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An Analysis of the Implications of Teaching Morals in the Public Schools

Elmer L. Towns

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF TEACHING MORALS
IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Approved by:

G. C. Holm
Floyd Messarsmith
W. H. Brown
AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF TEACHING MORALS
IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of
Southern Methodist University
in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the
Master of Arts
with a
Major in Education
by
ELMER L. TOWNS
(B.A., Northwestern College, 1954)
(M.A., Southern Methodist University)
August, 1958
To

my wife

Ruth Jean Towns
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the National Education Association has expressed its views with respect to ways in which morals may be made a part of the instructional program of the public schools. Several studies have been published by organizations which belong to the National Education Association. Because of the recency of these studies and the importance of what is recommended, it is the purpose of this investigation to analyze the proposals, made since 1945, by the National Education Association, in order to take note of selected implications that are expressed and implied.

Statement of the Problem

The present investigation shall be concerned with the following questions as they relate to the recommendations of the National Education Association:

1. Prior to 1945, what was the history of instruction in morals in the schools?

2. What do these advocates mean when use is made of the term, moral?

3. On the basis of the reasons and conditions set forth as justification of a program of instruction in morals, what is recommended with respect to the operation of a program of instruction in morals?
Limitations of the Study

In summarizing the history of instruction in morals prior to 1945, no effort was made to trace all the diverse trends and movements which characterized the evolution of the program. Rather, concern was limited to taking note of the dominant types of control over education, dominant patterns of instruction and content of teaching, and the role of the teacher in moral education.

In discussing the meaning of the term moral as used by advocates of a program of moral instruction within the National Education Association, two basic limitations were imposed. One limitation was with respect to the data. Data were limited to the report of the Educational Policies Commission, Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public School. The second limitation was with respect to the use of the concept moral. Consideration of the explicit meaning of the concept moral, as delineated in the literature selected for use in this study, was limited to the meaning of the term at the level of designation. The implicit meaning of the term was limited to the meaning of the term as it was implied in the discussion of the reason why moral instruction should be offered in the school and the ends served by such instruction.

In discussing the recommended program with respect to instruction of morality, no effort was made to analyze all the diverse recommendations that are implied in teaching values in the public school. Rather, the guide lines of investigation were those used in tracing
the historical development of morals. Specifically, these are the
control and organization necessary to provide a program of moral in-
struction, the role of the teacher in moral education, and the method
of instruction and content of teaching morals in the public schools
of America.

Significance of the Study

An analysis of the implications of the recommendation of the
National Education Association is important at this time. The Na-
tional Education Association has become a type of organization to
which teachers look as the parent body of the professional group.
The Educational Policies Commission throughout the years has issued
special studies in various fields of education. It seems these
studies have foreshadowed certain later developments in education.
Knight has observed this:

In 1948 the Educational Policies Commission pub-
lished a volume under the title Education for All
American Children . . . the book was so prepared as
to describe those schools as they might appear to an
observer in 1958.1

In effect, Knight has stated that the Educational Policies Commission
has pioneered certain investigations. These investigations later be-
came central in the discussion and concern of education.

1Edgar W. Knight, Fifty Years of American Education, (New York:
The Educational Policies Commission, by publishing Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools in 1951, has triggered many articles concerning the place of morals in public education. The bibliography bears out the growth of concern about moral instruction in the public schools.

A detailed and clear analysis of the report of the Educational Policies Commission is needed to see what recommendations are made to the teacher, since they play a dominant role in classroom instruction in morals. Teachers are looking to the National Education Association and its departments for suggestions in regard to objectives, content, and procedures. Since it seems likely that the teacher would not ignore this potential source of information, an investigation is needed to see what suggestions, if any, are given teachers in these three aspects.

Related Research

Inspection of available bibliographies indicates that no research similar in nature to that undertaken in this investigation has been made. However, many studies have been undertaken involving the issue of moral education in the public school.

The Kentucky School System has attempted to evaluate its program of moral education, investigate better methods of teaching morals, and enrich the whole school system as it pertains to moral education. J. M. Tydings, a professor at the University of Kentucky and leader in this study, gives the following summary of their findings:
1. The program should deal with personal experiences in specific life situations.
2. The program should be democratically arrived at, and carried on throughout by democratic procedures.
3. Social relationships of young people should be analyzed, defined and reacted to in terms of moral and spiritual values.
4. Methods used in teaching social values should emphasize the achievement of competence in dealing with the issues of modern life.
5. The role of the teacher should be that of a counselor who assists the growing person to work out an adequate philosophy of life.
6. The program should be integrated into the total school program and should make the whole instructional process one of growth at all points.2

The related study in moral education by the Kentucky public schools is significant in pointing out the apparent recognition by educators of the needs in the areas of moral education.

In 1952 the public schools of Pittsburgh sponsored a seminar at the University of Pittsburgh, by giving scholarships for some of the teachers to attend. One of the main conclusions of this group is as follows:

Moral and spiritual values are discovered and developed through living and learning experiences, and are inherent in all human relationships. Every subject taught in the schools is "loaded" with values, and every personal contact is an opportunity to understand what is meant by "the worth of the individual."3


In effect, the summary of this seminar placed moral and spiritual values in all of life's relationships. This tended to give a broad pragmatic concept of morality.

Time will not be taken to summarize all the related research that has appeared in this area in recent years. It is noteworthy that, since the publication of *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools* in 1951, many articles have appeared and the summary findings of these articles are a condensation of the material and findings contained in the Educational Policies Commission's Bulletin.

Sources of Data

The data used in this study were derived largely from both primary and secondary sources. The chief primary source was *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools*, published by the Educational Policies Commission.

The secondary sources included books, periodicals, and pamphlets dealing with various phases of the general problems concerning instruction of morals in the public schools. The treatment of the historical development of moral instruction in education was based on secondary sources. The majority of the secondary sources was found in the libraries of Southern Methodist University.

Method of Attack

The first step in attacking the problem was to summarize the
historical background of moral instruction in schools. The object of this historical summary was to show how the recommendations of the National Education Association relate to the larger picture of moral instruction. These data are presented in Chapter II.

Secondly, a very careful study was made of primary source material in order to discover the meaning of the term moral. This step was executed by investigating the explicit meaning of the term at the level of definition. Attempts were made to find terms used to define the term moral. Next an implicit examination of the material was attempted for the purpose of discovering the meaning of the concept as it was made operative in discussion of the reasons and aims of a program of moral instruction in the public schools. These data are presented in Chapter III.

Thirdly, an analysis of the primary source material was attempted in order to discover the organizational structure that was recommended to conduct a program of morals in the public schools. Also examination was made to discover what recommendations were made with respect to the relation of the teacher to the instructional program in morals. Finally, search was made for recommendations with respect to methods and content in moral instruction. These data are presented in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL EDUCATION

In this chapter an effort has been made to summarize the nature of the concern for moral education from the colonial times to 1945. Specifically three periods of time are examined:

(1) Colonial Foundations of American Education—1600 to 1779.
(2) The Development of a Distinctive American Education—1779 to 1865.

The data have been examined in each of the three above named divisions in order to find answers to the following questions: What were the dominant types of control and support in the education field that reflect upon the issue of moral instruction in the schools? What were the dominant patterns and content of instruction having to do with morality? What was the role of the teacher in education as pertaining to the teaching of morals?

Moral Education in the Colonial Period

According to H. C. Jensen,

It is important . . . for us to recognize that interest in moral and spiritual values is not a novel but a persistent and historic concern of persons who have thought deeply about the essential functions of the
public schools in American life.\textsuperscript{1}

Since the historical evolution of moral instruction in the schools of this country apparently has bearing on the present state of moral instruction, it would seem advisable to look at the founding of the schools of America.

Dominant types of control and support. Many of the early colonists came to America in small congregational, religious groups, bringing their ministers with them. Early New England had a theocratic form of government under John Cotton and the Mather Dynasty.

Each set up, in the colony in which it settled, what were virtually little religious republics, that through them they might better perpetuate the religious principles for which they had left the land of their birth.\textsuperscript{2}

A religious type of government would apparently have influence into every sphere of life. The school life of the colonies was therefore influenced by a sectarian orientation of government. "Most of the colonies founded in the seventeenth century soon gave evidence that government was looked to as high authority in educational affairs."\textsuperscript{3} Since the government exercised influence in the schools, it would seem possible to infer that the schools of the colonial time

\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
were religious in nature and purpose. This was apparently the case as Cubberley notes the aim of education in this period of time. "Education of the young for membership in the church, and the perpetuation of a learned ministry for the congregations, from the first elicited the serious attention of these pioneer settlers."

The religious type of education reflected itself in many areas of school life. Often the same building was used for the school and the church. Many times the minister, by reason of his education, was the schoolmaster.

A relatively high degree of control of the schools by civil authority was found in most of the colonies. Writing on the contrast of schools in the southern colonies, to the northern colonies, Butts and Cronin have stated:

The principle of state control of education in the south was not nearly so extensively practiced as it was in New England, but it was present from the beginning.5

Since the state was in control of education, the varying amount of influence sectarian religious bodies had on town councils and political authorities, resulted in varying amounts of influence over the moral-religious training in the schools. With the growth of the American frontier, the emergencies of a middle class, the desires to separate church and state, and the need for leaders in a growing united

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6Cubberley, p. 257.
5Butts and Cronin, p. 104.
political republic, American education began to take a broader scope during the later colonial period. The part state control had over this apparently broader concept of education is seen by the "general law of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay" for 1740:

(1) To teach the children and youths to read perfectly the English tongue; (2) to teach them a knowledge of the laws respecting capital crimes; (3) to catechize children and servants in the grounds and principles of religion at least once a week and (4) to bring up children and apprentices in some "honest lawful calling, labour or employment", for themselves and the commonwealth.\(^6\)

These laws present the broader definition of education that was apparently growing in all the colonies than the limited concept of preparing young people for membership in the church or preparation of a learned ministry. This finding is significant for this study in that it pointed out the earliest record of education becoming secularized in America.

The control and organization of education, it seems, was in the hands of civil authorities during the colonial period. Since the civil authorities were influenced greatly by religious bodies, it seems that moral instruction had a prominent place in classroom teaching.

**Dominant patterns of instruction and content of teaching.** During much of the colonial period educational opportunities were avail-

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able in two different types of institutions, roughly divided according to class lines. Apprenticeship and elementary schools for learning the reading and writing of English were largely designed for the lower classes, whereas secondary schools of the Latin grammar type and the colleges were designed for the upper classes. Instruction in religion was common to both types of education.

This form of dual system of education was dominant apparently in the seventeenth century, but it started to break down somewhat in the eighteenth century as the ranks of the middle class began to swell and educators sought a newer type of educational program that would be more utilitarian.

The apprenticeship was an informal method of teaching selected by the master craftsmen and the apprentice. Patterns and content of instruction were very simple, as described by Butts and Cremin:

The apprentices agreed to work hard, learn the trade, keep the secrets, lead a sober and moral life and obey all the directions and commands . . . the stipulations were made that the apprentices should be taught some rudimentary elements of learning. Most commonly, this was simple reading, but also included writing and the elements of religion or simply the catechism.\footnote{Butts and Cremin, p. 116.}

This apprenticeship type of moral instruction would be based in the religion and personal criteria of the master craftsman. Apparently instruction in values was based on personal example of the craftsman as well as a direct method of teaching religious standards.
Elementary education, also designed for the lower classes was apparently a simple matter. It contained elements of reading and writing the vernacular, arithmetic, and elements of the religious faith. The content of learning experiences was apparently designed to establish morals in the life of the student. This was noted by Butts and Cremin:

Reading and religion were combined in the hornbook, which was simply a piece of paper or parchment on which was written the alphabet, some simple syllables, a benediction, and the Lord's Prayer. . . . the child learned his letters through religious materials.8

The textbooks used in this area were the hornbook, the Catechism, the Primer, the Psalter, the Testament, and the Bible. The hornbook was used for beginners, but was replaced by the New England Primer shortly after 1690. The Catechism and the Bible were the next books used, and these constituted the entire range of reading for the pupil. It was not until around 1740 that new textbooks began to appear in which religious material was replaced by more secular matters. One of the first books of this type was Dilworth's A New Guide to the English Tongue, which was a forerunner of Noah Webster's blue backed Spelling Book published in 1733.9 After the first appearance of secular or semi-secular textbooks, the religious and moral content of all readers gradually decreased.

8Ibid., pp. 113-119.

The secondary schools or Latin grammar schools, designed for the upper classes contained an education in the classical languages of Greek and Latin. Since the time of the humanistic revival of the Renaissance, a person who would be called truly educated must have studied ancient languages. Apparently, since the aim of this type of education was formal intellectual preparation, it seems not much emphasis was given to religion as noted by Butts and Cremin:

The curriculum of the Latin school showed little evidence of an emphasis on religion, but . . . much reading was given from the Bible, and probably masters emphasized the religious texts as well as instruction in the catechism.\(^{10}\)

Since the content of education was religious in nature and the pattern of instruction tended toward the direct method especially in the field of moral development of children, an investigation of the place of the teacher in moral education in the colonial period would now be appropriate.

Teachers and moral education during the colonial period. Generally in the colonial period much attention was paid and effort expended to see that the teacher lived up to the expectations of those who controlled education. Butts and Cremin note on this point,

The appointing officers were given the right to inquire into the qualifications of teachers and to see that they did not deviate from community standards whether religious, political or moral.\(^{11}\)

\(^{10}\)Butts and Cremin, p. 123.  
\(^{11}\)Ibid., p. 131.
The essential qualifications for teachers were along religious and civil lines since the control of schools stemmed from civil authorities that were influenced by religious sectarian bodies. Butts and Gremm have given the following: "The three most common requirements of teachers were that they be religiously orthodox, loyal to the civil government and morally acceptable."  

The requirements have a noted absence of educational preparation on the part of teachers. The apparent general feeling of most colonies was that little thought or attention be given teachers in the field of academic achievement. Butts and Gremm have arrived at this conclusion:

Whereas much was made by the public of the religious, political and moral worthiness of their teachers, the public seldom had very high expectations concerning the professional training of teachers.  

In general, the colonial period had a strong emphasis on the moral development of their young. Since the control of education was from civil authorities with influence from religious bodies, the content was by nature religious and moral, and the teacher qualified for his position on the basis of religious, moral, and civil obligations.

Moral Education from 1779 to 1865

This period marked the era when the great state school system

\[12^{\text{Ibid.}} \quad 13^{\text{Ibid., p. 133.}}\]
of contemporary America took form. In 1779, except perhaps for New England, there was little to foreshadow this phenomenal development. What schools did exist were usually local institutions designed to meet the specific needs of small segments of the community. They still served largely to prepare children for religious orthodoxy. Much of the curriculum was removed from the ordinary, everyday life of the people. Furthermore, the schools still reflected and perpetuated a dual class system, with the vernacular elementary school tending to confine itself to the lower class while the Latin secondary school served the upper classes.

This period could generally be classified as a transition time, because the emphasis of education was moving away from religious preparation toward concern with secular matters. This was due first of all to the changing concepts of the aim of education. Several other factors brought about this change: the coming of immigrants, the increasing association with and tolerance of individuals and religious sects toward one another, scientific discoveries, widened intellectual horizons due to books, periodicals, and newspapers, increase in material prosperity, and the separation of church and state.¹⁴

Dominant types of control and support. America during these years forged one of the most revolutionary educational developments of modern time, the public school system. Great debates over who should pay for schools, who should control schools, and what should be taught in the schools echoed in state legislatures and other civil offices.

¹⁴McKown, p. 74.
The country was gradually coming to accept the principle of public controlled education, maintained by public funds. This was a long, hard fought battle. There were different rates of progress toward the goal of public taxation for schools in different parts of the country. Generally, New England, with its colonial traditions of public supported schools, moved rapidly toward compulsory support. The middle states, having displayed less interest in education during the colonial period, moved toward public support somewhat more slowly and grudgingly. The western states received tremendous initial impetus from federal grants for schools; yet their movement toward public support seemed dependent to a great extent on the traditions which their settlers brought with them. Finally, in spite of persistent efforts on the part of educational reformers, the south tended to perpetuate older traditions of private and philanthropic support.15

Horace Mann was an outstanding figure in this period of education. He was secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education from 1831-1843; while in this capacity he strengthened the control of education by the state.

When Horace Mann resigned his secretaryship in 1843, the board had become an established institution in the life of Massachusetts. . . . Functioning within the bounds of a loosely construed grant of authority, it had served to reassert the educational role of the state . . . the state's duty to supervise the efficiency and quality of its schools had been enunciated.16

15 Du Bois and Cronin, p. 244. 16 Ibid., p. 257.
Since the control of the schools was taken out of the hands of the local authorities, religious influence played a smaller part on the life of the school.

Acceptance of the principle of public tax supported schools minimized the influence of local sectarian groups in control over education as a matter of policy. Such exclusion, of course, did not mean the elimination of private and parochial schools. Having accepted the principle, many American people felt driven to the conclusion that if religious teaching could not be carried on in the public school without sectarian strife, therefore it would have to be eliminated. This was noted in the thesis of La Grone: "The bitter jealousies of political unity were prime causes in the decline of religion as an aim in education."

Since the further use in the public schools of an authoritarian religious standard was to be eliminated, many sectarian leaders reluctantly began to view the school as inhospitable to a religious interpretation of morals and began to look elsewhere for teaching religious morals. The Committee on Religion of the American Council on Education states:

In part the reluctance with which the decision was reached, was tempered by the hope that the rising Sunday School movement would supply sufficient cover.

to what was lacking in the public schools.\textsuperscript{13}

Since the control of public schools was moved to the state level and the principle of tax supported schools was accepted, the place that religion and the earlier type of moral instruction had in schools began to diminish and disappear. This exclusion of sectarian values is also seen in the dominant pattern of instruction and content of teaching during this period.

**Dominant patterns of instruction and content of teaching.** Of the many conflicting educational aims vying for support during this period of tremendous expansion, traditional ones tended to dominate the schools. Perhaps the dominant aim of the whole school system from the common school through the university was character and moral development. Other aims of the period were: strengthening the mind's power to reason logically; universal literacy; education for citizenship; vocational and practical competence; and individual success.\textsuperscript{19} Since the aim of a school determines the content and procedures of instruction, the broad aims of education in this period would apparently determine broad curriculum, content, and pattern of instruction.

The threefold ideal of the broad common school curriculum sketched by the educational reformers formed the major guide lines of


\textsuperscript{19}See Butts and Cremin, pp. 267-269 for a discussion of aims of education during 1779 to 1865.
development in the schools during this period. The threefold development was: subjects providing the knowledge and skills necessary to the responsible exercise of citizenship, subjects providing suitable religious and moral training, and subjects providing loyalty to the republic.

Since the state was gaining control of education and the aim of education was broadening in concept, controversy arose over the place of religious moral instruction in the public schools.

Horace Mann displayed overwhelming concern when he saw implications of religious morals in the public school. When he looked for textbooks in teaching in which some common faith was expressed, he found none.

The proposal that each town or school district determine what content should be taught called forth his scornful rebuke:

It is easy to see that the experiment would not stop with having half a dozen conflicting creeds taught by authority of law in the differing schools of the same town or vicinity. Majorities will change in the same place. One sect may have the ascendancy today; another, tomorrow... This year, the everlasting fires of hell will burn to terrify the unrepentent; next year, and without any repentance, its eternal flame will be extinguished, to be rekindled forever, or to be quenched forever as it may be decided at annual town meetings.20

Since moral and spiritual training was seen as inseparable from sectarian religious training, the leadership of Horace Mann was driv-

ing religious sectarian training from the public school room.

Even though Horace Mann was beginning to put religious sectarian instruction out of the public school, he favored ethical education. Because of this Mann would be at home with the present day advocate of moral instruction in the public schools as a way of life. The Committee on Religious Education stated:

Mann forwarded moral and ethical instruction in the schools to the fullest extent possible without invading those rights of conscience which are established by the laws of God and guaranteed as by the state. . . . about this he said, "against a tendency to these extremes, the beautiful and sublime truth of ethics and natural religion have a poising power."\footnote{21}

The hope of Horace Mann that a body of commonly accepted religious beliefs be taught in the schools was not realized during his day. The point to be stressed is that the intent of the movement which Mann led was not to exclude all moral subject matter from the educational process as carried on under public auspices; instead, Mann sought to eliminate sectarian teaching. The decline of the content of morality in instruction is apparently seen in Parkin's investigation of the moral and religious content of 1,291 American school readers, covering the period of 1776 to 1920:\footnote{22}

\begin{align*}
1716 \text{ to } 1736 & \ 100 \text{ per cent moral and religious emphasis} \\
1736 \text{ to } 1725 & \ 50 \text{ per cent moral and religious emphasis} \\
1825 \text{ to } 1830 & \ 21 \text{ per cent moral and religious emphasis} \\
1916 \text{ to } 1920 & \ 5 \text{ per cent moral and religious emphasis}
\end{align*}

\footnote{21}(American Council on Education, p. 3.} \footnote{22}(McKown, p. 74.)
Apparently the religious moral content of instruction was declining in the public schools because the aim of education was broadening and control was removed from local levels that could be influenced by sectarian bodies to state level. The decline of teaching a religious concept of morality is also apparently seen through an investigation of the place of teachers in the public school.

Teachers and moral education. One key to the efficiency of any educational system is always the teacher. During the era under consideration there were few of the well-planned texts, the workbooks, the reference guides and libraries, the play equipment and comfortable physical facilities which today lighten the burden of the average teacher. Then as always, but even more so, a good teacher meant a good school and a poor teacher a poor school. Obviously, with tremendous expansion of the facilities and scope of education, the problem of securing adequate teachers became central.

One factor that stimulated the increased use of young women as teachers during this period grew out of district control of public schools. All too often, districts were concerned with one thing in the management of schools—economy. During the first part of the nineteenth century women were paid less salary than men. This apparently influenced their use as school teachers.

A second factor to influence teachers in this period was the prevalence of the Jacksonian concept of public office, that is, anyone could hold any office with little or no training as qualification.
Quite often the teacher was simply the daughter or some other unmarried female relative of the district prudentialman. She had completed the common school, and in a very limited number of instances she had attended a local academy for a short period of time.\textsuperscript{23}

With little qualifications on the part of the teacher, school keeping rather than school teaching was seemingly an implanted tradition.

Apparently the only qualification for school teachers during this period of time was good character, as notes Butts and Cremin, "good moral character was principal—often the only qualification for the post."\textsuperscript{24} If, as educational historians argue, the teacher was the key to the program of instruction in this period, then the qualification of the teacher to provide moral instruction was central to a program of moral development in the young. Evidence seems to suggest that many teachers were poorly qualified in this period. The teacher typically resorted to hearing lessons and provided little help beyond that to be found in the textbook. They worked in an environment where moral instruction was minimized by default rather than through conscious effort to ignore. In this relative vacuum, the older order of religious morals tended to be replaced by a secular order of morals.

The Expansion of American Education—1865 to 1945

The years following the Civil War witnessed a phenomenal expansion of the American Educational System. In effect, schools grew from

\textsuperscript{23} Butts and Cremin, p. 286. \textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
an uncertain infancy in 1865 into maturity by 1945. During this time a vast majority of American children attended elementary schools for some shorter or longer periods of their youth. Professional training institutions were coming into existence. New institutions such as junior high schools and junior colleges were established to meet the needs of specific groups of individuals. Compulsory school attendance brought many of the young of this country to the schools and with them a new concept in education. Preparation for trade and vocation increasingly became a part of high school programs. Active training for self-expression and citizenship entered the halls of schools which had formerly devoted themselves largely to transmitting knowledge and moral precept.

Dominant controls and organization of education. The control of education in this period apparently remained in the hands of the state, as was the tendency in the preceding period. The state exercised control of schools by making laws regarding compulsory attendance in this period of time. "Compulsory attendance requirements, established by two states prior to the Civil War, were universal by 1918." Compulsory attendance brought a host of new problems to the public school. Thousands of recalcitrant or slow-witted children, who in former times would have dropped out of school in the normal course of events, now became the responsibility of the school for the minimum attendance required. Moreover, the school was now forced to enroll many new groups of children for whom the traditional program had no particular meaning, use, or appeal. In effect, the burden of

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25 Ibid., p. 415.
compulsory attendance tended to force differentiation of school purposes and curricula in order that the different educational needs of a heterogeneous school population might be met.

Compulsory attendance had deep effects on the moral instruction in the school. No longer could morals be expressed as a concept of small sectarian groups. Apparently, morals had to be expressed in terms of the majority of the American public. Those who tended to advocate religious moral instruction in the public schools did not surrender the public classroom for teaching sectarian values without a fight. After the Civil War many court decisions affected moral instruction in public school. Butts and Cronin summarize some of these decisions:

Some courts ruled that the Bible was not sectarian instruction provided it was read without comment and students who objected were excused from taking part. Such decision obviously reflected the feeling that nonsectarian religious teaching was essential in a school program.

Other courts, however, held that reading the King James Bible—a sectarian version in the eyes of Catholics and Jews, and non-believers—violated freedom of conscience, was thereby unconstitutional, and should therefore be prohibited.26

Since morals could not obviously be expressed in terms of sectarian bodies, a great area of training in the lives of schools was neglected. This neglect became apparent to those in place of educational leadership. The United States Commissioner of Education Harris stated in 1892:

26Butts and Cronin, p. 436.
Religious education has almost ceased in the public schools and is rapidly disappearing from the program of colleges and preparatory schools. At present, on examination of the legal provision of the reading of the Bible in the public schools, we find that in only a few states is permitted the formal reading of the Bible and the recitation of the Lord's Prayer. The general situation seems to be that the law permits the reading of the Bible in most schools if no one objects, but forbids if an objection is raised.  

Many American educators seemed to recognize the spiritual need of children as they also recognized that American schools were not teaching religious morals. These began to examine the question—what can be done by the public schools to teach morals? The suggestions of Horace Mann that morals be centered around citizenship and a basic non-sectarian group of commonly accepted values began to find its way into the thinking of educators. Mann had given birth to his concept of morality, some fifty to seventy-five years before the public of America was apparently ready to receive it.

Charles De Garmo, in 1892, advocated the need of moral instruction through three channels of studies, since, as he stated,

The almost universal interest in ethical training leads to the conclusion that our former standpoint of mere intellectuality in school education is being shifted to one that takes more cognizance of developing moral character.

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27W. F. Harris, Report of 1892 to the National Education Association, p. 10.

28American Council on Education, p. 3.

The three groups of studies that he recommended were: (1) a humanistic core of studies having a distinct ethical content in literature and history, (2) a group of nature studies having no specific ethical content, and (3) an economic core of studies emphasizing man's relations with the past in order to build for the future with the universal study of geography to bind these three together. 

This statement was one of the first by advocates for moral education without a sectarian orientation. Later in 1894, De Garmo again deplored the lack of moral instruction in the schools and, after stressing its importance suggested that it be developed in connection with the regular subjects of the curriculum, especially social sciences.

Dominant patterns of instruction and content of teaching. Morals.

In spite of growing attacks on traditional conceptions of human nature and learning, religious-moral development and mental discipline apparently remained paramount aims well into the twentieth century. In opposition to the precept of moral training in the American school was the idea that citizenship education was intimately bound up with moral development.

Since the concept of morals as citizenship training and morals as religious standards were in vigorous opposition to each other in this period, attention is now directed to the efforts which were made

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30 Ibid.

to develop a concept and a content for teaching morals for use in the public schools of America.

**Development of the concept and content for teaching morals in the public schools.** Regardless of the causes of the decline of religious moral instruction in the public schools of America, the educational world during this time was confronted with many problems regarding the status of moral training in schools. The philosophy of education was apparently in process of change. In the abundance of literature on the teaching of morals, opinions varied. There were those who held a more traditional view of morals who tended to hold an authoritarian standard as valid. Those who held that morals, whether religious or secular, should be taught with conventional classroom techniques. Of this philosophy, Palmer stands as a spokesman:

In systematic teaching of ethics in the classroom lies the best means for enlarging the moral influence of the school. This belief expressed itself in the provision of regular courses in "morals and manners," "ethics and behavior," "civics," and the like.\(^{32}\)

This particular type of philosophy apparently has its outworking in teaching moral facts in much the same way land facts are taught in geography. This implies a conventional, disciplined classroom, as Palmer describes:

That school where neatness, courtesy, simplicity obtain; where enthusiasm goes with mental exactness, thoroughness of work with interest and absence of ar-

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Rudimentary with refinement; where sneak, liars, loafers, pretenders, rough persons are despised, while teachers who refuse to be mechanical held away--that school is engaged in moral training all day long. 33

At the same time, a new philosophy in the field of moral training was apparently coming into the picture. Morals generally no longer had to do with keeping a standard. Moral education was apparently a way of life and training for citizenship. In 1909 John Dewey spoke out against the traditional school of moral philosophy in suggesting a new type of moral training for students.

We need to see that moral principles are not arbitrary, that they are not "transcendental", that the term "moral" does not designate a special region or portion of life. We need to translate the moral into the conditions and forces of our community life, and into impulses and habits of the individual. 34

Educators who were interested in character education felt the impetus of demands occasioned by the fact that many children with spiritual and moral needs, who were forced by compulsory attendance laws to attend school, be taught commonly accepted values and be prepared for citizenship. The impetus of demands that children be given moral instruction along with the compulsory attendance laws led many educators and others to demand citizenship training. Out of these demands grew the public school classes of citizenship and manners.

33 Ibid., p. 41.
A survey made by Elvin H. Fishback\textsuperscript{35} in 1923 on the status of moral education in the United States and its territories revealed that seventeen states, three territories, and the District of Columbia had state requirements regarding character education. Twelve states did not have state requirements, but reported that this instruction was carried on in cities and school units. Eighteen states reported no character education of any kind. One state did not report.

In 1936, the Bureau of Cooperative Research, Indiana University\textsuperscript{36} sent out a questionnaire to the state superintendents of public instruction requesting answers to the three following questions:

1. Do you have a state course in character education?
   
   (Or religious or moral education?)
   
2. Has your state published a bulletin on character education?

3. Does your state require of its teachers any character education courses as a requisite for teaching?

There was a 100 per cent response to this questionnaire which revealed the status of character education in the public schools of the United States in 1936. The answers to the three questions made possible the following information:

1. There was no manifest opposition to character education


\textsuperscript{36}Henry L. Smith, R. S. McElhinney, and G. P. Steele, "Character Development through Religion and Moral Education in the Public Schools of the United States," \textit{Bulletin of the School of Education}, Indiana University, Vol. XIII, No. 3 (June, 1937), pp. 27-34.
in the public schools of any of the states.

(2) With respect to the general work of character education the states were divided into four groups: seven states required character education; thirteen states had definite courses in it, but did not require it; twelve states taught it indirectly; and seventeen permitted it.

(3) No state required a general course in character education as a requisite for teaching.

This survey tended to show that the public schools of the United States seemed to be giving more attention to the matter of character education than was the case earlier in the century. Apparent progress in the nine years since Fishback's survey could be seen. A new philosophy in public education had largely brought about new interest in teaching morals in the public school.

Development of the Direct Method of Teaching Morals

In 1909, the Character Development League of New York City initiated a plan using as its basis the biographies of great men. A book written especially for this purpose included biographies and pictures. Different traits were suggested for each grade in training examples.

In 1914 the Pathfinders of America, an organization unique in

that it had no official connection with the public school and founded by J. F. Wright, mirrored the belief that character education should be recognized as a special subject with special teachers in just the same way as any other school subject. In general the plan consisted of a basic talk by one of the trained teachers on such topics as, "Be faithful to yourself," "The guide of life," "How to be happy," followed by a meeting of pupils under their own leadership to discuss and make application of the points mentioned in the address.

Codes of morality were common during the early part of this century. Perhaps the best known of these was the Hutchins code which appeared in 1916. The code's own excellence and the publicity which it received as the winner of the $5,000 prize offered by an anonymous donor through the Character Education Institution commend it to many people. This code is composed of eleven "laws". Among these was the law of self-control, the law of good health, the law of kindness, the law of duty, and the law of loyalty. Daily discussion periods of ten to fifteen minutes were recommended for public school to communicate these values.

In 1924, Superintendent Burke of the Boston Schools, with the assistance of ministers and teachers, developed a "Course in Citizenship through Character Development." In this plan, fifteen minutes a day were used for the presentation and discussion of each character trait; two weeks are devoted to a trait. The apparent object of this

course was to install an objective standard in students.

During the 1920's pupil manuals were developed in many of the large school systems for use in moral instruction. The Pittsburgh Plan developed morals by emphasizing one major trait each year, such as, loyalty and ambition. Traits were emphasized by stories, illustrations, and questions. The twelve booklets were called "Guideposts to Character."[38, 39]

"Character Education," a manual for the teachers of Oregon, gave specific emphasis to the progressive nature of a virtue. Seventy-five traits were classified into three columns which represented three successive stages of development. The first column was for the primary child, the second for the intermediate child, and the third column for the upper grades. In the last column would be the ultimate character objective. For instance, obedience in the first column, conformity in the second column, and cooperation in the last. [40]

The workbook idea on moral training of children came into use in the 1930's. This new means of teaching morals generally placed a manual in the hand of each student to help instruct him in character education. An example of this is to be found in "Conduct Problems for the Junior High School Grades," set A (1930) and set B (1931). [41, 42]

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[38] Guideposts to Character, Pittsburgh Public Schools, American Book Company, 1926.


Each of these sets contained fifty problems for discussion. A short incident was related and significant questions were asked, the answers to which were written in the manual by the students. These answers, it seems, were discussed in homeroom, and the pupil's final reaction was recorded.

Apparently, the workbook idea of teaching morals marked the beginning of the end in direct methods of teaching morals to the public school pupil. Although some teachers may have still applied the direct method of teaching morals, this approach was well on its way to extinction by the time of the second World War.

Development of the Indirect Method of Teaching Morals

The indirect method of teaching morals was introduced shortly before the beginning of the present century. The idea spread and was embraced in more and more schools as the indirect method came into vogue, and the nature of morality came to be considered pragmatic and operational, not systematic and subject to direct examination.

In nearly all schools this indirect method is now more or less closely related to opportunities for democratic living. Consideration is not directed to a desirable character trait as in the direct method, but rather with a setting or situation in which it, or its opposite, must be actually practiced. The indirect method of teaching morals is best demonstrated by the typical student council or a similar organization by some other name. Consequently, a very brief outline of the high spots of the history of the student government will give insight into the development of indirect method.
In 1896, Wilson L. Gill organized "The School Republic" in one of the schools in the lower side of New York. Each room was organized as a complete city with all the officers and committees usually found in municipal government, each of which had its particular responsibility in connection with certain activities of the room and the pupil citizen within the room. This organization permeated the entire school and was designed to teach children, indirectly, the moral framework into which he would be graduated. Teaching values indirectly through the student council was a revolution from the past method of teaching morals.

The extent to which pupil government grew, and hence indirect instruction of values and morals, can be seen in three subsequent surveys. In 1925, C. O. Davis made a study of high schools of the North Central Association and found that 39.3 per cent of them had "pupil government," and that 53.7 had teacher-pupil council. Joseph Roemer in 1927 made a similar investigation in the Southern Association and found the percentage to be 45% and 55% respectively. Earle Rugg, after an investigation of 191 schools selected at random, estimated that 90% of them were "making an effort to teach morals indirectly through the movement."

Also during this period came the homeroom idea for the teaching of morals in an indirect way. The homeroom period had the same aim

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42/ NcKown, p. 35.
as the guidance program, and that was to help students in their self-
development and self-direction. The homeroom and guidance program
had a direct bearing on teaching morals in the public schools in an
indirect manner.

Summary

An investigation of the selected literature concerning moral
education during the Colonial period revealed that the control and
organization of education was in the hands of civil authorities
during this period. Since civil authorities were influenced greatly
by sectarian religious bodies, moral instruction had a prominent place
in classroom teaching. The content of education was religious in na-
ture, and the pattern of instruction tended toward the direct method
in the field of moral development of children. The teacher was ex-
pected to exemplify morality and qualified for his position by reli-
gious orthodoxy, moral character, and civil obligations.

The data revealed that during the period of time from 1779 to
1865 the control of public schools was moved to the state level, and
the principle of tax supported schools was accepted. By nature, this
excluded sectarian influence from the public schools, and sectarian
instruction in values began to diminish. The aim of education began
to widen, and the religious content of education declined. Profes-
sional qualifications remained low in the teaching profession, but
character qualifications continued basic to the position.

An investigation of the Expansion of American Education--1865
to 1945 revealed that educators realized spiritual needs of pupils were not being met in the schools. The expulsion of the instruction of sectarian morality from the classroom and compulsory attendance laws caused this observation by educators. Many began to advocate a secular type of morality. Still many advocated teaching an authoritarian type of morality. The first thirty years of the twentieth century revealed two methods of teaching morality, the direct and indirect method. The development of a pragmatic concept of morality brought an end to the direct method of teaching morals.

After World War II, the curricula of American schools did not show direct evidence of moral instruction, and our nation was in a period of moral rearmament. This brought accusations that the public schools were "godless." Much literature appeared defending and accusing the schools. The next chapter will be concerned with a selected portion of that literature.
CHAPTER III

THE DEFINITION OF MORAL

In this chapter an effort has been made to summarize the nature of the concept, moral, as it has been elaborated in the selected literature. Specifically, the data have been examined in order to find answers to the following questions:

(1) What do those who advocate the teaching of morals mean when use is made of the term morals?

(2) What reasons are given by those who advocate the teaching of morals that support their advocacy of such an instructional program?

(3) According to those who advocate the teaching of morals, what specific aims are deemed to be met by a program of instruction in morals?

As each of these three questions is analyzed, an effort will be made to identify the basic philosophic orientation which is reflected toward morals. In making this analysis, categories employed in the system of classification will be: (1) narrow morality; (2) authoritarian morals; (3) pragmatic morality. These are described briefly before attention is given to the materials on morals which have been prepared by various organizations in the National Education Association.
Phenix has noted in his book, *Philosophy of Education*, that there are at least three conceptions of morality. The first of these he has called the popular conception. About this he writes:

In popular conception the idea of morality is a highly specific and restricted concept. It is customarily used primarily in connection with sexual behavior. A person who abides by certain approved codes governing sex is called moral and one who acts contrary to these codes is called immoral.\(^1\)

By this narrow definition most of human experience would be apparently non-moral since it would not be concerned with sexual matters. In this investigation, the term *narrow morality* will be used to designate this conception of morality. The next conception of morality stems out of philosophic tradition. Of this thinking on morality, Phenix writes:

A somewhat more sophisticated conception of the moral associates the term with compliance with a code of conduct covering a broader field than sex. A moral person is one who does right, according to the approved standard. Or more frequently, he is identified as one who does not do wrong.\(^2\)

This broader scope is used to classify educators, as many term morals in this manner. The term *authoritarian morals* will be used to convey meaning to those who advocate the teaching of this type of morals.


\(^2\)Ibid.
The third conception of morals described by Phenix is that of the broad view, as he terms it:

According to the broad view, moral judgments are not gambling, drinking and murder, but one relevant also to such matters as choice of friends, selection of occupation and manner of pursuing it, participation in civic offices, and decisions about recreation.3

It seems that this comprehensive definition extends to include every area of human experience. None of life is non-moral, but morality under this conception includes all of life; therefore, the terms used to designate this orientation to morality will be pragmatic morality.

In 1951, the Educational Policies Commission asserted, "The American people have a right to expect the schools of this country to teach moral and spiritual values."4 Since this statement was intended to be a serious and clear declaration of what people have a right to expect, it seems likely that the meaning of the terms, moral and spiritual, were clearly understood by those responsible for the preparation of the statement. What, then, did those who prepared this statement mean?

A briefer definition of the term, moral, appears to be involved in the statement, "moral values are seen as those having consequences

3Ibid.

chiefly in social relationships." While this attempt at definition fails to tell us what morals are, it does tell us what morals do. If morals function so as to have consequences in social relationships, the question as to the particular consequences to be expected remains to be specified.

Perhaps it was intended that the particular passage above should be taken along with another passage which states the following:

By moral and spiritual values we mean those values which, when applied in human behavior, exalt and refine life and bring it into accord with the standards of conduct that are approved in our democratic culture.

Since the term spiritual is defined along with the term moral in the above passage, it might be inferred that the two are perceived as having the same or similar meaning. Use of the term moral as a type of value actually places the focus on values rather than on morals. Furthermore, it would appear that those values that have the quality of being moral in nature are those which, while they "exalt and refine life," actually are grounded in "standards of conduct that are approved in a democratic culture." In other words, those values that are moral in nature are values that grow out of an unspecified system of approval that is assumed to be operative in our culture. To know

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moral values, then, one would need to know what our culture is. Just what our culture consists of is left unspecified.

In 1945, the Department of Elementary School Principals announced the plan to publish a yearbook in which spiritual values would be discussed. The announcement sought to identify and define what was meant by the term spiritual value. The definition of spiritual values in the twenty-sixth yearbook, published in 1947, added nothing to the definition published earlier. This lack of added definition is acknowledged in the Foreword to the Yearbook.

This yearbook adds little theory to the current discussion of this question . . . the point of view it represents was stated in announcing the book in 1945. Those values which, when attained, make a finer person, are spiritual values.7

While this definition fails to tell us what values are, it does tell us what they do. If spiritual values are in operation, the opinion is concluded that values will make a finer person.

Later in the yearbook another definition of spiritual values is attempted:

The idea of spiritual values may be associated with the idea of living on a high plane . . . They represent spiritual values that are to be attained by good living in the natural world. Ideals of justice and cooperation, love of beauty, intellectual curiosity—such values and appreciation develop in human living.8


At the most, this definition tells us that spiritual values represent living on a high plane. Again, this definition tends toward ambiguity and adds little to the first concept. Finally, the authors of the yearbook state, "Efforts to be more explicit as to what is meant by spiritual values led into the dangerous path of trying to catalog qualities, and they never cover the field."  

Since the concept of moral and spiritual values as defined by those who represent official organizations of the National Education Association is vague by their own admission and apparently by their efforts to define, it may be well to turn to other and indirect means which might show just what is involved in the concept of morals.

The Reasons Why Morals Should be Taught

In this portion of the investigation, attention is devoted to the question—what conditions are said to exist that make the teaching of morals necessary? The Educational Policies Commission has noted:

The development of moral and spiritual values is basic to all other educational objectives. Education un-inspired by moral and spiritual values is directionless. Values unapplied in human behavior are empty.  

In effect the statement notes that morals should be taught because the objectives of the school demand instruction in values. Implied in this statement is the idea that a philosophy about moral and

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9Ibid. 10Educational Policies Commission, pp. 6-7.
spiritual values will give meaning to what would otherwise be meaningless. This statement cannot be classified in regard to orientation to a concept of morals, because both those who tend to take the authoritarian concept and those who take the pragmatic definition of moral would advocate teaching morals in keeping with their particular philosophy of education. In this statement whatever is done apparently has some moral value implicit in it, though what the value is cannot be specified.

Apparently the next reason why morals should be taught is "education in moral and spiritual values . . . can furnish a yardstick against which any future problem may be measured." Generally, the Commission is saying, a sure grasp of problems along with the relevant values of American society and a deep loyalty to these values will be needed to meet future problems. Teaching morals so that young people may better meet the future is at most a vague and general reason for instruction in values in our school. Still left out of the account is just what problems pupils will later encounter and what yardstick will be needed in encounters with these problems. Perhaps the vagueness of reasons why morals should be taught merely leads to explanations that are also vague.

The next apparent reason given by the Educational Policies Commission for moral education in our schools is because "many Americans, at one time or another, find it difficult to reconcile their accepted moral values with the realities of a distorted world." This general

\[\text{11Ibid.} \quad \text{12Ibid., p. 6.}\]
statement implies that many Americans already have a system of morals which is not in accord with realities. Giving recognition to the fact that many already have accepted moral values would tend to place the Educational Policies Commission with those holding the broad concept of morality, because they would say morals are pragmatic in their origin, gathered from all of life's experiences, and are sound when they are in harmony with life. If many Americans already have moral values and these moral values are out of harmony with the way of life that surrounds them, the nature of the harmony between values and surrounding conditions must be understood. Is it necessary, in order to have this harmony, to change the conditions or to change the moral values? Perhaps it is an authoritarian type of morals that is not in keeping with the realities of a disordered world. Perhaps the surrounding way of life is authoritarian. Should the morality be authoritarian to maintain harmony? Is a new system of morality implied, or is there a need of a change in the society of the public schools? The answers to these questions are not provided.

The next apparent reason given by the Educational Policies Commission for teaching morals is linked with results of the Second World War. Instruction in moral values is apparently needed to correct the evils growing out of this struggle.

Part of the current confusion on moral issues stems from the fact that the Second World War tended to blunt or distort ethical sensitivities. Most of us felt obliged to surrender the responsibility for far reaching moral decisions... Still the war and the events associated with
it left a great task of moral reconstruction.\textsuperscript{13}

By pointing to the past and showing certain conditions that apparently dulled man's system of moral sensitivity, the commission is stating man's capacity for morality must be increased. The commission is implying that man had a system of morality, but the effects of war left it incapacitated and now apparently a new way of morality must be established.

The Educational Policies Commission attempted an investigation of the dimension of modern political and economic institutions and, from the needs found in its study, gave this area of life as a reason for instruction of morality in the public schools.

Conditions of work in industrial society have, in many cases, lessened the sense of responsibility and diminished the satisfying pride of craftsmanship. Comparable developments in political life have tended to weaken the sense of civic duty of many citizens. Feeling that his actions do not really matter, he may become indifferent to the moral choices which confront him as worker and citizen.\textsuperscript{14}

In effect, the Commission has said that to insure that the worker and citizen is neither indifferent nor unsatisfied, he must have a developing group of values, as a corrective influence in a society that does not at present have these values in sufficient degree. This would apparently be a positive constructive system of values, that would tend to reflect a pragmatic concept of morality rather than a negative sys-

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 9. \hspace{1cm}\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 10.
ten of values that sometimes result from use of authoritarian morality.

The next reason given by the Educational Policies Commission has to do with the home and family life.

Social changes affecting relationship between the sexes complicate the problem of developing moral and spiritual values in young people. For instance, the increased emphasis on sex in advertising, theatre, cinema and elsewhere is of dubious value for young people. Another change is the frequency of divorce and desertion. Disturbed family relationships are bound to distort the sense of values of all members of the family, and especially the children.  

Generally speaking, the Commission is expressing an eclectic point of view with this reason for teaching morality in the public schools. Sex in advertising, divorce, and family disturbance could be viewed as failure to keep the standard in society, and the implication could be drawn that the Commission is in favor of replacing authoritarian values. However, family, divorce, and advertising suggest a way of life, and the implication of teaching morals is directed at improving the way of life. Hence, deplorable conditions in the present way of life are reason enough to teach youngsters morality.

The conflict between Communism and democracy is next given as a reason why the schools ought to teach morality. The Commission states,

In a sense, the division in the world is also a divi-

\[\text{ibid.}, \ p. \ 11.\]
cision in each person. If there are not developed in men some inner moral restraints strong enough to control their impulses toward power and brutality, the alternative appears to be the rule of the strong over the weak... in the last analysis it always has been a problem in moral and spiritual development.\textsuperscript{16}

In effect, the Commission has said, Americans must have a strong sense of moral development, if they are to overcome the threat of Communism. Democracy, as opposed to Communism, is a way of life, and the core of pragmatic morality is democratic living. The society must express itself in values that are grounded in standards of conduct that are approved in a democratic culture. Apparently then, the society, expressing an unspecified system of approval that is said to be operative in our culture, is one of the basic reasons for teaching morality. The Commission has summed up this argument: "No society can survive without a moral order. A system of moral and spiritual values is indispensable to group living."\textsuperscript{17}

The Educational Policies Commission has noted yet another major reason for teaching morals to students: "The need for common moral principles becomes imperative, especially in a society which cherishes the greatest possible degree of individual freedom."\textsuperscript{18} This statement implies that the individual in a democratic society has certain freedoms. The guarantee of these freedoms is founded in the basic worth and right of every individual to mature in every area of life to the maximum of personal limits. If individual personality is su-

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 12. \textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p. 2. \textsuperscript{18}Ibid., p. 4.
prome, each person should feel responsible for the consequences of his own conduct, as notes the Commission, "Moral responsibility and self discipline are morals of maturity."19 Since man is guaranteed basic freedom and this implies responsibility, then individual moral training is apparently necessary for every individual pupil in the public school.

Kizer has noted that the individual rights and worth of the individual are apparent basic reasons for teaching morality in the schools.

The ideal is a life wherein the individual person is living to the fullest of his capacities as an individual and wherein each well adjusted person finds himself a valuable member of the group. Therefore, it behooves schoolmen to mould all intangibles of values to the individual personality.20

The Educational Policies Commission says conditions that make moral instruction necessary are: (1) human behavior is empty without moral values; (2) because there are likely to be future problems, moral instruction will be needed to deal with these issues; (3) at present the world is distorted in its value system; moral instruction will reduce this distortion; (4) World War II has blunted and distorted ethical sensitivities; moral instruction will sharpen and rectify ethical sensitivity; (5) lack of a sense of civic duty and

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19 Ibid., p. 19.

indifferent moral choices are now being made by our people; moral instruction will help Americans accept their civic responsibility; (6) home and family relationships are disturbed; moral instruction will reduce the disturbance in these relationships; (7) Communism and democracy are locked in a bitter struggle; moral instruction will give American people stability to stand against a philosophy of life detrimental to their own; (8) since our country recognized the worth of the individual, moral instruction will enable each individual to develop to the maximum of his personal limits.

Pragmatic morality is apparently involved in the reasons given for teaching morality in the public schools, because values find their meaning in society and experience rather than in an objective standard.

The Ends Served by Instruction of Morals

In this portion of the investigation, attention is devoted to the question—what results are expected if moral instruction is provided in the public schools?

Purposes of general education have been recognized as having their foundation in moral and spiritual values. The Educational Policies Commission declared:

Every statement of educational purposes, including this one [moral education] depends upon the judgment of some person or group as to what is good and that is bad, that is true and what is false, what is ugly and what is beautiful, and what is valuable and what is worthless,
in conduct of human affairs.\textsuperscript{21}

Apparently, it can be implied that educational purposes reflect the judgments of people on moral standards. Thus which, out of their intelligence and experience, the people declare to be good, they will attempt to maintain and perpetuate. Educational purposes as a whole strive to transmit what is thought to be good for all the generations to come.

However, educational purposes in the field of moral development are seen by the statement of the Educational Policies Commission some years later:

> The public schools must increase their effort to equip each child and youth in their care with a sense of values which will lend dignity and direction to whatever else he may learn.\textsuperscript{22}

This was a serious and clear declaration of what ends would be served by instruction in morals. It seems likely that values, when established in students, were clearly understood by the Commission. Implied in the statement is the fact that the essential values of American life as seen by the Educational Policies Commission must be determined before arriving at what results are expected from moral instruction.


\textsuperscript{22} Educational Policies Commission, p. 13.
The Educational Policies Commission, after an examination, apparently arrived at some basis on which to ground these essential values of American culture that make up our way of life:

In spite of relapses and variations in practice... there is a generally accepted body of values which the American people tend to use as a compass for finding their way through political, social, economic, and personal issues.\(^{23}\)

These essential values would apparently be the aim of moral instruction as conceived by the Educational Policies Commission. The Commission feels the aim of moral instruction is determined before teaching in values begins rather than moral being seen as implicit in each act. In effect, the Commission is setting up its own "Ten Commandments" as a guide to moral instruction and behavior. The Commission has stated these essential values as: (1) human personality—the basic value; (2) moral responsibility; (3) institutions as servants of man; (4) common consensus; (5) devotion to truth; (6) respect for excellence; (7) moral equality; (8) brotherhood; (9) the pursuit of happiness; (10) spiritual enrichment.\(^{24}\)

In defining the ends served by morals, the Commission was vague and tended toward a pragmatic morality. The reasons for teaching morality were based on a definition of morality, and apparently supported the basic definition of morality. However, in stating what ends should be served by instruction in morality, the Educational Policies Commission has apparently contributed standards to which

\(^{23}\)Ibid., p. 17. \(^{24}\)Ibid., pp. 17-30.
students can readily conform. These standards which suggest authoritarian bases contradict the pragmatic outlook reflected in the reasons why morals should be taught.

Summary

Data in this chapter show that the term moral as used in the selected literature is vaguely defined at best. Apparently that which is moral is seen as being implicit in each act. Specifically, what aspect of each act is moral is not described.

Since the term moral, at the level of explicit definition, was vague, the data were examined to discover implicit definitions of morality. Two approaches to this type definition were attempted. One approach was to examine the reasons why morals should be taught. A second approach was to examine the aims of moral instruction.

An examination of the reasons why morals should be taught revealed eight conditions which could be improved through moral instruction. These ranged from concern with the individual as an individual to concern with the broadest type of social ills which were seen to exist in American society. In all cases the nature of that morality which was recommended was fundamentally pragmatic in nature.

An investigation of the aims of morality revealed ten essential values of American life. Since the aim of instruction in morality sees morals as a way of life, the ten essential values would apparently be the aim for instruction in the public school. The aim of that morality which was fundamentally recommended was authoritarian in na-
ture and inconsistent with previous definitions suggested by the Educational Policies Commission.
CHAPTER IV

THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, THE TEACHER, CONTENT,
AND PROCEDURES IN MORAL INSTRUCTION

In this chapter an investigation in the literature of the Na-
tional Education Association will be attempted to answer the question,
what do the advocates of teaching morals say ought to be done in the
public schools with regard to teaching morals? Answering this ques-
tion would imply other questions to be discussed:

(1) What shall be the organizational structure of the public
school for teaching morals?

(2) Who shall teach morals?

(3) What content and procedures should be used in teaching
morality?

The Necessary Organizational Structure for Teaching
Morals in the Public Schools

Basic to any plan of instruction is an organizational structure
which will assist in accomplishing the objectives of the program. An
investigation of the selected literature of the National Education As-
sociation seems to show an absence of discussion of the place and plan
of organization to be employed in teaching morality in the public
schools. What may account for this apparent silence?
Perhaps the answer to this silence on the organizational aspect of the school as it relates to morality is seen in Chapter II of this thesis. It may be remembered from that chapter that the control, procedures, and authority in education was traced from the colonial period to 1945. Apparently the advocates of moral instruction have reconciled themselves to the existing control of education as established in the past century. The Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association shows its acceptance of present controls over education by stating:

The public schools of the United States are created and regulated by law. They are financed from the public purse. Their policies are determined by public officials who are selected, directly or indirectly by the people. These schools are public in terms of control and support as well as availability to all.\(^1\)

By acceptance of the present control in administration, procedures, and policies of operation of the public school, it seems that the Educational Policies Commission is implying that there are no recommendations to make concerning changing of administrative and organizational framework for teaching morality.

By acceptance of the present control of schools, the advocates of teaching morals apparently are reconciled to the fact of making use of the present structure for instruction in values. Jensen has taken this point of view:

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Each school must develop its own moral program based upon a frank recognition of the political, economic and religious makeup of the community it serves and upon the staff resources at its disposal.²

Since this is apparently the type of control in public schools, the part educators can play is by suggestion. The mechanism of suggestion could be through national organizations of those educators for their part in control of teaching morals in the public schools. As notes one advocate of teaching morals, "Certainly the thinking of such groups who have expressed an interest in these values should be utilized in establishing a program."³

Since there is apparently an absence of recommendation leading to fundamental reorganization and new control over schools, what are the suggestions made by national organizations pertaining to organizations for moral instruction? For the most part, the suggestions have to do with enrichment of the present curriculum and activities on the administrative level, as is suggested by the Educational Policies Commission,

The procedure most likely to be effective in the teaching of moral and spiritual values is to weave these concepts into the entire life of the school and to make them a vital part of all subjects of instruction in the school program.⁴


³Ibid.

⁴Educational Policies Commission, p. 59.
This program of enrichment of the school curriculum and activities, which was designed to teach morality, is spelled out by the Commission as "Every classroom, every teacher, every activity makes its contribution, plus or minus, to the understanding and appreciation of moral values."\(^5\)

The next problem to consider in the organizational structure of teaching morals in the public schools, arising out of the suggestions by national organizations, would be—is there any effort to get changes in legislature by these organizations? The majority of educational groups by the absence of suggestion in this field have shown that they have accepted the present control of education. However, some private foundations and minority religions would like to enact legislature to change the control of education to allow a different concept of morality to be taught in the public schools.

The Place of Teachers in Moral Education

Since the ultimate success of a program to develop moral and spiritual values depends largely on the teacher, an attempt was made to investigate the literature of the National Education Association to find the answers to the questions, (1) what shall be the preparation of teachers who teach morals? (2) what shall be the standard for teachers who have to deal with developing moral values in pupils?

stated, "The institutions which educate teachers should give full recognition to these values in their curricular."  

This statement is vague and almost meaningless because it lacks direction and definition. What type of morality is to be taught teachers is not clear from the statement. The meaning could be the limited scope of professional morality or expanded to a concept of pragmatic morality. Also lacking in the concept of the Educational Policies Commission is what end would be served by the instruction of morality in public schools.

The research department of the National Education Association is equally vague about teacher training.

The association recommends that teacher education institutions and inservice programs stress consistently the methods thru which the values may be developed.  

In effect, the research division is suggesting that methods be stressed by teacher training schools on the development of moral values. Although the method is not identified, the principle is implied that, if teachers learn the method in which morality develops, then the teacher will be equipped to develop his own morality. Apparently, teachers, by learning the method of developing morality in their own lives, will be better equipped to help children establish, refine, and redefine their values. This type of moral education for teachers

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6Ibid., p. 55.

does not reflect an authoritarian framework.

In regard to personal morality of teachers, the Educational Policies Commission has noted:

Personal character of an acceptable quality to serve as an example to American Youth often determines the success or failure of a teacher in teaching subject matter as well as in contributing to moral development.\(^3\)

In effect the Commission has stated a teacher must have morality that is exemplary to be a successful teacher in any subject. This would imply that morality includes a broad field in its concept and not a small isolated area of life. The implication is that a teacher's standard of morality must be such that when a student patterns his life after the example of the teacher, the student would fit into a democratic way of life. But the concept of what the teacher's example is to be is not identified. A teacher by having these unidentified qualities will tend to be successful in every field of teaching, while absence of these qualities tend to failure in the teaching profession.

Since those teachers who have character tend to be successful teachers, it would be apparent that teachers' qualifications include personal values as a basic prerequisite for a position. The Commission notes this, "The teacher education institution should consider character, scholarship, and teaching skills . . . in the recommenda-

\(^3\)The Educational Policies Commission, p. 55.
tion of prospective teachers to boards of education."

In sum, then, the selected literature seems to indicate that the teacher's place and role is that of providing a good example. The suggestion that teachers learn a method of developing morals is not followed by any concrete suggestions. By implication, however, the literature does provide some information on the point as it relates to children in the public schools. The suggestions in this latter area are examined next.

Content and Method of Teaching Morals

In the final analysis, the success of a program for teaching morality depends on the content and method in teaching morals. An investigation of the selected literature was made to find answers to the question—what content and procedures should be used in the public school with respect to teaching morality?

The Educational Policies Commission in describing a program of teaching morals has listed as the first procedure, "Moral and spiritual values should be stated as aims of the school." In effect, the Commission is stating that it is necessary for values which the program is to stress, to be stated in clear and compelling terms. This would imply that a list of values be compiled to be used as content in instruction of morals. Apparently this is the case as the Commission recommends acceptance of a list of values compiled by them and discussed in Chapter III of this paper:

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9 Ibid. 10 Ibid., p. 51.
The list of values proposed . . . in this volume may help to serve as a point of departure . . . it is especially important that the needs and problems of each community, as well as the probable public reaction, be taken into account from the outset. The very process of participation in preparing, considering, and approving such a list should help teachers and parents reflect immoral and spiritual values.\footnote{Ibid., p. 52.}

Teaching a list of morals would imply that criteria be brought to a situation or experience and applied to the incident, thus, reflecting and molding moral character. Since the Commission has suggested a prepared list of morals be taught which reflect an authoritarian type of concept of morality, the conclusion to be expected would be a direct method of instruction in morals. However, this is not the case. The Commission is opposed to the direct method of teaching morality as noted:

Teaching moral values as a separate part of the school curriculum is a questionable response to an unquestioned need. Lessons in character education cannot be clamped on like a gadget to some corner of the educational program.\footnote{Ibid., p. 57.}

In effect, the Commission is stating that it is wrong to give time in the schedule for classes in direct instruction in morals. There are certain reasons they give why morals taught in the direct method are ineffective. The first of these is, "Knowledge about right conduct does not materially increase the probability of right conduct itself."\footnote{Ibid., p. 56.} Apparently this declaration of the Commission was taken as true and valid, yet no substantiating evidence was given to support
this claim. The implication made by the Commission here is that knowledge is confined to mental fact rather than a total life orientation. The psychological theory of knowledge as pertains to life's actions could be challenged on this line. The implications could be advanced that, since the Commission apparently holds a pragmatic morality as noted by their definition, they would be expected to hold a pragmatic conception on the source of learning. Apparently they hold the conventional theory of source of knowledge.

The next reason given by the Educational Policies Commission against a direct program of instruction in morals is noted as:

The case for trait teaching is further weakened by the fact that public education, as a social instrument, should help young people develop more than strictly personal morality; it should be concerned also about the moral and spiritual implications of such broad social and economic problems as poverty, injustice, and war.\textsuperscript{14}

In effect, the argument is that direct instruction of morality would lead to personal morality rather than a social morality. There are implied questions from the above statement. What is wrong with instructing by direct means for personal morality? Could not social morality be gained some other way? These questions are not answered.

Apparently the case the Educational Policies Commission draws against the direct method of instructing morality is not strong. Since the Commission recommends a list of morals, to be taught in the public schools, their argument against the direct method contains

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 58.
loopholes. A list of morals would tend to suggest the direct method.

Since they do not recommend the direct method of instruction
in morals, while at the same time holding to a list of morals, the
question to be investigated now is—how does the Educational Policies
Commission recommend morals be taught in the schools? Answer to this
is seen by the following:

Our preference for integrated instruction does not arise
from a desire to minimize the importance of moral value
... evidence now available suggests that the procedure
most likely to be effective in the teaching of moral and
spiritual values is to weave these concepts into the en-
tire life of the school and to make them a vital part of
all subjects of instruction in the school program. 15

In effect, the Commission is stating that the indirect method, where
moral concepts are brought to every class and woven about every sub-
ject, is most effective as a means of teaching morality. An analy-
sis of the statement reveals a principle of moral education. A pre-
determined list of morals is introduced into every subject and brought
into every class; as educational situations arise, these values are
indirect guide lines to establish and develop morals in the student.
The Commission, in principle, apparently holds an authoritarian type
of morality. This is inconsistent with their apparent pragmatic
definition of morality.

15 Ibid., p. 59.
Summary

An investigation of the selected literature revealed an absence of suggestions concerning the organization and control of the schools which those who advocate teaching morality see as necessary to the success of their proposed program. Apparently they have reconciled themselves to the present organization and are satisfied to use the present structure to teach morality to students. Educators, in general, recognize that their part in the control of morality as taught in the school is through the mechanism of suggestion which comes through national organizations.

An investigation of the literature also revealed the teacher's peculiar role in education is to provide a good example. No specific way in which a prospective teacher may be trained so as to provide a good example was recommended. Since the National Education Association holds that good moral character among teachers determines effective teaching, it recommends good moral character as an essential qualification for the profession.

In the final analysis, the literature revealed that the National Education Association advocates a list of values to guide moral instruction. This list of values is to be applied to every learning experience. The predetermining of a list of values tends to give the National Education Association an authoritarian concept of morality, which is inconsistent with its concept of morality as expressed elsewhere. The direct method of teaching morals was opposed by the National Education Association and the indirect method advocated as the
most effective in a program of instructing morals in the public schools.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study has been: (1) to summarize the evolution of moral instruction in the American schools from the beginning of the Colonial period to 1945; and (2) to examine the proposals concerning a program of moral instruction which organized bodies within the National Education Association have made since 1945.

An investigation of selected literature concerning the Colonial period reveals that a strong emphasis was placed on moral development of the young. Sectarian religious bodies influenced civil authorities to the extent that content, aims, and procedures of education had to do with religion and morality. The teacher qualified for his position on the basis of religious, moral, and civil obligations.

The data revealed that during the period of time from 1779 to 1865 the country was gradually coming to accept the principles of public tax supported schools, which, by nature, excluded sectarian control. Horace Mann, among others, was a leader in advocating a change from sectarian instruction in morality. Instead he and others proposed a secular morality.

After the Civil War, educators realized a basic spiritual need
was not being met. This, along with increase in enrollments and compulsory attendance laws, brought about changes in the concept of instruction in morals. Hence, a new concept of pragmatic morality began to arise. Some educators were reluctant to accept the pragmatic type of morality, as is witnessed by the fact that courses on morals and manners were being taught as late as 1930. After World War II, the curricula of American schools did not show direct evidence of moral instruction even though our nation was undergoing moral rearmament. Much literature appeared advocating the instruction in morals in the public school. Among this body of literature were official publications of the National Education Association.

The official opinion of the National Education Association since 1945 was studied and analyzed in order to take particular note of the meanings of the term moral as the term was commonly employed in discussions published under auspices of the Educational Policies Commission. This body within the National Education Association has been responsible for the most comprehensive statement with reference to the teaching of morals. The definition given at the level of designation was vague. No specific defining term was noted, and the tendency was to resort to description and illustration.

An examination of the implicit definition of moral revealed eight reasons given to suggest why morals should be taught in the public schools. The Commission said the conditions that make moral instruction necessary are: (1) human behavior is empty without moral values; (2) because there are likely to be future problems that moral
instruction will be needed to deal with; (3) the world is distorted in its value system; (4) World War II has blunted and distorted ethical sensitivity; (5) lack of a sense of civic duty and indifferent moral choices; (6) home and family relationships are disturbed; (7) moral instruction will give American people stability to stand against Communism; and (8) moral instruction will enable each individual to develop to the maximum of his personal limits. At the level of implicit definition pragmatic morality was evidently involved.

A further examination of the data revealed that the National Education Association, through certain of its organizations, saw the end served by moral instruction as refined judgment in ten areas of life. This list of ten areas that constituted a moral life when adhered to tended to make the outlook of the National Education Association authoritarian.

In the sphere of organization of schools to teach morality, there was an apparent silence by advocates. They had accepted present organization of education and were reconciled to teaching morals through the present set up. The teacher's role in control of morality in education would be to receive suggestions through national organizations.

The National Education Association recommends that teachers be good examples in teaching morals to students. Educational institutions of prospective teachers were recommended to train teachers in morality; yet no specific suggestions were advanced.

The selected literature reveals that official position of the
National Education Association is against direct methods of teaching morals. The indirect method was advocated for teaching in morals. This was made possible by applying students in life's experience to a predetermined system of morals. The predetermined system of morals was in the form of the ten values discussed previously. A list of values to guide instruction in morality gave an authoritarian orientation to their concept of morality. This is inconsistent with previous declarations of the Educational Policies Commission.

Conclusions

On the basis of the data presented in this investigation the following statements seem valid as conclusive orientations to the official statements about moral instruction as given by the National Education Association and subsidiary departments.

1. At the level of explicit definitions, the National Education Association is vague in defining morals. When implicit defining of morals was attempted through analysis of reasons for moral instruction and the end served by teaching values, the definition remained vague.

2. At the level of definition, pragmatic morality was evidently involved. However, in the areas of aims and content of moral education, standards were suggested that would imply a concept of authoritarian morality. The resulting contradiction would lead to the teacher's looking for help in this area, to evident confusion.

3. The National Education Association has accepted the existing control and organization of public schools in relation to adva-
cating moral instruction. Through the mechanism of suggestion the National Education Association recommends enriching the present curricula and program to better facilitate moral education.

4. The purpose of the National Education Association in the literature that was selected for this study was to assist the classroom teacher in objectives, content, and procedures in a program of morals in the schools. The ambiguity of defining terms and suggestions in the fields of content, objectives, and procedures recommended are lacking in fundamental concrete suggestions that would be helpful to a teacher.

5. While the published work of the National Education Association, in general, tends to enlighten and inform concerning morals, the language is sufficiently vague that the reader's first indications are to read personal, moral associations into the concepts found in the literature of the National Education Association.
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An Analysis of the Implications of Teaching Morals in the Public Schools

Adviser: Professor C. C. Hoskins

Master of Arts degree conferred August 22, 1958

Since the end of World War II there has been an intensification of concern with teaching morals in the public schools. Many reasons for this resurgent interest in moral education are evident: new aims in education, a new concept of morality, and absence of courses in morals. Of all the literature on teaching morals, *Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public School*, published in 1951 by the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association, was chosen for analysis. This particular report was chosen because in past years the Educational Policies Commission has issued studies that have foreshadowed future development in education. This being the case, a detailed analysis of the report of the Educational Policies Commission is needed, since teachers are looking to the National Education Association and its departments for suggestions in regard to objectives, content, and procedures for instructing pupils in morals.

No explicit definitions await the teacher who searches for the meanings of the term moral. In the 1951 report of the Educational Policies Commission, descriptions and illustrations of the meaning of moral are supplemented by insights that suggest both pragmatic and authoritarian conceptions of that which is moral.
When the teacher searches the report for help with reference to organizational structure suited to an instructional program in morals, he finds the implication that existing arrangements must be accepted. When the report is examined for suggestions as to the desirable traits and characteristics of the teacher, vague references to the example set by the teacher are supplemented by equally vague urgings that teacher training institutions have a responsibility to prepare morally strong teachers.

When the report was examined for what it revealed about the program of instruction in morals, vagueness was also a major characteristic. An eclectic, indirect method of instruction was held as desirable at the operational level of the classroom, while a prede-termined set of moral principles was elevated to high status as ultimate goals in the program of moral instruction.