

## **Initial Prospectus for:**

***Forgotten Connections: On Culture and Upbringing* by: Klaus Mollenhauer (in English Translation); presented by Dr. Norm Friesen, September 2010**

### **Introduction**

Klaus Mollenhauer's *Forgotten Connections: On Culture and Upbringing* (1983) is internationally regarded as one of the most important German contributions to educational and curriculum theory in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It has been translated into Norwegian, Swedish, Japanese, Spanish and Dutch, but has not yet appeared in English. From an American perspective, *Forgotten Connections* is in many ways reminiscent of the work of John Dewey. Like Dewey's most famous texts, it is at once accessible and sophisticated, it effortlessly combines philosophical reflection and practical conclusions, and it draws from humanistic continental thinkers (e.g. Herbart, Pestalozzi) who were also important to Dewey. Indeed, the "forgotten connections" referenced in the book's title can be thought of as pointing back to Dewey and related work in the American pragmatic and transcendental traditions.

At the same time, *Forgotten Connections* speaks very much to the 21<sup>st</sup> century: it is concerned with the role of education in preparing people for the future at a time when the future is a matter of enormous uncertainty; it deals with the challenge of communicating cultural values and understandings to new generations at a time when these values and understandings have become increasingly fraught and conflicted; and it joins contemporary educational scholarship in exploring the implications of recent philosophy and sociology (e.g. Foucault and Bourdieu) for pedagogical and curriculum theory and practice. In its use of a range of cultural and historical sources, it mirrors contemporary efforts to link educational concerns to the larger cultural environment.

### **Nature of the Translation**

Like the German original, the English translation of Mollenhauer's *Forgotten Connections* uses non-technical language; but at the same time, it provides detailed commentary for concepts and references that may be unfamiliar to English-language readers. It also offers an introduction written specifically for the translation and targeted to Anglo-American audiences, describing Mollenhauer's (1928-1998) theoretical and practical concerns, as well as the overall nature of *Forgotten Connections*. An editorial board composed of translators of Mollenhauer's work into other languages, his former students, and philosophers of education from both the North American and continental traditions will work together to ensure that the introduction, references and the translation itself are all of the highest quality.

The editorial board members will be:

- Dr. Tone Saevi, Norwegian Teacher Academy
- Dr. Michael A. Peters, University of Illinois
- Dr. Michael Winkler, University of Jena, Germany
- Dr. Gert Biesta, Stirling University, UK
- Dr. Stein Wivestad, Norwegian Teacher Academy

## Audience

The historical, cultural and philosophical emphases of Mollenhauer's work make it relevant to a broad readership that includes pedagogical practitioners and teacher-educators. It is also an attractive text for a range of education courses and programs with a philosophical, cultural and historical emphases. These include courses in education and culture, social foundations of education, as well as programs in curriculum studies and educational foundations on the masters and doctoral levels.

Also, the overall applicability of Mollenhauer's *Forgotten Connections* to teacher training, and its corresponding use as a Bachelors- or certificate-level text is important to consider. This possibility has been documented in a paper recently published in the *Journal of Curriculum Studies* by the lead translator/editor and an editorial board member for the publication proposed here. The paper is titled *Reviving Forgotten Connections: Klaus Mollenhauer and Human Science Pedagogy in Canadian Teacher Education* 142(1), 123-147, and it extends Mollenhauer's use of concrete cultural examples to the realm of popular feature films, showcasing how themes developed in productions such as "My Life as a Dog" (1985) and "The Dead Poets Society" (1989) can further enliven topics and discussions based on Mollenhauer's text. Very specific suggestions from this article for the integration of *Forgotten Connections* as a textbook in teacher training curricula could be provided as an appendix to the translated text.

## Examples of Specific Courses:

### Certificate/Bachelors Courses

- EDUC 201 Foundations of Education (University of North Carolina)
- EPFE 410, Philosophy of Education (University of Northern Illinois)
- EDEF 4150 Social Foundations of Education (Thompson Rivers University)

### Masters Level Programs

- SCG 408 Education and Society (de Paul University, Program in Social and Cultural Foundations in Education)
- EDLPS 522 Contemporary Philosophies of Education (University of Washington, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies)
- EDF 500 Cultural Foundations of Education (Northern Arizona University, Educational Foundations)
- EDUC 385 General Foundations of Education (University of Texas at Austin, Curriculum and Instruction)

### EdD and PhD Programs

- CI 8157 Cultural Studies in Education (University of Minnesota, Curriculum and Instruction)
- EDU 751 The Social Context of Schooling (University of Michigan)
- ED 8111 - The Historical and Social Foundations of Education (Capella University, PhD in Education)

## Competition

Due to the uniqueness of the text, there are no directly competing texts and relatively few texts competing indirectly. At the same time, the issues raised in the proposed text are of considerable interest to leaders in curriculum studies and philosophy of education (as the listing of potential reviewers indicates). Brief consideration of three texts that are only indirectly related to the proposed translation illustrates this situation:

1. **van Manen, M. (1991). *The Tact of Teaching: The Meaning of Pedagogical Thoughtfulness*. Albany: SUNY Press.**  
This book does not reference Mollenhauer's *Forgotten Connections*, or work with a coincident set of themes, but it is clear that it is, in part, inspired by Mollenhauer. In its focus on the concept of pedagogical tact (originating in German educational philosophy in the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), and it thus addresses a theme relevant to Mollenhauer's text. At the same time, it departs from the general, social and cultural considerations in which Mollenhauer integrates his own brief reference to this topic. The focus of van Manen's text is clearly on the inter-personal nature of pedagogical practice, whereas *Forgotten Connections* engages with much broader historical and cultural conditions.
2. **Hansen, D. T. (1995). *The Call to Teach*. New York: Teachers College Press.**  
Like van Manen's text, this book captures some of the sensibility and concerns of Mollenhauer's book, and it also focuses on one concept (vocation or calling) in contemporary contexts. Hansen presents the narratives of four teachers in different school settings, and describes the mutually-reinforcing role of public needs and personal convictions in these stories. Again, it does not engage in the question of the general, social and cultural considerations in which the Mollenhauer text briefly situates the question of pedagogical vocation.
3. **Curran, R. Ed. (2007). *Philosophy of Education: An Anthology*. New York: Blackwell-Wiley.**  
This text deals with the history of the philosophy of education in the context of the social and cultural traditions of the West. In this sense its focus can be said to coincide quite directly with the Mollenhauer text. However, the absence of any German figures and of more recent continental contributions to educational philosophy in this representative anthology shows how the proposed translation fills in a very significant gap in educational theorizing in Anglo-American contexts. In the case of many general topics considered in this anthology (e.g. "critical thinking and reasoning" or "liberal education"), the contributions trace a fairly consistent trajectory that begins with the ancients, moves through Rousseau and/or Mill and ends with contemporary American scholars. The distinctive German tradition in education and pedagogical philosophy is literally unrepresented in this text, whereas the Mollenhauer text renders this tradition both authentically and accessibly.

**Potential Reviewers** (with parenthetical explanations of their relevance, where applicable)

- Gert Biesta, Professor of Education, The Stirling Institution of Education, University of Stirling, UK. (Author of works on German and continental educational philosophy.)
- Malte Brinkmann, Professor for Philosophy of Education, University of Education, Freiburg.
- David T. Hansen, Professor of Philosophy & Education, Teachers College, Columbia University. (Author of *The Call to Teach*, discussed above)
- Stefan Hopmann, Professor for School and Educational Research; History of Education and International Comparative Education, University of Vienna. (Editor of *Didaktik and/or Curriculum: An International Dialogue*).
- Ari A. Sutinen, Assistant Head of the Department of Education, Oulu University, Finland.
- Max van Manen, Professor Emeritus in Secondary Education, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta (Author of *The Tact of Teaching: The Meaning of Pedagogical Thoughtfulness*, discussed above)
- Ian Westbury, Professor Emeritus, Curriculum & Instruction, University of Illinois. (Editor of *Teaching as a Reflective Practice: The German Didaktik Tradition*)
- Michael Winkler, Chair in General Pedagogy and Theory of Social Pedagogy, University of Jena, Germany. (Former student of Klaus Mollenhauer)
- Stein Wivestad, Lecturer in Education at the Norwegian Teacher Academy (Translator of *Forgotten Connections* into Norwegian)
- Christian Friedrich Wulf, Professor of Education, Free University of Berlin. (Author of a number of English language texts on the German pedagogical tradition)

## Table of Contents

The following presents a translation of Mollenhauer's original table of contents including the original pagination; an introduction and (possible) appendices for English-language readers will be added.

Introduction: What do we really mean when we talk about upbringing? (9-21)

Presentation, or: leading our lives with children (21-51)

Augustine: Pointing, Ways of Life, Self / The Story of Buffalo Long Lance: Slowing Reality Down / What Images can tell us: The Origin of a Pedagogical Barrier

Representation, or: Deciding what to communicate (52-77)

Comenius and Velazquez: The Pedagogical Hall of Mirrors / Summary of Points Thus Far / Pestalozzi: The Construction of the Field

Developmental Preparedness, or: Trusting that children want to learn (78-114)

The Paradoxes of Upbringing / The Case of Kaspar Hauser / To render the Unsayable Doable; The Equivalency Postulate

Self-Starting: Children's own plans and projects (114-154)

Speaking / Mathematics / Drawing / Walking / The Discovery of the Self / The Active Individual / The Self-Starting Individual

Conclusion: Difficulties with Identity (155-173)

The Concept of Identity / Inside and Out / Reality and Possibility

End Matter (174-184)

## Explanation of Outline of Book and Example of Translated Text (two passages below translated from the author's introduction, pp. 17-21)

In contemporary culture, it is possible to speak of bringing children into the world as a matter of free will, of having children only when adults want them. Thus the first question for this book is: Why do we want to have children at all? There are of course still countless unwanted children brought into the world every day. This means that there are many complex answers to this question from a factual perspective (e.g., What motivates adults to have children?). But even in these cases, it should at least be possible to cultivate parents' wish to "accept" and "want" the child once he or she is born. But this then leads to the question: What *underlies* such acceptance and desire?

Philosophers or child development specialists would have no problem formulating and debating different answers to this question. But I venture a provisional one here: I have children because I want the (perhaps very little) goodness in my life to be perpetuated. This response has at least three implications:

- 1) that I would like human history to continue, with a sense of optimism or at least of hope that also orients my own actions;
- 2) that my own existence can be perpetuated in some small, indirect way through children;
- 3) that the way of life I teach children has at least *some* value.

If these responses, cursory though they may be, make at least some sense, then the next question has to concern what adults bring to children –what I call our cultural heritage—and its fitness for the future. Anyone who does not have a heritage of some kind to pass on will probably take little pleasure in raising or educating children. In this regard, the crises that abound in education are a significant symptom of our times. When the desire to see generations born beyond one's own is extinguished, educational and even experiential possibilities are greatly diminished. Conservative excesses threaten to turn child rearing into a ritualized duty. In these circumstances, it is not surprising that adults lose the desire to raise children and only want to interact with them as mirror images of their adult selves.

But as Maria Montessori put it, "children are different," mainly because they "want" a future for themselves, and they express this desire through stock phrases such as "When I grow up..." But they can only imagine this in terms of the adult life that is already embodied all around them. Even the most radical critic of the multiple coercions of schooling and socialization cannot avoid embodying an adult way of life in front of children. Like it or not, any teacher or parent powerfully exemplifies one way of life or another for a child. But the question is: Is the life that is being embodied a "good" one? And does the kind of life being lived contribute positively to the child's upbringing?

[...]

The structure of this book is simple. It begins with a discussion of a phenomenon I call "presentation," by which I mean that there is no getting around the fact that we lead *our* lives with children. We cannot stop being social animals and products of our society, nor can we pretend to be dead or impartial. This may be obvious, but it is also the cardinal and most serious of all educational realities. Child rearing is thus first and foremost a matter of passing on a valued heritage, of conveying to children what is important to us. It is simply unimaginable for an adult to undertake any educational or child-rearing measure without conveying some aspect of him or herself or the way he or she lives, whether it is deliberate or not.

The more complex social reality becomes, the more difficult it is for the child to get a handle on the host of realities relevant to his or her future. The less these things are present in the child's everyday world – particularly in a time when our society's future can no longer be predicted with any reliability – the more urgent another basic problem becomes: the issue of developing and choosing material to *represent* the world to the child. This means that in addition to the "presentation" of a particular way of life to a child, the social and historical aspects of the culture that are hidden from the child's view must also be *represented* to him or her. This in turn means that adults must select from a vast array of material and convey it to the child or teenager in an understandable form. Educational institutions, which specialize in doing this type of selective representation, are central in this regard.

Child educators believe that young learners are capable of learning and have the desire to learn, despite the obstacles encountered along the way. If the adult has this attitude toward the child and the child has the desire to learn, then

theoretically such obstacles can be surmounted. Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776 –1841) coined a phrase for this, which has since entered the [German] language: *Bildsamkeit* or *developmental preparedness*.<sup>1</sup>

The developmental preparedness of both adults and children is regarded as a proclivity, a potential, and a possibility. But it manifests itself for the adult and becomes accessible to the child only if the child is active. The child must be motivated to become active, not just for the sake of being active or activity at any price (in this sense, animals could be said to be “active”), but rather for the type of activity that requires intelligence, good sense, and intellectual capacity. This type of activity is known as *Selbsttätigkeit* or *self-starting*: self-motivated, self-determined activity that promotes the realization of individual potential.

I conclude the book by asking what we mean when we talk about a “self” that is active and develops through developmental preparedness and self starting. What is the relationship between the self and these processes? This question, broadly understood, is often discussed today in terms of *identity*. Identity is meaningful only when it is *not* seen as something that is stable, existing in and of itself. It instead takes the form of a gradually changing relationship of the self to itself. Such a relationship is constituted by the difference between what is already real and what is eventual and possible.

This book written in an essayistic, discursive and informal manner, which I feel is appropriate to the subject. I have not set out to assess and critique current views in the field of education, and I do not attempt to construct a linear argument. Instead, my approach owes much to the arts and to the concrete examples provided in fiction and painting. It is through artistic and cultural illustrations that I endeavor to bring the relevant problems and issues to life.

## **Art and Tabular Material**

- 22 reproductions of artistic works (note: many of these are available in the public domain in high-resolution formats; see: <http://commons.wikimedia.org>)
- 4 tables

## **Other Rights and Royalties**

All translation costs will be covered by Dr. Norm Friesen; royalty payments (between 5% and 8%) will be negotiated with the rights holders (with whom Dr. Friesen is in contact).

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<sup>1</sup> This is the English for the term suggested by Stein Wivestad, translator of Mollehnauer into Norwegian.