers must appeal to understanding⁴

That indoctrination and education are two fundamentally different processes is underlined by the almost universally attributable negative connotations to indoctrination, and by the

¹Dr. Max Rafferty, in Summerhill: For and Against, ed. by Harold H. Hart (New York: Hart Publishing Co., 1970), p. 13.

²Ashley Montague, in Summerhill, ed. by Hart, p. 51.

³John B. Magee, Philosophical Analysis in Education (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 100.

⁴Ibid., p. 101.

conclusively positive connotations attributed to education.

It remains now to examine both processes in greater depth to determine the justification of these evaluations.

Content in Indoctrination

A seemingly obvious criterion of indoctrination deals with content as related to truth (as opposed to personal taste, as was the case in the consideration of indoctrination as a negative process). Gregory and Woods suggest that indoctrination involves doctrines which, unlike facts or manifest untruths, are not known to be true or false.¹ They claim that this is, in fact, the salient characteristic of doctrines. They distinguish between 'theory' which is arrived at by rational means - for example, one refers to scientific theory - and doctrine - which involves a "Kierkegaardian leap of faith".² They note that one speaks of religious doctrine, and not religious theory. Doctrine cannot be proved or disproved. It follows, then, that indoctrination deals with subject matter which can be neither empirically proved or disproved. The existence of God; the inherent superiority of Aryans; Marxian dialectics: these would be classified as doctrines by Gregory and Woods. Consequently, the process of transmitting this information as truth (that is, as subject matter which should be believed) or as falsehood is indoctrination. The transmission of verifiable information, which would include mathematical deductions, chemical experiments and other empirically observable information, would not be considered cases of indoctrination.

¹Gregory and Woods, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 171.

²Ibid., p. 173.

Gregory and Woods make a further distinction between indoctrinating and 'inculcating untruths'.¹ The distinction is made by virtue of whether the student's beliefs were unshakeable in the face of contrary evidence. For example, a Russian citizen who had been told since he was young that there are no trees in England, discovers on a trip to England that the country is in fact full of trees. Although he had accepted the prior information as true, he would now realize that it was false. His trust in his teachers might not be affected - he might rationalize their 'lie' or 'misinformation' as having political motives of which he is not appreciative - but his belief of the information has certainly been changed. This then is a case of an untruth being originally transmitted, and eventually rejected in the face of evidence to the contrary. According to Gregory and Woods this teaching would be a case of non-indoctrination, since the subject matter has been shown to be verifiable (as opposed to doctrines, which they claim are not). For these writers indoctrination must always involve doctrines - that is, information which cannot be known to be true or false. The instruction in this case would be an example of ignorant or misguided teaching.

For Gregory and Woods, an example of instruction can be substantiated as indoctrination, if the student maintains

¹Gregory and Woods, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 185.

his belief in the doctrine, regardless of contrary opinion which might more evidentially be corroborated. Of course, since their definition of doctrine is something which is beyond verifiability, a change of opinion would have to be based on other than purely rational considerations. The authors suggest that, "a Russian coming to (Great Britain) nursing the unshakeable belief that the course of history is determined by economic forces, would return to Russia still holding that belief."¹ According to the authors, this 'history-economic doctrine' possesses a feature lacking in the untruth about the absence of trees in England, "namely a wide-ranging generality that allows considerable freedom of manoeuvre in the sense that one can take up a distinctive position and not be easily dislodged, or even not be dislodged at all."²

The difficulty with this argument, though, is that it seems possible that in the second case, the Russian's beliefs may in fact alter. For example, after being introduced to literature and people which explicitly showed that economics is just one of several determining forces, his belief in the original (supposedly unshakeable) Marxist doctrine may be re-evaluated. Does this mean that the indoctrination proved unsuccessful, or that this was never a case of indoctrination in the first place? Although their argument is somewhat unclear,

¹Gregory and Woods, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 185.

²Ibid.

it would seem that according to Gregory and Woods this constitutes a case of indoctrination which was not successful, since it did involve a doctrine, as opposed to 'manifest untruths or facts.'

A similar ambiguity arises in the following example regarding Malcolm X. He had been instructed, and had come to believe, that the white man is the devil. His previous contact with most white men served to confirm the teachings of his mentor, Elijah Muhammed. However, after Malcolm's pilgrimage to Mecca and his earlier censure by Muhammed, and after meeting countless Caucasian Moslems, Malcolm's beliefs started to change. He had come to see that whiteness and devilness are not necessarily synonymous, and even started to question whether white American non-Muslims were the devils he had believed they were. According to Gregory and Woods' definitions of doctrines and indoctrination, Malcolm's earlier teaching by Muhammed indicates a case of indoctrination. And yet, while the beliefs remained unshakeable for the vast majority of Black Muslims, a large segment of the movement followed Malcolm X. It seems that the latter's original Black Muslim views were shaken when they began to take the form of untruths in his eyes, and hence verifiable. It is significant, I feel, that Malcolm started to re-examine his earlier beliefs only after he had been censured by Muhammed. (He had not rationally considered some of his earlier beliefs, until his faith in the basis of those beliefs - that is, his faith in Elijah

Muhammed - had been shaken.) So while Gregory and Woods argue that indoctrination involves unshakeable beliefs in unprovable information, this does not eliminate the possibility of previously so-called non-verifiable information becoming provable (a common occurrence in science). It should be kept in mind too that not everyone accepts the same information as valid proof. For example, among the many Black Muslims who remained loyal to Muhammed, even Malcolm's brother did not agree with Malcolm's newly held views. Indeed, this seems to me to be a fundamental shortcoming of this criterion. That is, it is difficult, if not impossible, to objectively delineate and distinguish a fact, a manifest untruth, and a doctrine.

This can be further shown by the following example. Anti-semitism is an ideology which is often closely associated with indoctrination, in that some of its underlying assumptions are not always empirically verifiable (for example, the notion that Jews are both wealthy capitalists and international communists; that they stick together; that they are stingy and greedy). A few years ago, I had been doing research with a fellow student-teacher (a top student academically) at McGill University, who expressed shock one evening when she happened to drive by my parents' small suburban duplex, because she had until then believed that all Jewish people were fantastically wealthy and lived in huge mansions. She asked me if there were other Jews who were also not millionaires. She then proceeded to ask me questions about Israel and my experiences in that

country. Apparently she had been holding a totally one-sided anti-Israel view, based mostly on information a former Arab boyfriend had provided. Suddenly she started to wonder whether she had been believing certain over-simplified information relating to Jews. Now, according to Gregory and Woods, whether she had been indoctrinated must be based on whether she had an unshakeable belief in a doctrine. In this case, this was apparently not so, since (like the Russian who saw trees) she was suddenly confronted by what to her was a clear untruth - that is, the notion that all Jews live in huge mansions. For someone else, it is possible that this would not constitute proof of an untruth: the rationalization could be made that Jews who don't live in huge mansions are even stingier and sneakier than those who do, as they simply keep their money hidden.

Once again, it seems clear that it is difficult to classify a process as indoctrination solely on the basis of whether the content is a doctrine, untruth, or fact, since these categories are not universally accepted. Furthermore, what is doctrine at one time, may be viewed as an untruth or fact at another time by the same person. Indeed, Gregory and Woods themselves mention that the teacher's aim and method as well as content, are conceptually connected with the concept of indoctrination.

One might question, furthermore, whether there is such a thing as an absolutely true fact (although it does seem clear

that some facts appear to be more true or likely than others), since even facts are constantly being revised to the point where previously opposing information takes their place. And still there exist innumerable cases of facts being presented as true, in all realms of subject matter. Gerald Johnson calls these facts, "imperfect but indispensable knowledge". He writes:

If the aim and end of education is the comprehension of truth, then to assume that pupils should be told no lies is logical. But it is immoderately logical....There is no conclusive evidence that any permanent damage results from telling the child that two and two are four, or that the recorded history of America began when in 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue, although both propositions are of considerable dubiety.¹

Johnson concludes that there exist toxic but also necessary forms of indoctrination (where he seems to define indoctrination as a process of the transfer of beliefs which are inaccurately classified as 'facts' instead of as 'hypotheses').

Anthony Flew, while conceding the importance of aim and method in determining what is indoctrination, suggests that an adequate analysis of indoctrination must include the following criteria:

- 1) that the beliefs to be imparted must be ideologically tinted doctrines
- 2) that the doctrines must be false or not known to be true²

For example, Flew suggests that the sleep-training of French is not indoctrination because it does not deal with ideologically

¹Johnson, in Harvard Educational Review, p. 526.

²Flew, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 85.

tinted doctrines. Similarly, one would suppose that for Flew inculcation of mathematical equations and memorization of Latin conjugations would not be indoctrination. On the other hand, passing on information about religious matters as true (when their truth has not been universally established) is indoctrination. The content, then, must be of a certain sort - that is, 'ideologically tinted'. This notion however seems to have more to do with the intention of the teacher than with the type of the subject matter. B.S. Crittendon referred to this as "content-in-context", where subject matter not generally considered indoctrinary can be used in indoctrinary situations¹ for example, when the science of genetics is used to attempt to prove that white people are inherently superior to black people. Another obvious example of this is the teaching of history in Russia to illustrate the Marxist viewpoint, where at different times the emphasis on certain information is slightly altered: the re-evaluation of Stalin's (and more recently, Khrushchev's) contributions.

Patricia Smart presents the argument that since we are frequently mistaken about the strength of the evidence, it is unrealistic to claim that the teaching of beliefs which later prove to be false is always indoctrination:

Medieval thinkers did not conclude that the world was flat because they ignored the evidence. On the whole, Bellarmine

¹B.S. Crittendon, "Indoctrination as Mis-education", in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 146.

(who did not prescribe to the Copernican theory but considered it as a hypothesis which required further scientific documentation) showed a greater respect for genuine argument and canons of proof than Galileo....It is the occurrence of incidents such as this, which have led writers on indoctrination to retract their original suggestion that indoctrination consists of teaching false beliefs.¹

If the evidence at the time seems valid and appropriate, then Smart concludes that,

to accuse the medieval teacher of teaching his pupils the belief that the world was flat, when there was no contrary evidence for this belief would be like accusing the 17th Century doctor of malpractice because he did not use penicillin.²

The implication of Smart's argument suggests that one must look beyond the truth or falsity of the teaching to determine whether that teaching is a case of indoctrination. Smart considers the significance of the intention of the teacher: "One must want one's students to develop unshakeable beliefs, even though one is aware of the inadequacy of the evidence one is propagating".³

If content is indoctrination in light of its use, it seems then that it is not so much the content which must be of a specific nature (for a process to be considered indoctrination), but more significantly what the instructor attempts to do with the information. Furthermore, the content criterion

¹Patricia Smart, "The Concept of Indoctrination", in New Essays in the Philosophy of Education, ed. by Glenn Langford and D.J. O'Connor (Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, 1973), p. 39.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

(where information not known to be true is presented as true) is not enough to always determine whether a case is or is not indoctrination, since there exist cases whereby information is presented as true (so-called facts), although their absolute truth has not been confirmed, and yet these cases are generally not considered to be indoctrination - for example, scientific information, and Johnson's examples above. In fact, even Johnson, who suggests that these are necessary forms of indoctrination, bases his distinction on what is good and what is bad indoctrination, and on other considerations - such as, whether it would be harmful to students. Gregory and Woods would suggest that another important consideration is to what extent the person is open to criticize formerly accepted truths.

So it seems that it is not altogether accurate to suggest that indoctrination necessarily involves either the transmission of ideologically-tinted doctrines, or doctrines of any sort. I intend now to briefly consider whether the transfer of this kind of information is acceptable in the educative process.

Content in Education

It has been shown in the previous section that the transmission of a specific subject matter does not necessarily represent a case of indoctrination. In fact, I intend to show that this sort of transmission is a fundamental characteristic of the educative process.

The notion that the imparting of any content at all constitutes a case of indoctrination (since one is imposing information on the child), is one put forth by the advocates of total freedom for the child. In the name of objectivity and an open mind, an attitude of total neutrality on the part of the educators has been advocated by some - anything less than this would be considered indoctrination. However, that the inculcation of bodies of information is not only not a case of indoctrination but actually a fundamental element of education, is the stand taken by many writers on education, to a few of whom I shall now refer.

One of the criteria of education put forth by Peters is the 'transmission of what is worthwhile' (see page 24 above). In fact, in response to the advocates of total freedom, Peters notes that the adherence to principles of liberty and respect for persons "cannot serve as a substitute for valuations about content, which determine the direction of growth and what interests are worth developing."¹ Peters argues that "the stress

¹ Peters, Ethics and Education, p. 35.

on 'experience' and 'nature' is surely a healthy corrective not to the handing on of traditions, skills, and information, but to the mechanical and unimaginative manner in which they are often handed on."¹ In his discussion of freedom, Peters suggests that a general empirical condition of freedom is that in order to have freedom in some spheres guaranteed, it is necessary for the individual to accept a less restricting sort of constraint. Similarly, in order for the individual to be able to critically and independently evaluate information, he must have at some stage been dependent on others (teachers, books, etc.) as his sources of information. Peters proposes that for a person to really understand science, he must first have been imbued with a sense of a passion for truth and a concern for evidence and clarity. Similarly, in order to understand philosophy, one must have learned a respect for cogency and consistency. These values are part of Peters' worthwhile content to be transmitted - without which, he justifiably claims, it is impossible for the individual to ultimately be able to critically consider any information. With regards to curriculum selection, Peters stresses those activities which ultimately help to determine what activities are indeed worthwhile (for example, science, history, literature as opposed to ping-pong, poker or comic books). For Peters, then, the question

¹R.S. Peters, Authority, Responsibility and Education (New York: Atherton Press, 1967); p. 97.

is not whether the educator may transmit information, but rather determining the nature of what worthwhile information to transmit.

G.S. Counts stresses the validity of a similar question, referred to earlier: "the big question...is not whether we should impose anything on the child in the process of education, but what we should impose."¹ Counts argues that,

all education contains a large element of imposition, that in the very nature of the case this is inevitable, that the existence and evolution of society depend upon it, that consequently it is eminently desirable, and that the frank acceptance of this fact by the educators is a major professional obligation.²

On the suggestion that the imposition of cultural traditions and achievements places a severe restriction on the freedom of the children, Counts maintains that it is precisely this imposition ("provided the tradition is vital and suited to the times") which releases the energies of the young, sets up standards of excellence, and creates the possibility of further achievements.³ Like Peters, Counts agrees that the nature of the child must be taken into account with reference to the organization of an educational program, but it cannot

¹Counts, Phi Delta Kappan, p. 188.

²G.S. Counts, Dare the School Build a New Social Order? (New York: John Day Co., 1932), p. 12.

³Counts, Dare the School..., p. 14.

furnish the materials or the guiding principles of such a program.¹ Since absolute impartiality is neither possible nor desirable, Counts concludes, like Peters, that it is a respectable element of education to pass on what is considered worthwhile information.

John Holt seems to be in accord with Counts on this matter, and suggests that complete impartiality does not exist even in the most permissive of schools. Holt refers to the Summerhill school, suggesting that Neill had a definite aim in mind when he paid a child for stealing, and that was to get the child to stop stealing.² If Neill had been absolutely permissive about stealing, and was serious about not impinging on the child's freedoms, he would have taken no notice of the stealing. The point is that Neill was concerned with getting across the message of 'not stealing' - it is his method which is unique, not the basic valuation of the actual message.

While it is generally agreed that scientific information is valid as worthwhile content, R.M. Hare suggests that moral guidance falls into a similar category. It is the role of the educator, says Hare, to provide a firm foundation of moral principles, which the student should be in a position to ultimately reject if need be. Certainly it is true that it

¹Counts, Dare the School..., p. 15.

²John Holt, in Summerhill, ed. by Hart, p. 88.

might prove extremely difficult in some cases to abandon these principles in later life - and thus one might question the damage which had been caused to the child's ability to think rationally or critically. But it is also possible that this consequence could result even when the information passed on was of a scientific nature. I am reminded of an elderly friend (in her mid-nineties at the time), who refused to believe that man had actually landed on the moon - even as she watched the occurrence on television. Hare proposes that,

unless our education has been so thorough as to transform us into automata, we can come to doubt or even reject these principles; that is what makes human beings, whose moral systems change, different from ants, whose moral system does not.¹

In order to deal with moral education properly, Hare emphasizes that it is principles, not decisions, which should be taught. For example, a student driver is taught that he must drive on the right hand side of the road. If this student has been well-educated in the principles of driving, it is possible that he would disregard this rule in the face of new circumstances: that is, in order to avoid a pedestrian, or when driving in certain European countries. Similarly, a morally educated person is one who has a solid basis of principles, even if it means changing, improving, or abandoning the original decisions he had been taught to give meaning to the principles. With regards to the issue of the importance of

¹R.M. Hare, The Language of Morals (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 74.

providing a content that is worthwhile to the young, Ashley

Montague emphasizes that giving children

roots in the background of their culture and humanity... would be desirable in providing the child with the sort of referents from which he can wing his way to fulfillment and independence.¹

Montague does not see a necessary contradiction in this viewpoint, and in his consideration of the function of education, which is to 'nourish and cause the individual's uniqueness and creativity to grow'. (page 25 above)

Paul Goodman, who suggests that unlike incidental learning which is 'natural and inevitable', formal schooling is deliberate intervention and needs justification, nonetheless does admit that this justification exists and is valid. He refers to a "vague but important wisdom that must be passed on, a wisdom that does not appear on the surface and which requires special pointing out and cloistered reflection."²

In his book, Philosophical Analysis in Education, John Magee suggests that since there is a "contingent or decisional element in all human knowledge in the sense that it rests upon ultimate assumptions that are not themselves rationally proveable",³ there is no escape from indoctrination by eliminating every bit of subject matter from education that cannot be

¹Montague, in Summerhill, ed. by Hart, p. 54.

²Paul Goodman, in Summerhill, ed. by Hart, p. 207.

³Magee, Philosophical Analysis, p. 67.

grounded empirically in the consensus of inquirers. Magee acknowledges the place of faiths in the educational process, and suggests that the solution to this problem is "to teach students the contingent character of human knowledge and evaluation as soon as they are able to grasp such a concept."¹

Thomas Green, in his article "A Topology of the Teaching Concept", refers to the ineffectuality of teaching in those "whose minds are enchained by prejudice or who cannot face the questions which must be raised."² Green suggests that when this is the case, it is up to the teacher to try to directly change the attitudes of the students in order to begin teaching. Green refers to the necessity of inculcating certain beliefs, "without which no beliefs can be warranted, and these are the only beliefs which at all cost must be affirmed."³ So Green too, for all his stress on evidential beliefs, does affirm the need for passing on certain beliefs, to which can be ascribed a non-empirical foundation. He asserts, however, that although one should try to rationalize these beliefs, their non-evidential characteristic is not enough reason to disregard them.

In conclusion, then, it seems that the passing on of

¹Magee, Philosophical Analysis, p. 68.

²Thomas Green, "A Topology of the Teaching Concept", in Concepts of Teaching: Philosophical Essays, ed. by C. J. B. MacMillan and T. W. Nelson (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1968), p. 49.

³Ibid., p. 52.

content, in the form of a body of knowledge, can be considered as part of the educative process. Our earlier contention, in the discussion of the criterion of content as indoctrination, seems to have been confirmed - that is, that one has to look beyond the substance of the content (for example, to the use to which the content is put by the teacher), to determine whether the particular case represents a case of indoctrination.

Nonetheless, it does not seem inaccurate to suggest that it is more likely for indoctrination to occur when the subject matter deals with 'ideologically-tinted doctrines'. It is improbable that one would speak of an instructor indoctrinating someone with the multiplication table, or with the physiology of the jellyfish. On the other hand, if the instructor were transmitting this kind of information with the express purpose of excluding independent thought about these or other matters, then we would be more inclined to suggest that he might be indoctrinating. There might in this case indeed be an ideological doctrine to which the instructor adhered (for example, to keep students ignorant of global humanitarian injustices in order to maintain his economic superiority). It is helpful, in our consideration of indoctrination, to examine the nature of the information transmitted, and the reasons for its transmission.

Method in Indoctrination

Another criterion commonly used to determine indoctrination entails an evaluation of the method of the information transfer. I intend to examine by what qualifications this criterion can be helpful in determining a case of indoctrination.

John Wilson is among those who suggest that it is logically necessary that the indoctrinated person arrives at the belief by non-rational methods: if the aim of education is to increase a person's rationality, in the sense of appreciation and control over reality, then it is argued that this can only be achieved through rational methods.¹ That is, it does not make sense that one can coerce or beat a person into appreciating the virtue of rationality. Wilson in fact suggests that it is sometimes right to make children believe certain myths in order to give them more security, or even to fulfil the ultimate objective of bringing them up to be 'free and independent' adults² - as long as rationality would ultimately not be diminished. Wilson puts it this way:

Now it may be true...that there are cases in which we would be prepared to give the child this sort of false impression to save it from a worse fate....But to allow the child to remain under this false impression, or to create or sustain it except when absolutely necessary, seems to me dangerous in a way in which force or conditioning are not. For here,

¹Wilson, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 21.

²Ibid., p. 20.

we have taken over or put to sleep, a central part of the child's personality - his ability to think rationally in certain areas.¹

Wilson concludes that in order to avoid indoctrination it is not necessary to claim the existence of certainty - merely of rationality. The doctrines "may be certain, or they may be highly probable, or probable, or just likely on the whole. What they must be is backed by evidence."²

Thomas Green seems to agree, writing that,

when in teaching, we are concerned simply to lead another person to a correct answer, but are not correspondingly concerned that they arrive at that answer on a basis of good reasons, then we are indoctrinating; we are engaged in creating a non-evidential style of beliefs.³

For Green the important issue is not so much what the person believes, but rather whether he arrived at that belief in an evidential fashion. Thus, it would be possible to indoctrinate people into the truth - the problem is that they will not know that it is the truth (in the sense of being able to provide reasons) - they will believe only that it is a correct belief.

Green suggests that,

the intent of indoctrination is to lead people to hold beliefs as though they were arrived at by inquiry, and yet to hold them independently of any subsequent inquiry

¹Wilson, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 22.

²John Wilson, "Education and Indoctrination", in Aims in Education: The Philosophic Approach, ed. by T.H.B. Hollins (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1964), p. 28.

³Green, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 37.

and therefore secure against the threat of change by the later introduction of conflicting reasons or conflicting evidence.¹

Indoctrination is generally contrasted with conditioning on the grounds that the former involves belief and the rational support of this belief (rational in the sense of seeming logical and consistent to the indoctrinated person), while the latter does not. Conditioning generally involves behaviour modification relating to stimuli-response association, as opposed to the emphasis on belief. Green distinguishes between evidential beliefs and indoctrinated beliefs as follows:

A person who is indoctrinated can sometimes give reasons and evidence for his beliefs, because as a practical matter, reasons and evidence were necessary in the process of establishing his beliefs. The difference, however, is betrayed in his use of reasons and evidence. He will use argument, criticism, and so forth, not as an instrument of inquiry, but as an instrument establishing what he already believes.²

Thus, Green claims that the Church represents one of the clearest examples of the 'failure to teach (the term teach as opposite to indoctrinate), since it employs 'set beliefs' and thus encourages a non-evidential style of belief.³ Green would suggest that the Church is more closely involved with indoctrination than instruction, because it is more concerned with what a person believes than how he comes to believe it. It is

¹Green, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 35.

²Green, in Concepts of Teaching, ed. by MacMillan and Nelson, p. 47.

³Ibid., p. 50.

true says Green, that indoctrination is also concerned with how a person believes something, but only as a consequence of ensuring that the person gets to believe the required doctrine.

While Anthony Flew stresses the validity of the content criterion (that is, that the content must be an ideologically tinted doctrine), he also notes the significance of methodology in determining whether a process is indoctrination. He contends that "certain disfavoured methods", which are incompatible with the production of a proper understanding of what is taught and of a critical appreciation of its logical status, represent a case of indoctrination.¹ So while Flew suggests that sleep-training of French is not indoctrination in the primary sense because it does not involve ideologically tinted doctrines, he nonetheless proposes that indoctrination in the secondary sense would include, for example, the mastery of A-level physics by having an electric charge passed through a person's brain cells. Flew would include this as instruction by indoctrination because it does not involve the concept of a 'proper understanding' of what is being passed on.

B.S. Crittendon claims that the crucial criteria for determining when teaching is indoctrination are set by "the methods of intelligent inquiry and the conditions of moral actions."² Crittendon sees the purpose of schooling as

¹Flew, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 86.

²Crittendon, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 148.

involving the initiation of the person into the "best available bodies of theory for explaining and interpreting man and his world and for guiding human action."¹ It would seem to follow that, as Mill urges, the only way to ensure that the bodies of theory were in fact the 'best available', would be to maintain a completely open and intelligent method of inquiry. By this reasoning, one could claim that the teacher of any school of thought which rejected any other perspective, without a prior comprehensive examination, would be said to be indoctrinating.

Although the criterion of method, as emphasized by the above writers, certainly seems to appear as a valid criterion of indoctrination, there are considerations which lead one to suggest that method cannot be said to be a sufficient criterion of indoctrination. That is, there seem to be instances where similar methods are used in some cases which are considered indoctrination, and in others which are not. In the following section, I intend to clarify in what way this criterion is adequate in a consideration of processes of instruction as indoctrination, by considering the status of methods in the educative process.

¹Crittendon, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 138.

Method in Education

In defining a rational method of information transfer, the use of reason is what is generally implied. It is demanded that, 1) the teacher supply his students with reasons or evidence for information presented; or at least, 2) that the evidence exists and can be supplied if necessary. The former demand is one that is obviously not adhered to in all aspects of instruction. Willis Moore has firmly suggested that,

we frankly admit that learning necessarily begins with an authoritative and indoctrinative situation, and that for lack of time, native capacity or the requisite training to think everything out for oneself, learning even for the rationally mature individual must continue to include an ingredient of the unreasoned, the merely accepted.¹

That is to say, that even where the evidence does exist and can be made available, considerations of practicality as well as possibility dictate that education at times necessarily involves non-documented instruction. Moore proposes that the proper mixture of reasoned and unreasoned information is appropriately "determined by the degree of rational capability of the learner with regard to the subject matter before him and the degree of urgency of the situation."² To clarify this point, consider the example of a parent teaching his young child to not eat too many candies, which would cause a stomach ache. To the young child, who has discovered that he enjoyed eating three or four candies more than eating just one, and did not

¹Willis Moore, "Indoctrination and Democratic Method", in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 97.

²Ibid.

get sick, his logic might dictate that eating ten or twenty candies would increase his pleasure. He might further feel that because he likes eating candies so much, he is immune from any possible ill effects of candies. His parents, who notice that the child is not heeding their reasonable advice, then pass on their message in threatening and not immediately rational ways: for example, by grounding him, or by no television viewing on Saturday morning, or even by a spanking. One would generally not accuse the parents of indoctrinating, even though their methods were not rational, in the sense of giving reasons. On the other hand, parents who employed similar methods (That is, threats and force) to get their child to believe that 'you can't trust anyone who is not of your religion', are often said to be indoctrinating. In this case, it appears that the criterion of the method of information transfer is qualified by the nature of the indoctrination itself.

In his treatise, On Liberty, John Stuart Mill, the defender of individual rights and liberties (an individual's "own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant" for another to interfere with his liberties¹), admits that "these are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise."²

¹Mill, On Liberty, p. 15.

²Ibid.

Nonetheless, Mill maintains a completely opposite position in the following particular circumstance:

Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually affecting that end. Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion... But as soon as mankind have attained the capacity of being guided to their own improvement by conviction or persuasion...compulsion is no longer admissable as a means to their own good....¹

Of course, the assumption in this case is that those in charge can distinguish between 'barbarians' and people capable of understanding reasons; and that those in charge have the knowledge of what constitutes 'improvement'. Mill further suggests that his concept of non-interference with another's liberty "is meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties. We are not speaking of children."² The contention is that the existence of reasons does not necessarily suggest the desirability or possibility of their use in all situations. (A case in point, is the example mentioned earlier of the young child with the appetite for candies with whom reasonable discourse was ineffective.

The problem in dealing with young people (or 'barbarians' for that matter) without reasons, is the possible repurcussion of delimiting the child's ability to reason in the future.

¹Mill, On Liberty, p. 16.

²Mill, On Liberty, p. 15.

It is often noted that one of the reasons for the turmoil in many of the newly independent African states, is that the colonial powers, in their efforts to first exploit and then westernize the colonies, did not effectively change from (supposedly) benevolent despots to national advisors. Mill acknowledges this dilemma and suggests that the teacher must always be on the lookout for signs of rationality emerging in the student - indeed, he must encourage this emergence.

This notion of the sometimes impracticality or impossibility of using reasons, is also considered by Thomas Green. While he emphasizes the distinction between 'indoctrination' and 'teaching' on the basis of evidential beliefs, like Mill, he admits that there are situations when the transfer of non-evidential beliefs are acceptable, suggesting that "indoctrination may be useful in the prelude to teaching."¹ This precondition for teaching Green explains as follows:

Teaching is ineffectual in those whose minds are enchained by prejudice or who cannot face the questions which must be raised. Teaching aims to remove these fetters; it seeks by instruction to reconstitute the order of our beliefs so that even our psychologically central beliefs are evidentially held. But in this it presupposes already some measure of psychic freedom. It is in this sense that the practice of teaching presupposes certain attitudes, the cultivation of which is at the same time the consequence of teaching. When a teacher can, in effect, find no foothold from which to proceed, he must try directly to change attitudes in order to begin teaching.²

¹Green, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 45.

²Green, in Concepts of Teaching, ed. by MacMillan and Nelson, p. 49.

The 'certain attitudes' to which Green refers include characteristics which seem necessary to appreciate teaching - such as a concern for truth, respect for evidence, openness to new information, conviction in the value of goodwill and justice. Quoting G.K. Chesterton, Green agrees that, "There is a thought which stops thought. That is the only thought that ought to be stopped."¹ Green however also agrees with our earlier contention that this presents a dilemma which is not easily resolved: "the problem...is to seek closure of mind at precisely those points and on those matters which will permit us to be open to the evidence on all other matters of belief."² This closure of mind must be maintained despite the lack of evidence or reasons for its maintenance, since it is precisely this attitude (that is, an unconditional respect for truth and consistency) without which one could not seriously consider any evidence. Green refers to this 'due regard for truth' as an "enabling belief" which is indispensable.³ Although the attempt must be made to ensure that an enabling belief is rationally held (Green suggests that the aim of teaching "is to seek every possible assurance that our passionate convictions, our enabling beliefs, are also rationally held"),⁴ a "thorough skepticism in regard to reason, a kind

¹Green, in Concepts of Teaching, ed. by MacMillan and Nelson, p. 52.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 53.

of complete anti-intellectualism, if held to as a deep conviction, would successfully prevent the examination of any subsequent beliefs."¹ Thus, the abandonment of an enabling belief cannot be warranted on the basis of evidence or reasons.

So Green does see a 'perfectly good and important role' for indoctrination to play in education, but he stresses that it "can never be justified for its own sake....It can only be justified as the nearest approximation to teaching available at the moment."² For Green, indoctrination is acceptable when it can be reasoned that these beliefs would lead to an attitude where evidential beliefs can be considered. It seems to me that the unresolved difficulty in Green's argument is that there continues to be disagreement as to the points at which one should fix a 'closure of mind'. For example, there are some religious groups who discourage their children from attending secular universities, because they see the university as a strong but essentially misleading influence. There are other groups which make everything available to their children - except the option of the existence of God, which is seen as a self-evident truth. Inherent in Green's notion that there exist specific, valid "enabling beliefs" is the assumption (albeit based on rational if not evidential reflection) that a com-

¹Green, in Concepts of Teaching, ed. by MacMillan and Nelson, p. 52.

²Ibid., p. 55.

mitment to evidential beliefs is the 'sine qua non' in the pursuit for truth. That this is a disputable assumption is attested to by the many scientists (as well as philosophers) who acknowledge the limitations of evidential beliefs - especially the notion that that which is not empirically verifiable is not as valid in the quest for truth as empirically verifiable information. Green's point that non-evidential beliefs are sometimes acceptable (even necessary) is well made. Even when the evidence does not exist and cannot be supplied, there exist cases when the quest for truth and ultimate rationality sometimes requires such non-evidential instruction. However, Green's contention that indoctrination is sometimes necessary does not follow, since he has not shown that the use of non-evidential beliefs is a sufficient criterion of indoctrination. That is to say, enabling beliefs are not synonymous with indoctrination.

In defining a rational method of information transfer it is ultimately required that the evidence exists and can be supplied if and when the situation warrants. Thus, it would seem that the teacher who provided information for which there was no conclusive evidence, would be said to be indoctrinating. While this is true in some cases, it can be seen that this characteristic is not always considered to be a determinant of indoctrination.

Bertrand Russell, in Education and the Social Order, is among those who suggest that it is harmful for the teacher

of religion to transmit information for which there does not seem to exist evidence. And yet, he nevertheless maintains that,

A life of uncertainty is nervously exhausting at all times, but especially in youth... (the child) wishes his world to be safe, and subject to the reign of law... Our belief in the uniformity of nature is largely the projection upon the cosmos of the child's desire for routine in the nursery.¹

Furthermore, Russell seems to approve of teachers and parents encouraging a perspective for which there does not seem to exist evidence, since he suggests that, "Adventurousness and courage are highly desirable qualities, but they are most easily developed against a background of fundamental security."²

Russell seems to be suggesting the desirability of providing the child with some kind of security, although this security might be based on mythical information. He rejects not the concept or rationality of providing information without evidence, but rather of certain types of information which are presented in this way. The information without evidence in this case is that for which the evidence seems non-existent, in the sense of being evidentially proved. Although the assumptions of the uniformity of nature and of the existence of God both seem non-evidential, Russell favours the former as 'a background of fundamental security.' Certainly that is his right; but it is not inconsistent or less logical to have faith in either or both hypotheses.

¹Russell, Social Order, p. 23.

²Ibid., p. 24.

Leo Jung, writing in 1927, seems to agree with Russell in that it is necessary to seek "working formulas and theories which will help to reduce to a form of order the bewildering variety of life phenomena."¹ The acceptability of working theories is acknowledged in all areas of learning - indeed the use of these can be credited with progress in the search for knowledge. This proposition is quite evident even in the physical sciences, generally considered a most rational area of study. For example, the age of the earth has been considered by examining, through the principles of carbon dating, the actual deterioration and changes which the earth has undergone in the last 60 years. The assumption that has been made is that physical conditions have remained constant prior to the start of the actual observation period. On the basis of actual proof, there is incomplete justification to suggest that the earth is X billions of years old - and yet, this is what is considered as a fairly accurate account of the earth's age. Here then is a case of presenting a conclusion for which there is incomplete tangible evidence, and yet the transfer of this information has not generally been considered an irrational process, and certainly not a case of indoctrination. One could argue that the scientific manner of determining the earth's age is based partly on empirical data, and partly on a faith in the data's validity. Now even though the possibility exists that new scientific discoveries could completely invalidate this theory, because it is

¹Leo Jung, Living Judaism (New York: The Night and Day Press, 1927), p. 15.

the least objectionable right now, it is passed on as the correct version. Even scientific authorities would not accept the scientific assumption of the earth's age as infallible - nevertheless, it is generally accepted as a helpful working concept, and more often as a factually accurate account.

My point here is simply to show that such a procedure is entirely acceptable in the educative process. Absolute certainty and proof are not necessary elements of a rational method of information transfer. To classify an instructional process as indoctrination because it involves methods which deal with incomplete evidence (which is considered to be the most accurate at the time) does not seem to be correct. The criterion of rational method must be qualified in this sense, since the existence of absolute certainty is rather dubious.

Another area in which information is passed on without evidential basis, and yet not necessarily considered indoctrination, is with regards to moral values. G.F. Collier has suggested that, "in the last resort our belief in our values depends on our own personal intuition or 'faith', not necessarily in the sense of religious faith, but in the sense of passing beyond the support of factual evidence."¹ That this is so, can be seen with the help of J.S. Junell's example, in enunciating the difficulty of determining moral truths: "When some forms of

¹Collier, Social Purposes, p. 155.

stealing are nowadays less of a gamble than, say, starting a new business, it becomes increasingly difficult to prove that honesty is indeed the best policy."¹ Junell, in considering the non-empirical basis of moral beliefs, writes:

A moral belief which is not valued for its own sake is doomed. Because it cannot rely on scientifically defensible evidence, and often lacks empirical basis, it must be accepted on faith as an absolute or not at all. Teaching children to accept truth on faith, however, calls for methods somewhat different from those for teaching them to accept truth on evidence. Absolutism does not lend itself fruitfully to argumentation or the employment of alternatives, for in a sense there are no acceptable alternatives to principles which are by definition unconditional, totally independent, perfect, and all inclusive.²

The imposition to which Junell refers is not normally considered to be a process of indoctrination. For example, a parent using non-rational methods to teach his child to refrain from indiscriminately hitting other children, would not be said to be indoctrinating. Although it can be argued that morals are 'first principles' for which there need not be any reasons, the point is that these are nonetheless somehow determined - furthermore, first principles are not universally accepted. A co-operativist and an Ayn Rand Objectivist maintain their opposing beliefs on the basis of having faith in opposing values; or at least, their emphasis on similar first principles is not the same. Will Herberg proposes that, "Without existential commitment to some system of values, which, despite an inescapable element of

¹Junell, Phi Delta Kappan, p. 183.

²Junell, Phi Delta Kappan, p. 183.

relativity, is felt to be somehow anchored in ultimate reality, human life in any significant sense is simply impossible."¹ Furthermore, Herberg maintains that all of man's activities, "insofar as they are specifically human, make sense only in terms of some structure of purposes which are themselves value in action."²

The rationalization generally put forth for the imparting of values or morals, is that without a foundation of certain attitudes (as stressed by Green, for example), other worthwhile activities cannot follow. The notion that teaching is worthwhile is an example of a non-evidential assumption. To suggest, then, that non-rational methods of information transfer (whereby reasons are not either supplied or available), always result in or characterize indoctrination, is not quite the case, since there do exist instances of non-indoctrination where non-rational methods are employed.

That indoctrination can only occur through non-rational methods seems a more accurate description. It is possible that the efficient or cunning indoctrinator would use something similar to rational methods in his instruction; that is, providing reasons and allowing for open discussion. A skillfull instructor

¹Herberg, Judaism and Modern Man, p. 16.

²Ibid., p. 17.

could easily use those tools as a means of ensuring belief in his doctrines. For example, in a discussion on American intervention in foreign wars, an anti-American professor could skillfully emphasize the negative experiences (eg., Cuba and Viet Nam), while ignoring the more positive experiences (the American defeat of Fascism in World War II). The professor might further stress economic and imperialistic motives involved. The point is, that if an instructor had his mind made up in advance, and is concerned solely with getting his students to accept his viewpoint, any semblance to rational methods which he uses is merely coincidental, and is better described as a rationalization than a rationale.

R.S. Peters includes as a criterion of education the understanding of the student, which seems to imply the need for reasons in the educative process. And yet, he also suggests that, "Rationality requires a middle course between authoritarianism and permissiveness."¹ It seems to me that this does not represent a contradiction, especially taking into account the arguments presented above. Peters' claim that to prevent understanding at any point is necessarily anti-educational, does not mean that when a teacher passes on a certain information without providing reasons, that that teacher is preventing understanding. In cases where the students are not in a position to appreciate the reasons, it does seem possible that the teacher

¹Peters, Ethics and Education, p. 198.

who insists on supplying them may be complicating matters to the point of preventing a less complete but also less complex level of understanding. For the sake of providing a foundation on which more complete bodies of information be digested and scrutinized, it seems that non-rational methods (that is, lack of reasons) can be employed in the educative process.

None theless, while non-rational methods are not unique to indoctrination, it is not incorrect to suggest that indoctrination can be said to employ non-rational methods. However, unless we are willing to refer to all cases as indoctrination, the criterion of rational method, while certainly valuable in examining specific processes, cannot be considered as a sufficient condition of indoctrination. That is to say, if a process of instruction is seen to involve non-rational methods, it warrants closer scrutiny because it might represent a process which is not conducive to education. If it appears to be acceptable as part of the educative process, one should be able to note the qualifications (of the criterion of method) whereby it can be distinguished from indoctrination. As discussed above, these qualifications seem to include the nature of the student, the nature of the subject matter, and the overall intention of the teacher.

Intention in Indoctrination

In the preceding examination of the criteria of indoctrination, the consideration arose of the instructor's intention. Indeed, this criterion is one which seems to merit a thorough examination. Isaac Snook defines intention as follows:

- 1) that which is desired to happen
- 2) that which is foreseen as likely to happen (that is, the teacher foresees that as the result of his teaching a certain outcome is likely or inevitable)¹

A teacher might be using non-rational methods (absence of reasons), or be presenting content which is not universally accepted as valid; and yet, if his ultimate intention is that the student will eventually be able to review these beliefs critically (that is, be open to future evidence which might contradict these beliefs); and furthermore, if he uses non-rational methods with the intention of providing a foundation upon which the student would the sooner be able to deal with rational methods intelligently and logically; then we would not normally say that the teacher was indoctrinating. If, however, the teacher was teaching with the intention that his students believe certain information regardless of future evidence to the contrary, this would seem to indicate a case of indoctrination.

Let us consider the following examples, in which the intention is examined to determine whether a specific case is

¹Snook, Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 155.

indoctrination. A parent tells his three year-old child to stay away from the electrical outlets in the house. The parent explains that the child can get hurt, as being the reason for staying clear of the outlets. In fact, it is very possible to handle electrical outlets with complete safety if one is careful and understands why and how any dangerous accident might occur. Certainly in this case the parent's concern is that the child not get hurt - not that he stay away from electrical outlets for the rest of his life. As the child grows older, the parent shows him how to handle electrical outlets safely. One would not call the parent's teaching in this case (even if it did involve using a severe tone or perhaps a rap on the hand) indoctrination - based, it would seem, on the parent's intention.

An example of parents' intention to indoctrinate seems to be involved in the following situation. The parents want their child to stay away from the electrical outlets because that is where they hide their stolen diamonds. They use methods similar to those of the parent in the former situation. They attempt to keep the child in a perpetual state of fear, in order to keep him from discovering the jewels. Their intention is to nurture the child's fears about the electrical outlets. They prefer that their child believe lies and distortions about electrical outlets which would keep him in a state of fear and, as it happens, ignorance, rather than guide him to an open and honest understanding of electrical outlets and electricity. It seems to me that in this admittedly hypothetical case, one would

not be errant in claiming that these parents were indoctrinating their child. They were purposely getting him to believe something which they want him to believe, irrespective of its truth. They were not concerned with the child's capability to use his own mind; they want to keep him in a mindless state for their own benefit. On the basis of the parents' intention in this case, one would justifiably classify this as a case of indoctrination. (I have used this example as a clear contrast to the previous one, where the distinction of intention is the outstanding feature. In fact, this example harbors some of the characteristics of conditioning, since the parents' prime concern had more to do with the child's actions than with his beliefs. Nonetheless, even though the child's beliefs were of a secondary and almost unconscious concern to the parents, this would still be classified as a case of indoctrination, since it is presumed that even if the parents were made aware of the effect their actions were having on the child's belief system, they would persist in their actions.)

A further example of a parent's intention to indoctrinate seems to be involved in the following case: The parents of a ten year-old boy notice that their son has a definite preference for working with his hands, especially with objects which have electrical components. The boy soon starts talking of growing up to be an electrician. The parents, who are middle class, high-achiever oriented, desperately want their son to eventually become a white-collar professional, preferably a

lawyer or a doctor. They proceed to try to shift their son's interest and attention toward their aim, primarily by attempting to discourage their child's electrical aptitude and preference. They constantly mention how hard blue-collar workers have to work, for substantially little financial remuneration. They suggest that there is not much social prestige in being an electrician, and that the work is often risky. Finally they mention how unhappy they would be if their son did not make them proud of him by becoming a famous lawyer, doctor or professor. Although they would explain their actions as being ethical on the grounds that their son would be better off by not becoming an electrician, their actions are based on this as an assumption. They are purposely 'loading the dice' in a certain area. Their intention is not that their son ultimately make a rational decision about his career (which should include his own personal interest as well as considerations of money, prestige, etc.); but rather that their son base his decision within the limits of their personal preference. They are not merely trying to make their son aware of the many considerations involved (remember that the boy is still only ten years old), they want him to make his decision before he is ready to do so: by incorporating their own prejudices, so that by the time he would be in a position to decide upon a career, the criterion of personal interest will have been cancelled out by other considerations, which may or may not be accurate. Based on the parent's intentions, this would seem to be a case of indoctrination.

In this example, the doctrine or belief that the parents are transmitting is the exclusive importance of a professional career for their son. Although they might be accurate in their decision, it is based on a non-rational attitude and could just as easily prove to be inaccurate. It would seem to me that a more legitimate action (in the sense of not being indoctrinary) would be for them to expose their reasons, but explain that they would accept any career that their son would choose, as long as his decision was based on reasonable considerations.

R.M. Hare, who claims that the aim or intention of the teacher is appropriate as a determining criterion of indoctrination, proposes the following example: Getting a child to stop lying by using a severe tone, so that the child does not lie partly because he senses that his parents or teachers do not approve of his lying, is not indoctrination, if the latter do not want the child to "remain such that non-rational persuasion or influence is the only kind of moral communication" that the adult can have with him.¹ If however, the parents or teachers wanted the child to remain forever in that state of influence, then that would constitute indoctrination. Hare notes a fundamental difference between influencing a child in the best direction we can think of, and trying to stop the growth in a child of the capacity to think for himself about moral questions.

¹R.M. Hare, "Adults into Adolescents", in Aims in Education, ed. by Hollins, p. 51.

Hare concedes that "non-rational" methods are bad only if they are used to produce attitudes that are not open to argument. The parents (in the example mentioned above) who did not want their son to be an electrician were certainly trying to influence their son 'in the best direction they could think of', but this included a definite disregard for his own free choice and his attempt to reason for himself. In this case, the parents' influence was in fact attempting to produce a close-minded attitude, and hence indoctrinary.

On the subject of morality, Hare admits that this is a question of tradition, and is something which must be handed down. But, he stresses, what has to be passed on "is not any specific moral principle, but an understanding of what morality is and a readiness to think in a moral way and act accordingly."¹ However, just as in teaching the scientific outlook it is necessary to teach some science (that is, to pass on some proofs and conclusions), so does Hare allow for the more concrete use of moral principles by the teachers as examples. But the teacher's intentions in presenting actual moral principles, must be similar to the attitude of the teacher teaching some science which could be radically altered in the light of later researches. In this sense, since the intention of the teacher is to improve the child's ability to reason in these areas (that is, be open to new evidence), indoctrination is not occurring.

¹Hare, in Aims in Education, ed. by Hollins, p. 61.

J.P. White seems to agree with Hare's evaluation, suggesting that early moral education, for example, cannot be considered indoctrination as long as the teacher's aim is not to stop the growth in his students of the capacity to eventually think for themselves about moral questions.¹ "Since indoctrination is an activity, it can only be distinguished from other activities in terms of the particular intention the indoctrinator has in mind."² Thus, if a person has the intention of teaching that X is true, if and only if the student has good reasons for this belief, and that the student would reject this belief if he discovers otherwise, then we would not say that the student was being indoctrinated. In emphasizing the significance of the criterion of intention, White presents two examples where he attempts to show that where the intention is the same, the presence or absence of a set of doctrines is irrelevant to what is really going on.³

A) In White's first example, a member of a rich, white minority devises an ideology he does not believe to maintain his position over the poor black majority, and teaches this ideology as if it were true. In this case, there is a definite doctrine which is involved. The intention of the 'teacher' or 'ruler' is to entrench a doctrine in the minds of the people,

¹White, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 118.

²Ibid., p. 121.

³J.P. White. "Indoctrination Without Doctrines?", in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 193.

without regard for its validity. This seems, on several grounds, to be a clear-cut case of indoctrination.

B) The second case that White introduces, involves a schoolteacher who is concerned for his country's economic need of a docile labour force. In order to help meet this need, the teacher takes it upon himself to stamp into his pupils (regardless of their individual aptitudes or interests) the belief that they are best suited for manual duties. The teacher does this not by introducing or propagating an "ideologically tinted doctrine", but by engaging them in projects which would encourage their desires to become manual workers. In this case, although there is no unshakeable doctrine (although there is an unshakeable belief) which is being passed on, one would have to admit that the teacher was indoctrinating his students, his intention being to do their thinking and deciding for them.

Isaac Snook's definition of indoctrination is similar to White's, and is also based on the criterion of intention as fundamental to indoctrination:

A person indoctrinates P (proposition) if he teaches with the intention that the pupil or pupils believe P regardless of the evidence.¹

Although Snook concedes that the method and content criteria are determinants in the consideration of indoctrination, he

¹Isaac Snook, "Indoctrination and Moral Responsibility", in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 154.

suggests that they are inevitably involved in its application, whereas intention is involved in the actual concept of indoctrination.¹ For example, it is one thing to determine what constitutes murder, it is another thing to show that a person committed it. Ultimately, to determine a person's intentions with regards to indoctrination or non-indoctrination, it would be necessary to evaluate his teaching actions, which take into account what and how he is carrying on his instruction. However, as Hare stresses, it does seem that the actual appropriateness of the method and content can be evaluated by the intention of the teacher. As noted above, there exist cases where similar methods and content represent different kinds of instruction (that is, as indoctrination or non-indoctrination) depending on the intention.

As far as Snook is concerned then, certain 'truths' presented by teachers (for example, in mathematics or chemistry) with the intention that the students accept them as truths, irrespective of the existence of absolute or final proofs, is not indoctrination if the teachers allow for new (and possibly contrary) evidence to be accepted. In delineating clear-cut cases of indoctrination and non-indoctrination,

¹Snook, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 159.

Snook lists the following instances:¹

1) Cases which are clearly indoctrination:

- a) teaching an ideology as if it were the only one with any claim to rationality
- b) teaching, as if they are certain, propositions which the teachers know are uncertain
- c) teaching propositions which the teacher knows are false

In each of these cases it seems clear that the instructor is concerned with inculcating certain beliefs in his students, regardless of the validity, truth, or rationality of the beliefs. The instructor is only concerned that the students acquire and accept the beliefs. He discourages independent thought, for this would open up the possibility of the students' rejection of the beliefs.

2) Cases which are not indoctrination:

- a) teaching young children acceptable behaviour
- b) teaching facts by rote
- c) influencing the child unconsciously

In case '2a' Snook seems to be referring to socially acceptable rules of behaviour. For the child to get along at all, it seems that at least certain basic norms must be adhered to in any society. Gerald Johnson refers to the importance of this initiation of the child:

¹Snook, Indoctrination, p. 64.

From an early age the child will have occasion to deal with the cashier at the supermarket, who acts on the obviously false theory that two dimes are the same as four nickels....The child who cannot meet these requirements will certainly be catalogued as retarded and become a statistic in psychiatric case books. In short, in a world such as the one we inhabit, adherence to absolute truth is a card of admission to the foolish house.¹

Johnson's point is that in order to be able to function at the simplest level, the child must be in tune with the norms (assumptions) of his society. The problem with this general criterion is that "acceptable behaviour" is not always so clearly defined as by the example illustrated by Johnson. For example, during the 1960's in the United States there was disagreement as to whether draft-dodging was acceptable behaviour. Furthermore, fashion codes, alcohol or drug consumption, the status of higher education, respect for particular religious customs - these are all areas in which disagreement exists as to their "acceptability". So in determining whether teaching children acceptable behaviour is indoctrination or not, one would have to examine the behaviour taught, and the intentions of the teacher.

Snook rules out '2b' as indoctrination, since in and of itself, there is little chance of memorized multiplication tables or Latin verbs impairing the child's later assessment of evidence. This kind of instruction can be used as part of an indoctrinary process, but it can just as easily be used in non-indoctrinary situations.

¹Johnson, Harvard Educational Review, p. 526.

Snook discounts '2c' as indoctrination since he suggests, as does White, that indoctrination is primarily a task activity, and can thus be distinguished from other activities in terms of the particular conscious intention of the teacher. It would seem that unconscious influences are omnipresent in any teacher-student relationship, and their significance is determined by the nature of the conscious influences.

Snook then introduces two situations which he classifies as problematic cases:¹

3) problematic cases

- a) teaching any subject without due concern for understanding
- b) inculcating beliefs which the teacher believes are true but which are substantially disputed

According to Snook, in both these situations the question is decided upon by whether the overall intention is seen to be indoctrinary. Thus, in '3a', if one was teaching "acceptable behaviour" with the intention that the child would eventually come to understand, but at the time of teaching the child was not mature enough to cope with the reasons involved, then Snook would suggest that indoctrination did not occur. If however, the intention was that the student never come to an adequate understanding, this would represent a case of indoctrination.

¹Snook, Indoctrination, p. 64.

For example, in teaching English as a second language to a French student (at the junior high school level), the teacher passes on information which includes vocabulary, pronunciation, rules of grammar, sentence structure, and little tricks to aid in remembering exceptions. It seems possible that the teacher might be acquainted with an understanding of the derivation of certain words and why some have come to be spelled out in unusually different ways. Now, due to considerations such as lack of time, rather complex data not within the grasp of the students, and the opinion of the teacher that an in-depth explanation of the reasons for these exceptions was not directly relevant at this stage of language learning, the teacher explains the exceptions very briefly, including a mention of the above considerations. The main consideration of the teacher is that it seemed more of a priority to temporarily delay an in-depth understanding in favour of more practical and relevant information, at this particular stage of learning. That this is an acceptable procedure in the educative process is confirmed by the following opinions: Snook suggests that, "To wait for moral reasoning before beginning moral training is like waiting for the child to compose a sonata before beginning his musical education."¹ Kilpatrick refers to the same issue when discussing democracy: "Before our pupils can begin to understand reasons for believing in democracy, we must nonetheless help them to live democratically,

¹Snook, Indoctrination, p. 21.

else they will not learn to respect each other, etc., etc."¹

In the case of the English teacher above, taking into account the intention of the teacher, there does not appear to be any suggestion of indoctrination.

Let us now consider the following example, in the same circumstances, but where the teacher was of the opinion that understanding was not a concern of students. He explains the "exception as follows: "That's the way it is, just remember it." The teacher is not interested in developing the students' curiosity or thinking capability; in fact, he does not trust these capacities in his students, and is only concerned that they accumulate the information which he passes on. Although the actual subject matter does not appear to be indoctrinary matter (that is, material of a more subjective nature), there are nonetheless unshakeable beliefs which the teacher is transmitting. These are the manners in which he has the students accept the information. This teacher is not concerned that his students ever understand the logic of the language, or even whether they ever come to think that there is a logic to the language. It would seem to me, that in the light of the teacher's intention, this is a clear case of indoctrination. It appears, then, that Snook's suggestion that a teaching which reflects understanding can or cannot be indoctrinary, depending on the "overall intention", is well founded.

¹Kilpatrick, Philosophy of Education, p. 311.

The other problematic case mentioned by Snook is the inculcating of beliefs which the teacher believes are certain but which are substantially disputed. In this situation as well, Snook contends that it is the overall intention of the teacher which determines whether or not indoctrination is taking place. Let us consider the following examples.

A high school science teacher in the Soviet Union is certain that there is no God, that the latter was invented by shrewd capitalists to maintain their position, and accepted by the weak masses as a crutch. This is the view he expounds when questioned by his students. His concern is that the students completely accept this viewpoint, which he believes is the correct one. There is no question of the teacher leaving any area for doubt at the time of his teaching or in the future. Anyone who entertains doubts in this matter is simply of weak character, or else a 'capitalist roader'. In this case, the teacher attempts to inculcate a specific unshakeable belief in his students, notwithstanding substantial dispute on the subject. It would seem that, in this case, indoctrination is taking place.

A similar example involves a high school science teacher in Canada who also considers himself an atheist, and who does not believe in the existence of a god because he can find no reason or proof to believe otherwise. When questioned by his students in this area, the teacher puts forth this viewpoint, explaining however that there are other scientists

who do believe in God, on the claim that such a belief is outside the realm of scientific inquiry and evidence, and so does not depend on proof. Although he admits that he personally cannot find any justification for excluding the existence of God from the normal realm of scientific inquiry, he nonetheless leaves an opening for potential differences of opinion or belief. The intention of the teacher is not to inculcate an unshakeable belief in his own personal beliefs, even though he does emphasize the latter. Based on the teacher's intentions, we could not call this a case of indoctrination. If it is proposed that the teacher is imposing information as well as a viewpoint on his students, then would have to refer to Counts, who suggests that imposition is a necessary and not by definition harmful process.

— Snook has offered two ways of avoiding indoctrination in a problematic area such as the inculcation of religious information. One way is by removing the propositional element of the information passed on, so that the teaching is transmitted as a perspective, rather than as the final perspective. In the two examples given above of the atheist science teachers, it is the second teacher who cannot be accused of indoctrination specifically because he has presented his viewpoint as one of several. His overall intention is that his students get closer to the truth, for which reason he must present even his own personally certain beliefs as not necessarily representing the absolute truth, nor that such a thing as 'absolute truth' exists.

A problem arises when, notwithstanding the teacher's intentions (which are not such that would suggest indoctrination), the consequence is that the students were influenced by his teachings to the extent that some of them did acquire unshakeable beliefs. If, for example, some of the Canadian teacher's students become atheists (unshakeable in the sense of ascribing absolute and unchallengeable truth to the doctrine), the fault may lie with the students and not necessarily with the teacher. The students in this case are dogmatic or close-minded, but not indoctrinated. The difference is that remedial solutions would involve the nature of the students more so than the nature of the teaching that was presented. (The process seems here to be more a case of self-indoctrination, rather than indoctrination on the part of the teacher.) It is relevant to keep in mind Wilson's point that it is important not so much whether we call something indoctrination or not, but whether a particular process increases or diminishes rationality, in the sense of appreciation of and control over reality.¹ In this instance it does not appear that it is the teaching that diminished the students' rationality. It may be that had the teacher never introduced his own viewpoint, we would not have had the result of certain students acquiring those unshakeable beliefs. But this assumption does not condemn the teacher or the teaching. For example, if a parent introduces his child to the proper use of soap, but later the child eats the soap instead of washing

¹Wilson, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 49.

with it, surely the conclusion is not that soap or that its introduction is not desirable. The fault of the parent may have been that he was not aware of the child's inability to understand his instructions. Similarly, if we are to fault our atheist teacher, it would be for introducing the subject matter to some of the wrong people at the wrong time, but not, it seems to me, for indoctrinating them. (Unless the teacher was aware of the fact that his influence had a strong tendency to result in close-mindedness of his students, and nonetheless continued this kind of teaching.) The significance of this distinction lies in the fact that it is possible, although not axiomatic, for a teacher to inculcate beliefs which he feels are certain but which are substantially disputed, without indoctrinating. After all, it was not the entire class which acquired unshakeable beliefs. Certainly however there is a significant element of responsibility and awareness which the teacher must possess, so as not to hinder the students' critical faculties.

W.H. Kilpatrick emphasizes that controversial issues cannot be ignored by teachers: "In the matter of controversial issues teachers must understand that, however or whatever they teach or refuse to teach, they are nonetheless necessarily promoting one kind of society in preference to all others."¹ He goes further to suggest that,

¹Kilpatrick, Philosophy of Education, p. 311.

Even if there is controversy as to what is right, the parent or teacher will still teach his own best insight as to the proper habit. As soon as possible, however, the child, now grown older, should be helped to get a reliable understanding of what is socially and morally involved....Ultimately, when adolescence has well advanced, the youth should be encouraged to review critically both his habits and the earlier accepted why of those habits and attitudes.¹

In order to accurately determine the intentions of the teacher and whether indoctrination is taking place, it can be helpful (if not crucial) to examine the content and method of the instruction, to verify the claimed intention. As mentioned earlier, it is one thing to determine what constitutes murder, it is quite another to show that a person committed it. Similarly, to establish that a person was indoctrinating, the prior determination of the 'intention to inculcate unshakeable beliefs' seems to be a task which requires various considerations. In fact, Snook himself admits that his notion of intention is grounded on what and how the teacher teaches.²

¹W.H. Kilpatrick, "Indoctrination and Respect for Persons", in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 49.

²Snook, Indoctrination, p. 53.

Intention in Education

The intention of the educator is fundamentally different from that of the indoctrinator. For the educator, beliefs are secondary to the evidence: he wants his students to end up with whatever beliefs the evidence demands (or at least with beliefs which are not contradicted by available evidence). For the indoctrinator, on the other hand, beliefs are primary.

R.S. Peters, in considering the role of the teacher as educator, suggests that, "paradoxically enough, a teacher must both be an authority and teach in such a way that pupils become capable of showing him where he is wrong."¹ The crucial element involved in the educative process, "is not what any individual thinks, but what is true."² This being the case, as long as the teacher maintains the intention of having his students be concerned with truth, he is educating them and not indoctrinating them. This does not suggest that the teacher has no mandate to introduce the student to what he (the teacher) thinks, or to what others have concluded, since it would seem that in the pursuit of truth, it is precisely the introduction and consideration of various perspectives of 'truth seekers' which would lead one in the proper direction.

John Stuart Mill had argued that truth is only advanced

¹Peters, Ethics and Education, p. 261.

²Ibid.

if people are allowed to voice their opinions, however heterodox. For if the accepted opinions are true, their truth would be strengthened by being challenged; if they are not true, their falsity can only be exposed if challenging opinions are permitted. Peters agrees that this can be easily supported in discussing the role of the university professor, whose function, students and environment are at least formally geared to developing the frontiers of knowledge.¹ For the pre-university level instructor, however, the circumstances are somewhat different, with the emphasis here necessarily on transmission and preparation, as opposed to exploration (of course, all three processes are used in varying degrees at each level of education). At the pre-university level, Peters suggests that the basic task is not to teach the students what to think, but rather how to think. Certainly there is no need to hide his own opinions (especially with regards to basic moral rules such as prohibiting injury to others, theft, lying, the breaking of contracts, etc.) - but his primary concern "should not be to convert children to adopt substantive positions because of their admiration for him, but to get them to see the reasons on which such positions are based; for his job is teaching, not indoctrinating."² So while Peters agrees that emphasis should be placed on the desirability of spontaneity and autonomy of the students, he proposes that

¹Peters, Ethics and Education, p. 200.

² Ibid., p. 202.

this must be exercised within the range of what is considered desirable.¹ The justification of a framework in which the teacher determines specific choices over the desires of the students (which will happen), falls under the principle of the promotion of what is good, encompassing basic moral rules and first principles, such as the desirability of truth.

With regard to the concept of intention, the role of the educator requires a commitment to openness, and certainly not to unshakeable beliefs. The educator has to teach in such a way that his students can eventually dispense with him.² The educator is aware of the fact that his opinions, for all his certainty, may be incorrect. The intention of the educator is to transmit information and kinds of information which would enable his students to master the form of thought by means of which opinions are arrived at - and thus, to leave them open to fairly evaluate new evidence and arrive at impartial opinions.

The intentions of the indoctrinator are the opposite. He has made up his mind about the subject matter, and is determined to transmit this viewpoint to his students. The indoctrinator may use reason in his arguments; the information he passes on may lie within the bounds of truth. But the significant consideration is that for the indoctrinator, reason and truth are

¹Peters, Ethics and Education, p. 193.

²Ibid., p. 201.

incidental to the centrality of his beliefs. His commitment to these beliefs is such that he has no use for openness on the part of his students, which might lead to (in his view) a mistaken repudiation of his beliefs.

Summary of Criteria of Indoctrination

On the basis of the discussion of indoctrination so far outlined, it seems that the following criteria can serve as a guide to determining whether a case is indoctrination:

- 1) indoctrination is a process to which is ascribed negative connotations (the limitations of the usefulness of this criterion have been previously noted)
- 2) the intention of the instructor to transmit unshakeable beliefs (in the face of contrary evidence) designates a process as indoctrination
- 3) although it is more likely for indoctrination to occur when the subject matter deals with 'ideologically-tinted doctrines', it seems more accurate to suggest that content is indoctrination in light of its use
- 4) although the use of non-rational methods is not a sufficient condition of indoctrination, it does seem to be a necessary condition

The criterion of intention seems to be the sufficient criterion of indoctrination. However, to adequately determine a person's intention, it would be necessary to take into consideration his teaching actions, which include the method and content of his instruction.

Before examining the particular case study with which this thesis is concerned (Jewish religious education), it will prove helpful to apply the guides outlined above to cases which are definitely considered either indoctrination or non-indoctrination. This should serve to illustrate the validity of our criteria as they apply to recognized cases of indoctrination, as well as the manner in which they can be applied.

CHAPTER III

ILLUSTRATION OF APPLICATION OF CRITERIA

Clearly Recognized Cases

A case which of instruction which is quite universally considered as an example of indoctrination is the instruction of anti-semitic doctrine by teachers in Nazi Germany. Let us briefly consider this instruction with reference to our criteria of indoctrination.

In general, the education system (pre-university level) in Nazi Germany was geared, as in most societies, to the transmission of the norm of that society. The nature of Nazi society required a fanatic devotion to the leader and his teachings, where no criticism was tolerated. It was not uncommon for young students to betray their parents to the authorities, so strong were their school taught beliefs. And this was in fact the intention of the teachers - to firmly establish only one loyalty, only one acceptable doctrine. Because it was foreseen that there would be a lengthy struggle against dissident forces from within and without Germany, it was considered necessary to entrench the Nazi doctrine and loyalty within the minds of the students to the point where it would be impossible to shake their beliefs. The truths imparted to them in the schools were expected to be adhered to in their adult years as well. There was no issue of the search for truth, since it was supposedly already discovered in the form of Nazi doctrine. The

teachers were not concerned with new evidence or outside reasoning - they were satisfied and confident with the doctrines of National Socialism. It was their job and their intent to transmit these beliefs as unshakeable. By applying the criterion of intention to Nazi anti-semitic instruction, which is generally recognized as a case of indoctrination, this categorization can be confirmed.

With regards to the criteria of method and content, it seems that here too Nazi instruction falls under the category of indoctrination. The methods used by the teachers did not allow for an open attitude to evidence. Although there was often a logic which was employed, it was of the nature of rationalizing already determined doctrine. Furthermore, the doctrine of anti-semitism is an ideologically-tinted doctrine which was presented as absolutely accurate. In the light of the use to which this instruction was directed (to ignore knowledge and to prevent complete understanding), one could on this account also refer to the instruction as indoctrination.

Another example of what is generally classified as indoctrination, is the instruction of 'The Party' in George Orwell's 1984. In order to maintain complete loyalty, the Party engaged in revising historical information, peer group pressure tactics, total intolerance of criticism, and falsification of information. Like the children of Nazi Germany who were inducted into the Hitler youth movements, the children of 1984 were inducted into the Youth League, the 'Spies', and the Junior

Consideration of Science

It is generally conceded that science instruction is a paradigm case of non-indoctrination, and I intend to determine whether this is actually the case with respect to our criteria of indoctrination. I hope to define the conditions under which science can be said to be either educative or indoctrinary, which should serve to later clarify the conditions under which Jewish religious education is indoctrination or education. My concern does not lie in pitting science against religion (in fact, the two forces seem to complement one another, especially with reference to Judaism); but rather in maintaining a consistency in the application of the criteria.

It seems to me that though science cannot be said to be indoctrination, there are certain difficulties which prevent it from being considered education, as earlier defined, in all cases. For example, the correctness of viewing the world through the scientific method is presented as fact and not as a hypothesis. (By scientific method, I am referring to the approach to an awareness of reality where information which is verifiable and observable is essentially considered. Hence, astronomy is referred to as a science, while astrology is not. Also, there are several instances where working concepts are presented as true and are expected to be accepted as such on the basis of scientifically shaky grounds. The problem is underlined by J.W. Krutch, who sees "orthodox science, despite all its achievements, become now the most dangerous enemy of a true philosophy, because its

dogmas are least often questioned."¹ (Krutch seems to object not to science in the abstract, but rather to contemporary attitudes of people to science. Whether the problem with religion is similarly based on cultural attitudes as opposed to on its inherent nature, will be reviewed later.)

Will Herberg restates the problem thus: "the error of scientism consists, not in taking science seriously - science is one of the enduring achievements of the human spirit - but in mistaking the nature of science and taking it to be somehow a revelation of the 'real' reality."² Although it is necessary to distinguish 'science' with 'scientism', it seems to me that it is precisely when the scientific viewpoint emerges as a dogmatically exclusive perspective, that indoctrination makes its appearance. R.S. Peters sees the problem in this way:

The scientist is in danger - and it is a danger - of becoming like Plato's philosopher king - not just an expert in a particular field of research like evolution or nuclear physics but an expert on the good for society and for the individual.³

So let us turn now to the criteria of indoctrination as applied to the teaching of science and the scientific method.

One of the fundamental underlying values of the scientific method is the importance of truth, and as such, the scientific

¹J.W. Krutch, in Webster's Third New International Dictionary, 1966, p. 666.

²Herberg, Judaism and Modern Man, p. 21.

³Peters, Authority, Responsibility and Education, p. 26.

method can be said to be a rationally oriented process that is open to new evidence. Certainly this has been clearly evident especially in the last one hundred years, with the continuous introduction of new evidence which altered, in parts or in whole, formerly accepted scientific theories. One of the most striking examples of this has been taking place in the search for a theory of the constitution of matter. In the 19th Century it was generally accepted that there were in fact ninety indivisible and immutable elements, from which all matter was constructed. The discovery of radioactivity eventually led to the conclusion that there actually existed three basic constituents of matter, namely electrons, protons, and neutrons. More recent discoveries led to the appearance of positrons and later to mesons of various kinds. And it seems that scientists in the field are confident only that new discoveries and explanations lie ahead. But science, rather than ignoring new information which seems to upset previously established patterns and theories, progresses specifically because of the respect given to new data, no matter how upsetting.

Another example of this occurring was in the 1975 archaeological discovery at the Turkana site in Kenya, where anthropologists searching for a fossil link between man's ancestors and homo sapiens, came upon a discovery which negated their own thesis.¹ It was discovered that the existence of Australo-

¹"Puzzling Out Man's Ascent", Time Magazine, Nov. 7, 1977, p. 39.

pitheous and homo habilis occurred at the same time - thus negating the longstanding theory of the direct link between Australopithecus and modern man. That this discovery was made by scientists who were attempting to find evidence which would confirm that theory, is a further example of the priority given to new evidence. Indeed, in almost all cases, the scientific method as it is defined and taught, is consistent with rational methods, and concerned with objective observation and verification.

Similarly, with regards to the content transmitted, science seems to deal with subject matter which is verifiable and open to inquiry. The fact that previous content has been shown to be incorrect, does not detract from the overriding principle that the content is based on evidence which seems most valid and appropriate at the time. Patricia Smart suggests that,

To accuse the medieval teacher of indoctrinating his pupils with the belief that the world was flat, when there was no contrary evidence for this belief would be like accusing a 17th Century doctor of malpractice because he did not use penicillin.¹

In accordance with our criteria of indoctrination, Smart suggests that indoctrination must be intentional: the instructor must want his students to develop unshakeable beliefs, even though he is aware of the inadequacy of the evidence he is propagating.² It is on this ground that scientific data is not considered indoctrination, regardless of its eventual acceptance

¹Smart, in New Essays, ed. by Langford and O'Connor, p. 39.

²Ibid.

or rejection.

Indeed, the intention of the scientist/teacher is that his students respect the available evidence, not that they adopt unshakeable beliefs (in fact, science asserts that any belief is capable of being 'shaken'). William Etkin, a professor of anatomy, has suggested that, in a sense, accepted scientific hypotheses are merely those which have not as yet been eliminated by contrary findings.¹ But the basic principle remains, that new evidence does take precedence over previously accepted information.

It seems then that the teaching of science - under this description - and of the scientific method does not represent a case of indoctrination with respect to the criteria established earlier. And yet, upon more intensive investigation, there seem to be several instances where certain information is passed on as true in the face of inadequate evidence. The two most striking cases concern the theory of evolution, and the age of the world.

The theory most popularly accepted and transmitted as accurate with regards to the age of the world is based primarily on the system of radiocarbon dating. Now, although this

¹William Etkin, "The Religious Meaning of Contemporary Science", in Challenge: Torah Views on Science and its Problems, ed. by Aryeh Carmell and Cyril Domb (Jerusalem/New York: Feldheim Publishers, 1976), p. 40.

system certainly represents a viable hypothesis worthy of consideration, to suggest that this theory is more than just a working hypothesis is rather unscientific, in the sense earlier defined. M.M. Schneerson describes the dilemma as follows:

Conclusions based on certain known data, when they are ampliative in nature, that is when they are extended to unknown areas, can have any validity at all only on the assumption of 'everything being equal', that is to say on an identity of prevailing conditions and their action and counter action upon each other.¹

Schneerson continues to say that,

In view of the unknown conditions which existed in pre-historic times, conditions of atmospheric pressures, temperatures, radioactivity, unknown catalyzers, etc., etc.; conditions, that is, which could have caused reactions and changes of an entirely different nature and tempo from those known under the present-day orderly processes of nature, one cannot exclude the possibility that dinosaurs existed 5722 years ago, and became fossilized under terrific natural cataclysms in the course of a few years rather than in millions of years, since we have no conceivable measurements or criteria of calculations under the unknown conditions.²

So although there is certainly good reason for seriously considering the conclusions reached by carbon dating, there exist many unanswered scientific questions, and hence other possibilities. And yet, this theory is very popularly passed on in the form of a scientifically verified observation. It is not unusual to find in a recent Time Magazine article on evolution, terms such as "beyond doubt", and "accurately determine" in reference to dating procedures that supposedly took place over

¹Rabbi M.M. Schneerson, "A Letter on Science and Judaism", in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 145.

²Ibid., p. 147.

fourteen million years ago. From this one gets the impression that instruction of this kind (eventually becoming man-in-the-street knowledge of science) is not consistent with the inherent principles of science. This is perhaps more a reflection of Time Magazine than of science; nonetheless it shows that science is not immune to the conditions and uses that would fall under indoctrination. That radiocarbon dating (and the dating method established by the potassium argon system) may actually represent the accurate age of the world is not a reflection on its presently inconclusive nature. It seems then, that in this case the process of the transfer of this information as accurate, if not a case of indoctrination (the intention may not be to pass on this information as unshakable), cannot be said to be a case of education, in the sense of being accurate on the available information. A more accurate statement would consist of the mention of doubt on the subject, as opposed to the use of such terms as "beyond doubt" or "determined accurately". A clarification of the reason for this somewhat unscientific approach, will be considered later.

Another example of a popular scientific theory which is based on inconclusive scientific authority but is nonetheless often considered exclusively authoritative, is Darwin's theory of evolution. The theory suggests that man represents the evolutionary descendant of the simplest organism, and that this evolution can be traced and verified through fossil records. The explanation underlying this evolutionary process is based

on the theory of the survival of the fittest. Indeed, it is only recently that this theory is being subjected to closer scientific scrutiny and criticism. (It is true that perhaps the strongest criticism arose when the theory first surfaced, but it also seems true that the original outcries were often not based on sophisticated scientific refutation.) Dr. Morris Goldman, an American parasitologist, suggests that no one can say beforehand what constitutes fitness:

...the Darwinian explanation that 'natural selection' chose the long neck (for the giraffe) as most fit is no more scientific an explanation than the statement that God, in his wisdom, suffers an animal like the giraffe to persist in spite of his problem-causing neck. They are both simply metaphysical explanations of certain facts of life. Neither statement can be tested scientifically.¹

Cyril Domb agrees, writing that, "no 'a priori' criterion is given for what makes a species most fitted to the environment, only an 'a posteriori' criterion that if it survived it must have been the fittest."² The descriptive records on which this theory is based themselves leave much to be desired as scientifically conclusive data, according to the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists. Dr. Goldman suggests that the fossil records do not justify the conclusion of the evolutionary process as outlined by the Darwinists.³ In fact, the existence

¹Dr. Morris Goldman, "A Critical View of Evolution", in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 221.

²Cyril Domb, "Biology and Ethics", in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 457.

³Goldman, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 228.

of the many 'gaps' and missing links can be noted to suggest the opposite. Although scientists have found practically no telling fossils from the crucial period between eight million and five million years ago (this is the time period in which it is speculated that the change from ape to man took place), there are still scientists who seem convinced of the certainty of the theory. And yet, even their pronouncements are shrouded in a feeling of uncertain groping. Elwyn Simons, who heads the Duke University Center for the Study of Primate Biology and History, recently suggested the following: "Ramapithecus is ideally structured to be an ancestor of hominids. If he isn't, we don't have anything else that is."¹

Henry Marcell agrees that the theory of evolution is a working hypothesis of biologists which leaves many factors unexplained:

Science is not normally satisfied to concoct speculative theories to account for given facts and leave it at that. Science progresses by predicting an outcome on the basis of the theory, followed by verification or falsification by experiment. If the prediction is falsified, the theory is rejected. This course is not followed here.²

(Falsification of a prediction does not necessarily lead to a scientific refutation of the theory - it would be more accurate to suggest that 'doubt had been shed on the theory'.)

¹"Puzzling Out Man's Ascent", Time Magazine, Nov. 7, 1977, p. 39.

²Henry Marcell, "Evolution -- Theory or Faith?", in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 190.

In examining the theory with regards to verification, L.M. Spetner suggests that the Darwinian prediction of the evolution of greater complexity as time goes on is not confirmed, since a close examination of the record shows that late forms are not uniformly more complex than the earlier forms: for example, he notes that in the invertebrate order of Gryptoloida, the latest forms are the simplest while the earlier forms are the most complex.¹

Marcell questions the inconsistency of the selectivity concept of the theory with regards to the existence of identical sub-families within the same genus, one having a very specialized piece of equipment which the other does not - for example, poisonous and non-poisonous snakes, electric eels and non-electric eels.²

Professor L.T. More had written that, the more one studies paleontology, the more certain one becomes that the theory of evolution is based on faith alone; exactly the same kind of faith which it is necessary to have when one encounters the great mysteries of religion. The changes that are noted as time progresses show no orderly and consecutive evolutionary chain, only by faith and imagination is there continuity of variation.³

¹L.M. Spetner, "New Look at Evolution", in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 205.

²Marcell, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 191.

³Jung, Living Judaism, p. 61.

Although More was writing in 1924, fifty-three years later Alan Mann of the University of Pennsylvania suggested that anthropologists "are like the blind men looking at the elephant, each sampling only a small part of the total reality."¹

Now this approach in science - the use of working assumptions - is a fundamental part of science, and is not contrary to a rational approach in the search for knowledge. But to remain rational, it is important not to confuse a 'working assumption' with an empirically verified fact. Whether there is a perfectly verified fact is not at issue here; but that there exist facts which are verifiable to greater or lesser extents seems more accurate.

In his book, Fact and Theory, Professor W.M.O'Neill differentiates between the facts in a science (what the scientist observes - for example, classes of living organisms), and the theories (what the scientist supposes or invents - for example, the theory of evolution).² The latter he justifies as theory, since it is a process which no one has observed from beginning to end. And yet, he admits that, "we have come to believe as true, to be as much a fact, in another sense of that word, as the descriptive similarities and differences between the species."³

¹"Puzzling Out Man's Ascent", Time Magazine, Nov. 7, 1977, p. 41.

²W.M. O'Neill, Fact and Theory, (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1969), p. 1.

³Ibid.

In a recent discussion with several second and third year McGill University science students, I asked if they could tell me something about the age of the world. One immediately answered: "Well, I'm not sure about the age of the world, but I do know that man's been around for several million years. As to the age of the world, that shouldn't be too hard to find: just check any book on evolution." Another of the students, who admitted that there were several theories, suggested that the figure of hundreds of millions of years was consistent with most of the theories. After I mentioned some of the above criticisms, they admitted that they had never considered these criticisms to seriously affect the credibility of the theories they had learned; nor had they been led to consider these theories in a more intensely critical fashion.

Here is a situation of university science students who seem to be victims of precisely the "dogmatic danger to philosophy", referred to earlier by Krutch (page 97 above). The students to whom I was speaking were top students, all anticipating careers in science-related professions. What seems to be indicated here is a lack of critical approach in an, as yet, inconclusive area of study - partly because of the somewhat dogmatic general acceptance of the theories involved. Again one is confronted with the observations that 1) working assumptions are sometimes erroneously viewed as empirically verified data; and 2) that science can be indoctrination under certain conditions. This does not suggest that the instruction of science

is necessarily a process of indoctrination - rather, that it is not immune to indoctrinary instruction.

The question remains to be answered as to why some scientists have seemed to be somewhat negligent in their scientific obligations, with respect to the two theories considered above. Certainly it is true that one could not scientifically reject the possibility of the correctness of the theories, notwithstanding the indications which question some of the premises. But to continue to ascribe authoritative credibility to this theory is equally as unscientific. (As G.G. Simpson, a leading biologist in the field of evolution, seems to be doing, when he stresses that "man's ancestors were apes."¹)

It is just not scientific to say, "Well, it doesn't fit right now, but it will when science has progressed far enough." The difficulty with this premise as a scientific formula is that it can be applied to any theory, without getting us to progress scientifically. For example, "we can't see God now, but we will when we have more sophisticated lenses". As long as these two views are acknowledged as statements of faith rather than science, they do not seem to me objectionable. A more scientific statement would be to substitute in both instances, the word 'might' for 'will'.

¹L.M. Spetner, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 205.

It has been shown that certain information in science which is not verifiable is nonetheless valued when considered as a working hypothesis. Indeed, scientific achievements have been based to a large extent on the acceptance of the principle of the use of working hypotheses. But the acceptance of a particular assumption or working hypothesis over another assumption (although not arbitrary since some form of evidence does exist), seems to indicate a kind of faith in the maintenance of the particular assumption. Marcell suggests that the "fact is that evolutionists are prepared to accept many unexplained and apparently inexplicable phenomena, rather than give up the theory as a whole."¹ Ironically, this is the criticism often levelled at religious believers. O'Neill attempts to provide a clarification of the issue involved: "The aim of its (theory of evolution) inventors was to bring some sense, some intelligibility into what would otherwise have been brute, senseless facts."² Goldman suggests that the thesis of Darwinian evolution is a "doctrine which is resting on faith that satisfies the secularist yearnings of our age."³

That these theories represent doctrines which are ultimately resting on faith will now be considered. The 'faith' here

¹Marcell, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 194.

²O'Neill, Fact and Theory, p. 1.

³Goldman, Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 225.

referred to is not in the actual events themselves - there is certainly empirical data to scientifically support these theories - so much as in the physical laws and reasoning that point to their likelihood.

CHAPTER IV

ENABLING BELIEFS

In his book, Philosophical Analysis in Education, John Magee refers to the existence of underlying faith in all knowledge:

There is a contingent or decisional element in all human knowledge in the sense that it rests upon ultimate assumptions that are not themselves rationally provable. Science for instance, could not proceed without the assumption of some order in nature that is within our comprehension if we investigate further. This assumption of comprehensible order is a kind of scientific faith, if you will, but unproven does not mean whimsical or arbitrary. It is hard¹ to imagine human existence without some such assumption.

The faith referred to by Magee is not arbitrary in the sense that, upon reflective consideration, one would be able to justify an adherence to the faith. Although the evidence to prove the validity of the faith does not exist (or rather does not appear to exist), there is enough logical evidence to justify belief in the faith. It will be shown later that this can refer to certain religious beliefs as well. An example of an arbitrary or whimsical belief, is the belief that the sun will not exist tomorrow. Its arbitrariness arises from the fact that although this event is possible, all available evidence suggests that the sun will still be here tomorrow. Magee's example of faith in nature is not arbitrary since most of the evidence points toward this assumption - although not conclusively so. There is no guarantee that there will be sun tomorrow, just because it has always been there; but scientific knowledge

¹Magee, Philosophical Analysis, p. 67.

which predicts that it will be there, is based on rational computation and observation.

K.G. Collier suggests that the presupposition in science is that the scientist assumes that the events he observes do occur in ordered sequences; that his mind is equipped to grasp them, and that it is worth the effort to discover them.¹ A.N. Whitehead and Will Herberg both seem to propose that while judgements of worth are not part of the texture of physical sciences, they are part of the motive of its production: "Without judgements of value, there would have been no science."² The fundamental values presupposed by scientific thought include, for example, the importance of truth, the systematic order of nature, and the worthwhileness of scientific discovery. In fact, Etkin suggests that this faith maintained by scientists parallels the kind of thinking that is the basis of religious faith, in that the scientific mind often transcends commonsense rationality.³ He describes several paradoxes in science (including the speed of light, gravity, and the properties of light waves), and proposes that, "one of the outstanding characteristics of the revolution in scientific thinking of the last fifty years is its escape from the rigid

¹Collier, Social Purposes, p. 149.

²A.N. Whitehead, The Aims of Education (London: Williams and Norgate Ltd., 1950), p.228.

³Etkin, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 33.

formalism of what was once considered rationality and the scientific method."¹

That these underlying values constitute a faith, as opposed to a verifiable entity, is emphasized by Israel Scheffler. He explains that, "to know that a belief is justified in relation to certain evidence does not provide general justification unless we have confidence in the evidence to begin with."² Ultimately, the general justification of the rules we adhere to depend on initial commitments, which cannot be justified by the rules since they have logically preceded the rules. The initial commitments may ultimately intuitively be perceived to be true, although it is a feature of science that initial commitments are open to review whenever possible. Even commitments to moral views and first principles which seem evidentially non-verifiable, can be open to rational consideration and review. Whether this is possible with initial commitments in Jewish religious education will be examined later.

Ian Barbour, in Issues in Science and Religion, proposes that since "the scientific community deliberately selects only certain kinds of variables for inclusion in its symbol system, then one cannot decide on the basis of that system

¹Etkin, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 33.

²Israel Scheffler, Reason and Teaching (New York: Bobbs and Merrill Co., 1973), p. 119.

alone whether the scientific description is potentially exhaustive and complete."¹ Objective acceptance of scientific documentation and evidence comes after one has intuitively agreed that it is this type of documentation and evidence which is most acceptable (although as mentioned above, intuitive does not mean arbitrary or whimsical).

I think that it is important to distinguish between the completely logical attitude which accepts empirically observed scientific documentation, and the attitude to which I am here referring which is based on a non-arbitrary faith in the sequential order in nature. It is this latter attitude which intuitively (although not arbitrarily) views the scientific description as exhaustive and complete. The proof that a person holds this attitude is shown by his refusal to consider seriously certain scientifically non-verified information - for example, the existence of God - while at the same time admitting other kinds of scientifically non-verified information, such as the existence of an order in nature. Although it may be claimed that the latter perspective is more logical than the former, this is not so obviously the case. For example, members of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists, who are eminent scientists as well as being well-versed in Jewish law, suggest that either of the above assumptions can be shown to be equally logical (or non-logical). They would also suggest

¹Ian Barbour, Issues in Science and Religion, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p.256-266.

that neither belief is necessarily held arbitrarily. Herberg refers to the underlying basis of which faith one chooses as the "will to believe", which must be there even before reasoning can begin. The scientists' article of faith is described thus by Rabinovitch:

The quest for scientific knowledge in all its grandeur is based upon an unshakeable faith in the possibility of making sense of the material universe and in the worthwhileness of the endeavour to do so, even in the face of overwhelming odds.

Returning to our criteria of indoctrination, it now seems that since there appears to be a contingency in all knowledge, and that all knowledge which is passed on presupposes values which are ultimately based on faith, indoctrination may in fact be a process which is inevitable in all impositions. The concept of indoctrination, however, would not mean much if it were applied so universally. Magee suggests that the way out of the dilemma lies in the direction of teaching students the "contingent character of human knowledge and evaluation as soon as they are able to grasp such a concept."² This does not eliminate faith, nor can analysis and reasoning prove the reality of a particular faith. But analysis and reasoning can serve to clarify the nature and implications of the value judgements involved, and in this sense, indoctrination would not take place. A faith which is transmitted as a faith does

¹N.L. Rabinovitch, "Torah and the Spirit of Free Enquiry", in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 57.

²Magee, Philosophical Analysis, p. 68.

not fall into the category of indoctrination if the instructor does not ascribe absolute or completely objective unshakeability to the information, but rather admits that his beliefs are subjective ones. (which he can justify. A belief that white people are inherently more intelligent than black people can be said to be an arbitrary belief, and hence readily open to indoctrination, since it cannot be justified by the available information.). The instructor who admits to the underlying faith inherent in his teaching leaves himself, and his teaching, open to not only disagreement, but also desertion. The time and place of such an admission by the instructor would seem to depend on the ability of the students to intelligently consider this 'admission'.

In the discussion of the criteria of method, the argument of Thomas Green was presented. While it was noted that Green stressed the need for evidential beliefs in the educational process, Green nonetheless admitted that there are beliefs which may be justifiably passed on regardless of their empirical basis. He referred to the condition of establishing in students (when it is not present) the proper attitude which is necessary in order to appreciate and acknowledge evidential beliefs. This attitude includes, to name a few, a commitment to a concern for truth, respect for evidence, and a conviction of the value of consistency. Green suggested that teaching cannot take place unless these conditions have been met, and that in transmitting these prior beliefs, it is necessary to proceed regardless of the

absence of evidence. Green's contention is that it is crucial for the teacher to impose a "closure of mind at precisely those points and on those matters which will permit us to be open to the evidence on all other matters of belief."¹ This closure of mind, it is argued, must be maintained despite the absence or lack of evidence or reasons for its maintenance, since it is precisely this attitude without which one could not seriously consider any evidence. Green referred to the beliefs which characterize this attitude as "enabling beliefs", distinguishing them as a sub-class of non-evidential beliefs, "which can be rationally justified in a non-evidential way."² A commitment to the value of truth, for example, is rationally defensible because without it there can be no rational defence of any belief at all. Although Green referred to this situation as justifiable indoctrination, it seems to me to not constitute a case of indoctrination at all, since according to our criteria, indoctrination involves the transmission of unshakeable beliefs - unshakeable, that is, in the face of contrary evidence. In this case, the enabling belief imparted is unshakeable in a different sense, in that it is not verifiable, and that it is eventually admitted to be subjectively absolute, as opposed to objectively absolute beliefs. Although it cannot be evidentially corroborated, neither can it be evidentially falsified. (However,

¹Green, in Concepts of Teaching, ed. by MacMillan and Nelson, p. 52.

²Ibid.

to suggest that it could never be corroborated or falsified is to assume too much - expanding domains in which we find enabling beliefs can prove to ultimately shed new lights on the beliefs themselves, and on related beliefs.) It is true, as mentioned earlier, that first principles can be examined dialectically, or as Green puts it, "rationally justified in a non-evidential way." (page 118 above) In the preceding discussion on science, then, the commitment or faith in the order of nature and in the worthwhileness to study it, can be seen as enabling beliefs. The intention behind imparting these beliefs is not to induce anti-rational beliefs, but rather to provide the condition in which rationality can flourish. It begins to seem that enabling beliefs are inherent components of all beliefs, usually at the level of the basis for further beliefs.

William Kendall suggests that there is a "whole series of goods" (religion, self-preservation, education, enculturation) which societies "are not only likely to value as much as or more than the pursuit of truth, but ought to value as much as or more than the pursuit of truth, because these are the pre-conditions in the pursuit of truth."¹ Collier seems to agree, referring to the necessity of certain prior conditions being fulfilled before men can make profitable use of freedom, these being "reasonable order and security in the community, and

¹William Kendall, "The Open Society and its Fallacies" in Limits of Liberty: Studies of Mill's On Liberty, ed. by Peter Radcliff (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1966), p. 37.

reasonable satisfaction of the standards the members have been taught to regard as obligatory."¹ He claims that ultimately one's belief in these values depends on one's personal intuition or faith, "in the sense of passing beyond the support of factual evidence."²

While an 'educated belief', as described by the Peters/Magee criteria, is one which, if not proven is at least seen to be capable of being empirically or rationally verified, an enabling belief differs in that, although it can be examined and considered rationally as a faith, it cannot be empirically proven. J.S. Junell underlines this point when he refers to the difficulty of determining moral truths: "When some forms of stealing are nowadays less of a gamble than, say, starting a new business, it becomes increasingly difficult to prove that honesty is indeed the best policy."³ He concludes that,

a moral belief which is not valued for its own sake, is doomed....Because it cannot rely on scientifically defensible evidence, and often lacks empirical basis, it must be accepted on faith as an absolute or not at all.⁴

Moral beliefs which are not accepted on faith in themselves, seem to be (at least in North American contemporary culture) subject to the most current judgemental trend in popular opinion

¹Collier, Social Purposes, p. 163.

²Ibid., p. 155.

³Junell, Phi Delta Kappan, p. 183.

⁴Ibid.

as engendered or bolstered by public relations, since they are not grounded on a philosophical basis as inherent in a faith.

Magee agrees that the inevitability of certain fundamental assumptions exists in human existence. He describes the concept of democracy as an example, claiming that the loyalty to democracy is based upon unprovable assumptions about the powers of men to govern themselves and about the foolishness of allowing a single group of men to wield unlimited power over the others.¹ Among those who hold the opposite view based on different assumptions is Plato, as outlined in The Republic. Magee agrees that this kind of assumption of the faith in democracy, although not empirically provable, is vindicated by experience, but it seems to me that this experiential vindication, although a kind of evidence, is still somewhat subjective. For example, while most North Americans would find it fairly obvious to claim the superiority of democracy over other forms of government, I am reminded of a group of Cuban university students who suggested that Castro's benevolent dictatorship negated the need for a North American type of democracy. To them it was not democracy, but a dictatorship which was 'experientially vindicated'.

Now, I am not trying to suggest that a rational evaluation of forms of government is not possible. And certainly it is likely that persons have altered their allegiance to forms

¹Magee, Philosophical Analysis, p. 67.

of government because of rational consideration based on new experiences and observations. But it is also the case that other persons, of equal intelligence and sincerity, have maintained their loyalties in spite of the new information. In instances such as this, it seems to me that a kind of intuitive adherence to an assumption is what tips the person's loyalty to a political belief. (This intuitive adherence being grounded on intellectual, psychological, and environmental influences.) I would not consider this an arbitrary belief, since there can exist legitimate justification for belief in a political system. This does not mean to say that all beliefs in political systems are justifiable - a system which did not include reflective scrutiny cannot be considered to be justifiable, since the opportunity for justification does not exist.

In discussing the role of educators to be concerned with cultivating the 'good life', Counts suggests that, "as educators we must make many choices involving the development of attitudes in boys and girls and that we should not be afraid to acknowledge the faith that is in us or mayhap the forces that compel us."¹ Counts refers to the imparting of fundamental principles and values in which there can be no flexibility - but which prepare the student to adjust to the changes that take place in a dynamic society. This notion of inflexibility with regards to basic values is also asserted by W.D. Hudson. On

¹Counts, Dare the School..., p. 20.

moral education, Hudson writes, "What I am saying is that for a man to be morally educated is for him to be able to reason in moral terms. It is not for him to be open to argument which may lead him to give up thinking morally."¹ In fact, Hudson distinguishes between the rationalist, who is willing to abandon even his presuppositions about rationality if there is sufficient reason to do so, and the educated man, "who has been initiated into activities where reasons will exist for thinking or doing one thing rather than another given certain presuppositions."²

When criticizing Mill's concept of liberty, Kendall writes that, "by giving equal privileges to those who are in fact opposed to or ignorant of the discussion process, it constitutes a major onslaught against truth."³ He seems to suggest that there are indeed some issues which are beyond rational refutation and ought to be beyond rational refutation - one either accepts them or not, as enabling beliefs. The attempt should be made to justify them, but if rational justification is not confirmed, this is not a good enough reason to reject them. An enabling belief, as distinguished from an indoctrinated belief, must be open to reflective scrutiny. There may not be

¹W.D. Hudson, "Is Religious Education Possible?", in New Essays, ed. by Langford and O'Connor, p. 180.

²Ibid.

³Kendall, in Limits of Liberty, ed. by Radcliff, p. 41.

empirical verification for the importance of belief in justice, but as long as this belief is open to discussion and critical review, then it is an enabling belief. The difference with, for example, Nazi ideology, was that it was not open to critical review. Beliefs such as the value of truth are beyond the support of factual evidence, but are fundamental assumptions without which one could not proceed to the pursuit and consideration of factual evidence, faith in which is itself an enabling belief.

The notion of not accepting a belief without empirical verification is itself without empirical verification, and actually constitutes an enabling belief. For if one were to ask, "Why does belief require prior empirical verification?", the answer would have to include value judgements (which cannot be empirically verified) concerning the concepts of truth, empirical verification, and the relationship between the two. Thus, the paleontologist who accepts Darwin's theory of evolution as 'unassailable', can be said to not maintain these value judgements, by virtue of his conclusion in this instance, which is not based on empirical verification.

In Dynamics of Faith, Paul Tillich suggests that "faith is the state of being ultimately concerned."¹ That is to say, adherence to the unconditional demands of a 'god' (such as economic power, nationalism, social prestige, or a religious God),

¹Paul Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 1.

is based on the promise of ultimate fulfillment. For example, in Nazi Germany the faith was in Hitler's doctrines of nationalism and racial superiority, and in Hitler himself (Hitlerism), and not in truth and empirical verification (as in the case of the scientist). Decisions were made and actions taken on the basis of their compatibility with Hitlerism. This faith, like other faiths, demanded unconditional surrender to its laws even though, in this case, the price was the sacrifice of genuine human relations, personal conviction, and humanitarian values. But the sacrifice was made because of the ultimate promise of the fulfillment of one's being. The promise of self-fulfillment is the same one which prompts others to sacrifice nationalism in order to comply with the demands of faith in truth and justice. According to the rules of this faith, the other faiths are 'misguided'; on the other hand, within the rules of Hitlerism, the faith in humanitarian values can be said to be misguided. It is essential to realize, however, that within the rules of Hitlerism, other faiths were not accorded the same kind of non-critical scrutiny as Hitlerism. Tillich suggests that faiths can be proven to be misguided only in retrospect, when the promise of fulfillment proves empty, as in the case of Hitlerism. "In true faith, the ultimate concern is a concern about the truly ultimate; while in idolatrous faith, preliminary, finite realities are elevated to the rank of ultimacy", leading inevitably to "existential disappointment".¹ But whether

¹Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 12.

a faith proves to be misguided (as faiths in nationalism and in financial success have sometimes proved to be), they are still nonetheless faiths, and as such cannot be disputed on the basis of empirically rational argument - since this is not the basis on which the faith is held in the first place. However, as mentioned earlier, the faith in Hitlerism cannot be said to constitute an enabling belief since it was not open to discussion and reflective scrutiny. While it seems true that 'faiths' are inevitable and perhaps necessary, one must distinguish between "idolatrour faiths" (that is, indoctrinary beliefs) and enabling beliefs.

Will Herberg suggests that without faith - defined as the commitment to a system of values anchored in ultimate reality - human existence is virtually impossible: "The attempt to comprehend life in its own terms, to live it in and for itself, must necessarily prove self-destructive."¹

Life without orientation, existence without unity or meaning, is ultimately impossible and so modern man strives desperately to relate himself to some overall principle of power that promises to provide spiritual security and yet not violate the basic presuppositions of his thought.²

Herberg suggests that there is no choice between faith and no-faith. Everyone has his faith, whether he recognizes and admits it or not. The enabling beliefs which a man holds are not necessarily those which he affirms verbally, but those that are operative in his life. For example, we have tried to show that those

¹Herberg, Judaism and Modern Man, p. 16.

²Ibid., p. 25.

evolutionists who are convinced of the validity of Darwin's theory of evolution on the basis of scientifically verified information, in reality hold this belief partly on the basis of empirical considerations, and partly because of their faith in science and the laws of science. But this faith does not necessarily imply arbitrary or whimsical. Michael Polanyi emphasizes the relationship between faith and cognitive experience in the following example:

Copernicus and Vesalius discovered new facts because they abandoned established authority - and not the other way around....When Vesalius first examined the human heart and did not find the channel through the septum postulated by Galen, he assumed that it was invisible to the naked eye; but some years later, with his faith in authority shaken, he dramatically declared that it did not exist.¹

If the imparting of enabling beliefs can be said to be part of the educative process, there are a few qualifying criteria which would have to be added to the Peters/Magee criteria of education. These additional criteria, which would account for the transmission of the scientific method as an educative process, include the following:

- 1) transmitting beliefs which can be neither completely proven or disproven (on the basis of available data)
- 2) transmitting beliefs which do not contradict anything that is manifest or proved (that is, they cannot be anti-rational)
- 3) the beliefs must be believed by the teacher
- 4) transmitting beliefs which have the intention of increasing the student's appreciation of and control over reality

¹Michael Polanyi, Science, Faith and Society (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 12.

- 5) the nature and implications of the enabling beliefs transmitted (as absolute to those who hold them, but subjective in the sense that there exist differing absolute beliefs ascribed to by others), must be clarified through analysis and reasoning when the students are deemed capable of the intellectual consideration of this concept

In distinguishing between a process of indoctrination and a process of imparting enabling beliefs, it seems that it is in the last criterion that the distinction can be most clearly made. For example, school instruction in Nazi Germany involved the transmission of unshakeable beliefs which were claimed as objectively absolute, and so could not be said to be a process of imparting enabling beliefs. The instruction of science, on the other hand, is by its very nature an instruction which encourages self-evaluation - not because of self-doubt, but because of a firm belief in its validity. The attitude of science in this respect is an attitude emphasized by Mill:

However unwilling a person who has a strong opinion may admit the possibility that his opinion may be false, he ought to be moved by the consideration that however true it may be, if it is not fully, frequently and fearlessly discussed, it will be held as a dead dogma, not a living truth.¹

This would seem to be a fundamental aspect of the imparting of enabling beliefs, without which the process deteriorates into indoctrination. Junell advances the difficulty in proceeding properly in this particular process of education:

Teaching children to accept truth on faith, calls for methods somewhat different from those for teaching them to accept truth on evidence. Absolutism does not lend itself fruitfully

¹Mill, On Liberty, p. 44.

to argumentation or the employment of alternatives, for in a sense there are no acceptable alternatives to principles which are by definition 'unconditional, totally independent, perfect, and all-inclusive.'¹

Junell suggests that since in any imposition 'the dice is often loaded in one direction or another' (for example, in literature, Dickens loads the dice against evil, Norman Mailer against war, Ayn Rand against socialism), the teacher should himself load the dice in favour of his own values - which represent "the values his society wishes to perpetuate."²

Snook agrees that the transmission of values without evidence is a valid and acute dilemma "in those domains of life where the evidence is inconclusive, where knowledgeable and sincere men differ, and where people are prone to hold their views tenaciously regardless of evidence or argument."³ Snook proposes that the contingency of the enabling beliefs be transmitted as soon as it becomes relevant (in terms of the student's understanding) to do so. He suggests, for example, that although habits and training are necessary during the child's early years when it comes to religious training, 'uncertainty' should be conveyed as soon as it is possible to do so.⁴ I would agree with Snook here, if by 'uncertainty' he refers to the explanation of the nature of the beliefs, as required by the criteria.

¹Junell, Phi Delta Kappan, p. 183.

²Ibid., p. 185.

³Snook, Indoctrination, p. 73.

⁴Ibid., p. 96.

In attempting to delineate a distinction between indoctrination and what we are calling the imparting of enabling beliefs, Peters suggests that just as it is necessary to impose safety codes on children before they can appreciate their underlying basis, so too is it necessary to transmit standards in the moral sphere. He writes that imparting value judgements and standards on the issue of lying or breaking promises is educationally acceptable. However, "such instruction would degenerate into indoctrination if it were done in such a way as to discourage the probing into principles at a later date when the child's mental development were ripe for it."¹ The teacher would not want the student to turn to lying and breaking promises, but to eventually discover on what grounds the student himself can find these moral standards acceptable. Peters mentions that,

teaching involves further that, if we try to get the student to believe that such and such is the case, we try also to get him to grasp it for reasons that, within the limits of his capacity to grasp, are our reasons. Teaching in this way, requires us to reveal our reasons to the student and, by so doing, to submit them to his evaluation and criticism.²

In the case of enabling beliefs the role of critical evaluation and analysis would be not to produce proofs for the beliefs (the beliefs being non-verifiable), but to clarify the nature of the beliefs.

John Magee suggests that the major difference between indoctrinating and non-indoctrinating, is that the latter involves

¹Peters, Ethics and Education, p. 262.

²Ibid., p. 39.

beliefs which are in principle subject to expansion, revision or even contradiction. He does, however, agree with our earlier contention that it is absurd to suppose that one would change one's fundamental principles every day. Nonetheless, the difference in principle is important, "and a student who would come to understand must realize the tentative and challengeable character of all his learning if he is to escape being the subject of indoctrination."¹

Faiths, whether political, religious, social or moral, will find their place in the educational process, but students must be initiated into an understanding of the grounds upon which these are so diversely held.²

Thomas Green suggests that one of the aims of teaching is to seek every possible assurance that one's enabling beliefs are also rationally held. He sees the need to attempt to rationally consider the grounds upon which our enabling beliefs are held, and the actual nature of the beliefs involved. Nonetheless, he admits that "their abandonment cannot be warranted on the basis of evidence or reasons, because they are precisely those beliefs without which we could not seriously entertain the evidence."³

Margaret Mackie, in Educative Teaching, considers the problem of whether non-indoctrination is possible in religious

¹Magee, Philosophical Analysis, p. 66.

²Ibid., p. 68.

³Green, in Concepts of Teaching, ed. by MacMillan and Nelson, p. 53.

instruction. She suggests that as long as the school teaching of religion is conducted in accordance with the principle of 'encouraging inquiry before acceptance whenever possible', then this teaching can be as educative as the teaching of any other subject matter. Mackie argues that the secularist suggestion that religious teaching exclusively involves some measure of acceptance without evidence or reasoning, is not valid: "Does (religious teaching)...require acceptance of a kind different from the acceptance necessary to study anything at all?"¹ She claims that, just as in other studies, in the proper teaching of religion,

the field for investigation will enlarge with the increasing maturity and interest of the learner. If someone here raises the objection that there will always be an unexplained portion of religion, my reply is that the same is true of any subject.²

It seems evident that the imparting of enabling beliefs is a very real and significant part of the educative process. All of human knowledge is grounded on fundamental principles, which we are calling enabling beliefs, and without which no beliefs at all could be held. In the discussion of the instruction of science, it was noted that this is an example of the process of imparting enabling beliefs, except in cases where information is passed on as absolutely and empirically accurate,

¹Mackie, Educative Teaching, p. 112.

²Ibid.

in spite of its ~~non-verifiable~~ nature. It should be stressed that within the scientists' article of faith (in the possibility and worthwhileness of making sense of the material world), the instruction of science is an educative process, characterized by those criteria which Peters and Magee use to describe the process of education. The instruction of Nazi doctrine in Germany, although the information was based on faith, is not an example of the imparting of enabling beliefs, because its beliefs were intended to be accepted as unshakeable in the sense of being objectively absolute. There was no intention in this instruction of encouraging analysis and reasoning, which would have served to clarify the nature and implications of the beliefs.

(Before turning to an examination of the instruction of Jewish religious studies, it might serve helpful to briefly recapitulate the conditions under which a process can be properly considered a case of indoctrination.)

RECAPITULATION OF CRITERIA

It is generally agreed that whatever else indoctrination is, it is certainly a process which is not conducive to the education of a person. If education is a healthy or positive process, indoctrination is almost always viewed as a negative process. I included a brief discussion of this characteristic of indoctrination, because there seems to exist some confusion as to the application of this feature of indoctrination. For example, a process is sometimes described as indoctrination simply because the person disagrees with the subject matter being transmitted. It would seem more accurate to suggest that indoctrination is a negative process because it contains certain characteristics which are not conducive to education, and then to outline what these characteristics are. That is, the negative feature of a process of indoctrination is a conclusion of that process being characterized as indoctrination, rather than a criterion of indoctrination.

I then proceeded to examine some of these characteristics, in the form of criteria. I considered the criterion of content, and concluded that although indoctrination is more likely to occur in areas where the subject matter deals with 'ideologically tinted doctrines' (where information is less capable of objective analytical scrutiny), this is not always the case. For example, it was noted that the transmission of moral and political values (such as a commitment to democracy) is not generally considered to be indoctrination, depending on how and why these values are being transmitted. The notion that the teacher must be absolutely neutral or else be guilty of indoctrination was

repudiated for several reasons, including the apparent impossibility of complete neutrality, and the undesirability of ignoring available knowledge which is considered worthwhile. It was argued that for the student to appreciate or consider any information at all, it was necessary to transmit to him basic information which would serve as the tools of his comprehension and analysis. It was concluded that the criterion of content, in order to determine indoctrination, must be qualified by other considerations. The transmission of any subject matter, or the transmission of ideologically tinted doctrines, do not necessarily indicate indoctrination; although it was later shown that if indoctrination does occur, it almost always involves a content of this kind.

The term 'enabling belief' as used by Thomas Green was introduced, referring to a commitment to kinds of belief without which further consideration of any beliefs could not follow. These enabling beliefs (such as a due regard for truth) must be adhered to despite their non-verifiable nature, although Green emphasizes that the attempt must be made to "seek every possible assurance that our passionate convictions, our enabling beliefs, are also rationally held." (page 54 above)

I then considered the criterion of method, particularly the notion that the use of non-rational methods constitutes a case of indoctrination. It was suggested, however, that while non-rational methods are not unique to indoctrination (since there are cases where non-rational methods are used in what are

clearly non-indoctrinary situations), it is more accurate to state that non-rational methods are a necessary, if not sufficient condition of indoctrination.

A consideration of the criterion of "intention" was then undertaken. It was suggested that indoctrination occurs when the intention of the teacher is to implant unshakeable beliefs, which are subscribed to even in the face of contrary evidence. It was shown that there exist cases where similar methods and content represent different kinds of instruction (that is, indoctrination or non-indoctrination) depending on the intention of the instructor. Of course, to properly determine the instructor's intention, it is helpful to take into consideration the nature of his teaching actions, which include the method and content of his instruction. It should be noted that the criteria of content and method were not disqualified as criteria; the analysis undertaken of their validity was intended to show how they apply in the determination of a process as indoctrination or non-indoctrination.

A distinction was made between objective and subjective absoluteness. One of the criteria of enabling beliefs was that,

the nature and implications of the enabling beliefs transmitted (as absolute to those who hold them, but subjective in the sense that there exist differing absolute beliefs ascribed to by others), must be clarified through analysis and reasoning when the students are deemed capable of the intellectual consideration of this concept (page 128 above)

Conversely, instruction which involves the transmission of unshakeable beliefs which are claimed as objectively absolute

(such as Nazi instruction) is a case of indoctrination. John Magee touched on this distinction by suggesting that non-indoctrinating involves beliefs which are in principle subject to expansion, revision or contradiction. (page 131 above) First principles and enabling beliefs are not likely to be easily changed; but the awareness of man's imperfection, suggests that absolute beliefs, regardless of one's faith in them, are in principle subject to change and contradiction. A subjectively absolute concept has the characteristic of being open to consideration and examination, eventhough the person is convinced of its truth and correctness. A person who ascribes objective absoluteness to a concept he is transmitting, is indoctrinating since the belief transmitted is considered absolutely unshakeable and is not open to further evaluation.

Although examples were used in the process of determining the criteria, several recognized cases of indoctrination and of non-indoctrination were then considered, in order to clearly illustrate the application of the criteria. The example which I reviewed most extensively was the instruction of science. It was noted that this instruction includes certain pre-conditions or assumptions which are considered to be axiomatic. These assumptions, which include the importance of truth, the systematic order in nature, and the worthwhileness of scientific discovery, allow the scientist to accept working theories (such as Darwin's theory of evolution, and the radio¹⁴carbon dating procedure) for which there are indeed reasons, but which are based on

incomplete data. Now the transmission of these working theories is not a process of indoctrination, since the criterion of intention to inculcate unshakeable beliefs in the face of contrary evidence does not necessarily apply. My objective in considering the instruction of science was not to refute the validity of science, of the contingency of its findings; nor to take issue with the underlying assumptions of science. What I have attempted to show is that such a procedure (that is, the transmission of working theories based in part on faith in scientific assumptions, as well as on evidential findings), is an acceptable process of education. Indeed, if we are to progress in any area, it seems that there is no other way to proceed. Furthermore, it seems to me that if one is to adequately review processes of instruction as indoctrination or non-indoctrination, it is important to acknowledge the observation stated earlier by Magee (page 112 above): "There is a contingent or decisional element in all human knowledge in the sense that it rests upon ultimate assumptions that are not themselves rationally provable." The fact that an assumption (which is at least at the moment non-verifiable) is transmitted to students, does not in itself mean that the transmission is necessarily a case of indoctrination.

I then proceeded to describe this process as the 'imparting of enabling beliefs', and outlined a set of criteria, which when added to the Peters/Magee criteria of education, would account for the transmission of science as an educative process. A fundamental distinction between enabling beliefs and indoctrinary

beliefs, is that the former include the criterion of reflective examination.

I now turn to a consideration of Jewish religious education, to determine by which set of criteria this process of instruction is most accurately described.

CHAPTER VI

EXAMINATION OF JEWISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

At the beginning of this paper, the views of several writers who saw religious instruction as indoctrination were noted. I should like to briefly consider some of these views and their validity with regards to Jewish religious education, in light of the preceding discussion of indoctrination and imparting enabling beliefs. Although I will be referring to science, this is not an attempt to equate the two kinds of perspectives; rather, my intention is to emphasize a consistency in the evaluation of each, with reference to our criteria.

J.P. White, Anthony Flew, Russell and Snook seemed to agree that religious instruction can be considered to exemplify a case of indoctrination, since its aim is to "fix in the minds of children an unshakeable conviction of the truth of its specific distinctive doctrines."¹ The problem, they suggest, lies in the fact that the doctrines they are imparting as true are doubtful, in the sense of inconclusive evidence.

Now in our discussion on indoctrination, we have shown that the intention of the instructor to transmit unshakeable beliefs seems to be a sufficient criterion of indoctrination. But it was further determined that when the beliefs are qualified as 'enabling beliefs', indoctrination does not necessarily occur. An enabling belief, it will be recalled, embodies the unique characteristic of subjective absoluteness (which involves reflective examination), as opposed to objective abso-

luteness. It was primarily through this qualification that we were able to distinguish Nazi instruction as indoctrination, and the instruction of science as the imparting of enabling beliefs.

I think that it is important to note that while the fundamental principles of a particular faith logically determine its characterization as indoctrinary or not, it is also possible that a misapplication or deviation from the principles can result in a revised consideration of its actual standing, under the new conditions. For example, when scientific theories take the form of scientism, indoctrination can occur. A case in point is the conclusion of Professor Jacques Monod, who used his theories of molecular biology (for which he won the Nobel Prize) to conclude that man's existence is meaningless.¹ Now even if Monod's factual observations with regards to randomness prove to be absolutely accurate (notwithstanding that there is a school of thought which does not accept the theory of the randomness of elementary events), it does not seem to be within the bounds of scientific procedure to conclude that because the molecular processes in natural selection are haphazard, then a divine overall design or master plan has been precluded at the macroscopic level. A panel committee of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists objected that there is "a logical sleight-of-hand involved in jumping from 'there is a scientific authority for X', to 'science has disproved X.'²

¹Panel Committee of the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists, in Challenge, ed. by Carmel and Domb, p. 276.

²Ibid.

If a teacher were to confer objective absoluteness on Monod's value based conclusion, we would be justified in calling his teaching indoctrination. In this instance, it seems that the teacher deviated from the basic tenets of the laws of science. Russell has suggested that,

The man of science holds that the truth is discoverable though not discovered....But even to say that the truth is discoverable is to say rather more than the genuine man of science believes, since he does not conceive his discoveries as final and absolute, but as approximations subject to future corrections.¹

The teacher of science, who transmits information as subjectively absolute is imparting enabling beliefs, and is not guilty of indoctrination.

An example where deviation from a faith can lead from an indoctrinary situation to a situation of imparting enabling beliefs, is the change of attitudes of Malcolm X. This actually represented a transfer of allegiance from faith in Elijah Muhammed's doctrines on Islam, to faith in traditional Islam. Malcolm X's views so deviated from Elijah Muhammed's doctrines, to which he had earlier been committed, that eventually a complete change in faith resulted. The critical change was one of openness, leading to a subjectively, as opposed to objectively, absolute position.

Similarly, when one examines religious instruction, one has to distinguish between the actual faith involved, and the

¹Russell, Education and Social Order, p. 15.

manner to which the principles of the faith are adhered - taking into account environmental and personal influences. That Jewish religious instruction has sometimes degenerated into indoctrination, does not negate the possibility that this resulted because of misapplications and deviations from the fundamental principles of Jewish education. I intend now to consider some fundamental aspects of orthodox or Torah-true Judaism (as distinct from reform, reconstructionist, or conservative Judaism) which relate to education.

Faith in orthodox Judaism, as in any faith, demands certain definite 'unconditional demands', as Tillich calls them. In this case, this includes the acceptance of the authoritative interpretation by the Rabbinical authorities (as contained in the Talmud, the Shulchan Aruch, and the Teshivoth - that is, the traditional commentaries) of the Torah.¹ Some of the articles of faith include a belief in the Laws of the Old Testament, acceptance of the Torah as divinely authored, and acknowledgement of the Talmud and the Commentaries as divinely inspired. Thus a person who is committed to the Jewish faith, is obligated to fulfill the 613 commandments, as enunciated in the Torah. These commandments pertain to, it is suggested, every aspect of human life: dietary laws; laws dealing with business ethics; hygienic standards; laws relating to worship; and laws relating to human relations. With regards to these enumerated commandments,

¹Jung, Living Judaism, p. 8.

there is no flexibility: these are considered to be essential to the fulfillment of the Jew's being. Perfect commitment would require the perfect being. Thus, Judaism recognizes that the committed Jew must strive for total adherence to the obligations of Judaism, and that differences in personalities and backgrounds means that different people's approaches and levels of commitment are not only tolerated but expected as a natural unfolding of events. In Judaism, belief in God and in the Laws of the Torah is an enabling belief in the same sense that belief in the value of truth is an enabling belief. A belief in the value of truth means that certain actions follow: If X is asked how old he is, he will respond truthfully; if he is asked his opinion on the Capitalist system, he will answer truthfully. Similarly, belief in the Laws of the Torah means that certain actions will follow: X will not murder; he will put on phylacteries every morning; he will observe the Sabbath; and so on. Furthermore, just as there exists the possibility, among thinking people, of reflective scrutiny concerning the value of truth, so too is there a continuing reflective scrutiny in existence among thinking people concerning the meaning and implications of acceptance of the Laws of the Torah.

Cyril Domb describes the commitment of the orthodox Jewish scientist to the traditional Torah view as follows:

These are his hypotheses and he searches for a solution to any problem in accordance with these hypotheses. In this respect, he is being no more unscientific than... any scientist who because of some feeling or intuition searches for a solution to a problem in a particular direction; as long as his hypotheses are clearly stated

and he subsequently uses logic and scientific method, his contribution need be no less significant than that of a researcher who starts from different hypotheses.¹

Just as a secularist scientist has certain social, political and ethical values which do not necessarily deter his scientific approach (although they may influence his priorities in his research), so too does the orthodox Jewish scientist adhere to a faith in these kinds of values. Just as the secular scientist has a faith in science, which is not empirically and absolutely verifiable, but within which there is rationality; so too does the orthodox Jewish scientist have a faith (in Torah) which is not verifiable, but within which there is rationality.

The question can be raised as to whether the hypotheses here discussed can actually be considered under the same magnifier. I would like to very briefly consider the nature of the two hypotheses or faiths involved. The secularist scientist maintains a faith in the worthwhileness of scientific discovery and in the validity of scientific procedure. This faith is grounded on a history of accounts of scientific experiments. It is further substantiated by personal observation and conclusions. Similarly, the orthodox Jew's faith in God is grounded on historical accounts (for example, in the form of Biblical information), as well as personal observations and conclusions. The latter includes such factors as the physical

¹Cyril Domb, "The Orthodox Jewish Scientist", in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 26.

and intellectual survival of the Jews, as well as the exile and dispersion of the Jews (both as clearly outlined in the Biblical sources). Furthermore, the Torah as a guide to living provides an impressive and all-encompassing volume of fundamental concerns (especially with regards to moral guidelines: general ones such as the Ten Commandments, and countless detailed ones such as the proper treatment of servants and unfortunate members of the community such as widows and orphans).

A secular scientist, when confronted with the dilemma of the destructive discoveries and potentialities of certain scientific achievements (eg., nuclear power, industrial pollutants), would have good reason to reflect on the worthlessness of science. But it is doubtful that he would renounce science. He would be more likely to criticize man's ability to properly deal with scientific advances.

A somewhat similar dilemma arose for the orthodox Jew at the turn of the Century. The traditional Jewish ghetto life was, for some very valid reasons, being criticized and denounced by many Jews who felt threatened and restrained by both the traditions of the Torah and of the ghetto. But a reflective examination of their traditions did not lead all intelligent Jews to denounce the traditions. Reflective consideration of their situation led some to conclude that it was not traditional Judaism which was at fault, but external factors, as well as misrepresentations and misapplications from within. It was man's

inability to appreciate and properly apply the Torah to their lives that was criticized.

I would agree that science and Orthodox Judaism represent two completely different concepts, neither equal nor opposite. But it seems to me that there is a similarity in the nature and method of the commitment to either approach of viewing the world.

As in other faiths, there is in Judaism inflexibility with regards to the enabling beliefs, and flexibility toward philosophic questions within Judaism. The enabling beliefs represent the presuppositions, without which no other beliefs (which are deemed to collectively lead to the promise of self-fulfillment) could follow. In fact, it is suggested that the enabling beliefs of Judaism are indispensable for the Jew in the quest for reason and truth, as well as meaning in life:

Certainly Judaism teaches some basic beliefs, and if it were true that reason can operate unshackled only by dismissing all certainties, then the fundamental principles of our faith would indeed stand in the way. However, we have seen that the ideal of 'free enquiry' implies articles of faith of its own.¹

At the beginning of this chapter we reiterated that the fundamental distinction between indoctrination and imparting enabling beliefs is often based in the claim of either objective or subjective absoluteness. On the basis of this criterion, it seems to me that the instruction of Judaism is logically charac-

¹Rabinovitch, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 58.

terized as a process of imparting enabling beliefs. The suggestion put forth by Rabinovitch (in the quotation on page 147 above) is not that the certainties taught by Judaism are objectively absolute; but rather, that they are "basic beliefs" grounded on faith, not on irrefutable evidence. In a conversation with Rabbi Lester Rosner, the latter stressed to me that one can fully accept Judaism only "by the heart as well as by the mind." Rosner admitted that the nature of Judaism is such that an intellectual commitment must be preceded by an emotional commitment - that is, in the sense of 'being beyond the scope of reason. Rabinovitch emphasizes that faith is the foundation upon which all else rests: it is through faith that one progresses to understanding. In Judaism, "faith is not to be found at the end of a long quest, by leaping over the stumbling blocks which reason cannot clear away from our path. Rather it is the very beginning."¹

Leo Jung considers the existence of the admittedly fine line between transmitting the Jewish religious beliefs which the parent believes to be important, and the danger of imposing a 'personal mold' on the child:

Parents have every right and every duty to so train their children that they may adopt a set of principles guaranteeing a decent form of life...and to expect their children to carry on their national obligations and to realize in as perfect a form as possible the particular obligations and aspirations of honest Jews....(Parents) have no right to look upon a definite form of training, upon their own

¹Rabinovitch, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 56.

views as perfect wisdom that will brook no interference.¹ Indeed, a commitment to Judaism seems to present an individual with countless dilemmas and mysteries within Judaism which it is considered not only permissible but admirable to examine and question. The Talmud, which is the basic commentary of the Torah, actually consists of thousands of questions and disagreements, each of which invariably includes at least two opposing viewpoints, and finally the perspective that has come to be accepted. This however does not negate the minority viewpoint (which still has its adherents); it merely presents the reasoning which has shown one viewpoint to pose less inconsistencies than the other - just as in science, one perspective is more generally accepted than another on the basis of its greater consistency with available knowledge. Phillip Rahv, in his introduction to The Selected Stories of Franz Kafka, compares Kafka's style with that of the Talmud, "in its reasoning, argumentative quality, in its movement through assertion and contradiction, statement and refutation."²

Just as in science there are disagreements, so too in Judaism are disagreements accepted as conducive to increasing knowledge and furthering awareness. Rabinovitch explains this as follows: "The believer, confident in his faith, is ready to

¹Leo Jung, Living Judaism, p.195.

²Franz Kafka, Selected Short Stories of Franz Kafka, trans. by Willa and Edwin Muir (New York: Modern Library, 1952), p. xviii.

consider, nay, search out every possible explanation, since only in doing so can we uncover all that is really hidden in Scripture."¹ William Etkin admits that an open or rational approach is not often associated with religious thinking, but claims that this is a misconception of Jewish religious thought:

In Western philosophic thinking theological positions have become almost synonymous with rigidity and dogmatism in thought, the acceptance of doctrine as absolute truth. Whatever may be said in support of such a concept for western philosophy generally, it seems to me antithetical to the fundamental attitude toward philosophic questions that permeates Jewish tradition.²

Etkin, an orthodox Jewish scientist, suggests that the committed Jew ultimately views the concept of God as a hypothesis which has not yet been contradicted by evidence, and which might never be within the scope of evidential verification. As such, claims Etkin, the committed Jew is like the scientist, who, "having conceded the unattainability of the absolute..., nevertheless finds confidence in striving toward what is given him to achieve, namely, workable concepts."³ There exists, in both science and Judaism, a striving to attain a validity that is both theoretically satisfying and practically justified (if not absolutely reliable), arrived at by eliminating the unacceptable. In fact, Etkin ascribes to both the faith inherent in science as well as the faith inherent in Judaism, and admits to the absence of the attainability of eternal and absolute truth in both.

¹Rabinovitch, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 60.

²Etkin, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 40...

³Ibid., p. 41.

But just as his faith as a scientist encourages him to a continuing intelligent probing of nature, so too does his faith in Judaism strengthen his "will to believe in our vision of the good and meaningful in moral life."¹ His description of Judaism is that it certainly does not include objective absoluteness, which we have seen is a characteristic of indoctrinary instruction.

Rabinovitch also admits that the fundamental tenets of Judaism are not subject to proof or disproof, and thus do not require the acceptance of these principles as evidentially true. He emphasizes that "halachah" (that is, the traditionally accepted laws of action) can and should be carefully and critically examined - for example, whether it is permissible to turn on electrical lighting on the Sabbath through the use of pre-set timers. However, he stresses that 'basic beliefs' - the question of the existence of God - cannot be viewed in this way, as these are based on faith. Rabinovitch does not negate the significance of faith - merely the possibility of subjecting faith to proof or disproof. As such, he would no doubt agree that it is not accurate to implant in students the notion of objective absoluteness to the basic beliefs of Judaism, notwithstanding his personal commitment to these beliefs.

Another orthodox Jewish scientist, Henry Marcell, also writes of the non-verifiable nature of the basic beliefs in Judaism.

¹Etkin, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 41.

In discussing the argument of the theory of evolution as opposed to the Biblical theory of creation, he suggests that these theories are not mutually exclusive.¹ His reasoning is that each theory is subject to certain limitations, and that adherence to one does not negate adherence to the other. The theory of Biblical creation cannot be a substitute for a scientific theory, because it fails to suggest any further lines of research for people who want to know how the world is put together. Similarly, claims Marcell, while scientific theories attempt to account for the way in which things came about, they are not in a position to explain why the world was put together in the first place. Whether there is a spiritual reality behind the universe is not within the scope of scientific endeavour. It would seem, then, that Marcell admits to the non-verifiable nature of issues dealing with spiritual considerations; as such, belief in such issues must be based on other than verifiable data, which are objective (in the sense of descriptive information being objective). The transfer of Jewish beliefs - ultimately based on spiritual manifestations, or relating to God - are seen by Marcell to encompass subjective, as opposed to objective, absoluteness.

Norman Lamm refers to this same characteristic of Judaism, as manifested by an attitude which is open to critical or differing perspectives. He writes that the Jewish position is

¹Marcell, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 195.

not loyally served "by refusing to consider annoying theories which may well turn out to be facts."¹ The close-mindedness to which Lamm refers is precisely that characteristic which labelled Nazi instruction as indoctrination. Indeed, practitioners of a religious faith who do not become acquainted with critical perspectives and deal with them (albeit in accordance with the terms of their own values), and ultimately transmit this type of close-minded attitude and the implications of such an attitude, could be said to be indoctrinating. The attitude of Judaism to a dilemma which arises due to a conflict between a fundamental belief and a seemingly obvious scientific fact which contradicts the belief, is suggested by Jung as follows:

Nature and revelation are the two sources of the knowledge of God. They cannot disagree. Where they seem to do so, we have erroneously read the meaning of one of them.²

Jung claims that the existence of an apparent contradiction does not lead the committed Jew to denounce outright the faith in either Judaism or science, but rather to investigate further. This attitude, is similar to that of the scientist, who confronted by a contradiction in his findings, does not ignore his results, but uses them to learn more about his research - in particular, to investigate further information which might serve to explain the contradiction. Thomas Green has suggested that it is specifically the man of firmest faith who should

¹Norman Lamm, "The Religious Implications of Extraterrestrial Life", in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 369.

²Jung, Living Judaism, p. 9.

be the most fearless in his search for truth.¹ Indeed, it is the scientist who has complete confidence in his faith in science who persists in his quest for truth and knowledge.

Similarly, when there seems to exist a glaring contradiction within Judaism, the required attitude is not to ignore the problem, but to explore it until one reaches a satisfactory explanation. Rabinovitch admits that while "there have been times when under the duress and pressure of a hostile world, some Jews have seriously limited the scope of their learning and the range of their intellectual pursuits, the critical approach was never in doubt."² Rabinovitch notes that it is the "secret of every Talmud student to find a 'Kashya' - some real or apparent logical slip in the chain of reasoning."³ And yet, as in science when a contradiction arises, the discovery of a 'Kashya' does not lead the person to suspend his allegiance to Judaism, but rather presents a challenge for further investigation, until a satisfactory resolution can be found. Rabinovitch seems almost to be paraphrasing Mill's views on the need for inquiry, when he suggests that the Torah scholar is bound to explore problems or possible contradictions which are posed by reason, or scientific discovery: For in this way alone can we assure that our faith will be pure, that it will not become contaminated, as unfortunately

¹Green, in Concepts, ed. by Snook, p. 41.

²Rabinovitch, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 58.

³Ibid., p. 59.

some great ideals do, with idle superstitions and false beliefs.¹

Judaism in fact stresses the significance of inquiry and the use of reason in those areas where reason can apply. To outright discount information which is non-verifiable is not within the scope of scientific inquiry. Nor is it a claim of Judaism that God exists, on the basis of proof. With regards to non-verifiable data, the choice is left to the individual to accept or reject this hypothesis (or to suspend judgement, if that is possible), but not on the basis of proof - rather, on the basis of faith. It seems clear that with regards to the criterion concerned with objective versus subjective absoluteness, Jewish religious education is not necessarily a case of indoctrination.

In the discussion of the criteria of indoctrination, it was noted that indoctrination is more likely to occur when the subject matter deals with ideologically tinted doctrines, and when the instruction appears non-rational. Jewish religious education seems to be a candidate for indoctrinary instruction because it falls into the above categories. However, it has been shown that it is not part of the philosophy of Judaism to transmit beliefs as unshakeable in the face of contrary evidence. Thus Jewish religious education is not a case of indoctrination, although it does become so when the instruction deviates from the true faith and deals in unshakeable beliefs.

¹Rabinovitch, in Challenge, ed. by Carmell and Domb, p. 66.

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