

By 'interpenetration' we might understand a sort of integration or inter-relatedness, or it might be thought of as a sort of mutual linking up of cause and effect. In Dewey's terminology, 'habit' would be anything learned. It is not restricted here to habits of action, but means as well habits of thinking, of attitudes, or of emotional states.

The definition which I should like to propose, however, is the learning basis of conduct, or the determiners of conduct.⁽³⁾ Let us discuss this definition a moment. A situation arises which calls for choice and the decision must be made as to whether to do A or B. The individual decides to do A. Why did he decide to do A and not B? This decision was based upon certain elements of his heredity but more upon elements of his education. These learnings may have been due to teaching or may have simply been "picked up" from some experience or experiences in the past. It is these determiners of his choice resulting in conduct, these things learned in some way or other, that we should call his 'character'. These learnings do, indeed, interpenetrate. The physical educator must to a large extent ignore the hereditary bases of conduct, for these are already pre-determined. As an educator he is concerned primarily with what he can do with the individual as he is. This definition of learning would involve all of the social and personal qualities which the individual exhibits in his day by day activities. It includes perseverance, cool headedness, and a general tendence towards initiative as much as it does moral courage and social ethics.

The question may arise as to whether such a definition of character does not assume that desirable changes of conduct (even though they may be the result of quite insincere motives) indicate desirable changes in character. The educator must face this dilemma. He desires to change motives but he can not measure motives or tell what they are from the individual's conduct. It would, therefore, seem that we are forced into assuming that while with any given individual, improvement in overt conduct may not be accompanied by like improvement in motive, yet general improvement in overt conduct, where such conduct is not unduly influenced by artificialities of the situation such as an over-emphasis upon rewards, is probably accompanied in most cases by improvement in motives.

THE BASIS OF ATTACK ON THE PROBLEM

The psychology of physical education is peculiarly poor in scientifically proven results. We have little in this field which gives us a direct approach to character building through physical education. I have thought, therefore, to approach this problem from the standpoint of a philosophical research. In the last thirty years educational psychology has taken great strides. Much is now known of the original nature of man, of his social inheritance, of the differences between individuals, and of the learning process. It seems rather evident that conduct involving character is just as much related to the processes covered by educational psychology as is the conduct involved in multiplying two numbers together or in reading and comprehending a book.

The individual is undoubtedly as much limited by his innate capacities or incapacities in the character qualities as in those of intellectual endeavor. As we have intellectual morons and geniuses so we have equal extremes in many of the specifically outlined character elements. One may be a genius in certain types of cooperation and a moron in differentiating between some kinds of social and unsocial conduct, just as one can be a genius in mathematics and a total loss in languages.