Especially in the applied or practical sciences such as medicine, law, economics, or education there is the temptation to believe that we know full well what it is that these sciences are concerned with as their object of study. Does not everyone know what a sick person is? Does not everyone know what justice and welfare are? And so does not the fact that everyone talks the same language in urgent and concrete situations prove that the practitioners of such professions know quite well what is expected of them? Don't we all know that children must be educated to be brought up? Now nothing is as dubious as the premise that everyone would know what a sick person is, even though there are pretty clearly many instances where that occurs. A person with a broken leg is sick in a different sense than a person suffering from malaria, and both are sick in a very different sense than a person who is said to have dementia paralytica, or a person who has a so-called psycho-pathological illness, or someone who is ill-afflicted with crippling symptoms of old age, or who suffers from neurotic anxieties. Should every such sick person be cured? Are some patients not better off with their illness than without it? In other words, is that which we expect as a matter of course from our physicians not often a real and unclarified problem? And, no doubt, these questions do present themselves in the day-to-day life of the practitioner. Don't we all know what is meant by welfare and prosperity? Or: Don't we all know what are the necessary conditions for a prosperous life?

I do not believe that things are that simple. We may feel that we know what is the state of our personal welfare. It has something to do with our income, with what we can do with it (or what we are permitted to do with it), and with the standard of living, social program, social justice, and so forth. Suddenly we are confronted with an expansive field of issues and questions. And as we reflect on the question of social order and on the organization of societal institutions, we realize that we must come to terms with the complexities of norms which underly the economic order. Once we have acquired knowledge of how life is to be lived, and once we have acquired a comprehension of the conditions which would make that possible, and, as well, once we have acquired an understanding as to how these conditions could be realized without violating the very norms and values which provide us with a sense of how life is to be lived in the first place; only then, and when we have acquired the social understandings and skills with respect to all this, do we also come to fuller awareness of how little is left of economics as an exact science. It does become clear, however, how much economics is a human science of practical significance—a science which presupposes moral and human norms and suppositions. And this is a simple matter. How many ages did it take before we knew the ABC of economics? And: how far have we progressed with this alphabet?

The matter of education seems much more straight-forward: we can hardly be confused about the nature of its subject matter and its task. Can anyone doubt that education first and foremost is concerned with the pedagogic situation in which we must act as educators? And what else can our educational task be than this: to make it possible for education to happen as well as to make it actually happen.

Educatng and child-rearing—these are realities which concern us as immediately as the everyday life concerns of food, clothing, shelter, care, and so forth. And yet we soon learn that life itself poses questions and problems—which these questions originate with the child or with the adult. "What is this all for anyway?" Someone asks, while someone else very resolutely, but very wrongly, seems to go "his or her own way;" and so we wonder, "Can we let that happen?" "Should that be allowed?" "What can we do to prevent it?" But how is life to be lived? and how do we live it? and what is needed for this life? We, the child's parents fail, schools fail, social services fail or are lacking. We have a feeling that others seem to somehow be doing it better than we are. How do you "learn" this? And how do you have to change, how do you have to remake yourself as it were, before you can do this? It is not adequate to simply follow an approach, to apply a model or a technique. You have to be something in order to be able to do something. And so you must humanly be worth more or amount to more than a figure who basically imposes rules, and who distributes "intellectual" rations. And thus it appears that education is no simple matter either. So we had better return to the question of the significance of the educational or pedagogic situation.

A situation is the totality of givens with respect to which we must act. Therefore, we should immediately make a distinction between the situation as we live it and the situation as we reflect on it. Is it really necessary to demonstrate the pedagogical significance of this distinction? Is it not an immediate consequence of the fact that we always hear it remarked how there exists an essential difference
between theorizing and practising, between knowing about educating children, and the ability to actually do it? And is there similarly not a difference in the way that a child being educated experiences his education and the way that the child also may be reflectively involved in the process of his education? It would seem especially important to point out that it really matters in the situation who undergoes the experience, who reflects on it, and what is the nature of this reflection--in the sense of asking "what is going on here?" and "what is the interpretive perspective according to which we (must) extend influence?"

Whose lived experience? Is it the experience of the child or the educator? Indeed this is the question which makes the real difference. Who reflects?--the child, the educator, an outsider who involves himself in a situation? What is being seen in the reflection and to what end does one involve oneself? These after all are the critical considerations which would determine in what direction a situation should be influenced or changed or possibly left undisturbed.

And if we pose the question: whose experience is it? then the unavoidable next question is concerned with what it is that is being experienced in this situation. How often do we need to remind educators (parents, teachers, etc.) that the subjective experience of the child in a pedagogic situation (for example, "my father at home does not care for me") does not necessarily match the so-called objective facts (for example, "father appears incapable of communicating his feelings of deep affection to the child"). And so how often do we have to remind educators that the subjective or personal lived experience of the child is more a decisive factor in the pedagogic relations and situations than what "objectively" was, possibly, well-intended?

There is a difference between "understanding" or "knowing" a situation and "influencing" or "leading it in an appropriate direction," in the sense that "influencing or leading" a child towards a future presupposes a certain kind of knowledge as well. What then is the nature of the knowledge which an educator who experiences and gives shape to a situation must have? Can this guiding knowledge or understanding insofar as it comes from external sources find its genesis in a discipline which is not itself rooted in systematic concerns and adequate analyses of that situation--that is, the educational or pedagogic situation? Can such knowledge be found, for example, in the field of psychology even though psychology has its roots in a non-pedagogic situation? For sure, psychology must have something to contribute to pedagogy, after all, the psychological givens are also part of the pedagogic situation. And yet the contributors connection is too loose and usually lacks the essential details which pedagogically make the important difference. Indeed, not everything which is psychologically possible is therefore also desirable. For example, people can be psychologically ready to have children, but should they therefore have them? And, if not, what are the criteria which we apply to this condition? A situation is after all the totality of givens with respect to which we must act. The pragmatic character of the pedagogic situation also implies that our actions are oriented toward a view of the future. But could it be possible that we currently find ourselves in a situation without a view? That is to say, that our situation is a deadlock, a dead-end, and that our vision is: no possible future?

In order to be able to understand the origin and therefore the past of a situation we often must have experienced the situation side by side with those who live in it. It is precisely in the experience of living with their children that parents can find the most important source of coming to an understanding of how things came to be what they are. But since, for a multitude of reasons, living side by side in a situation is not always conducive to acquiring a more detached understanding of the significance of a situation, these same parents are not always capable of accounting for why things are as they are. And, therefore, a professional pedagogue (teacher, counsellor, etc.) must possess the wherewithal to obtain the relevant information in spite of the difficulties experienced by the participants of the situation in their attempt to account for the whys and hows of the way things are at present. For this reason, some clinical child psychology should constitute part of the professional preparation of all pedagogues. And this implies that pedagogy as a practical science presupposes the practice of situation analysis in the lifeworld.

A mere knowing of the goal or end of human existence is insufficient for the practical task of pedagogy, even knowing the means toward such end is not adequate. Insufficient is also knowing in a general sense, what the conditions are that make such pedagogically-oriented thinking and acting possible.

An important consideration also is the question what means have been resorted to, how these means were used, and to what consequence. Responsive pedagogic acting must know the individual uniqueness, the living social context, and the moral characteristics of this particular child and of these particular parents and others who play a meaningful part in this child's life. That is, considering as well all the givens which belong to this life. This means that within the broad field of education and culture, it makes no sense to draw distinctions between disciplines which study the child (the way psychology is sometimes seen) and disciplines which must act with respect to the child (i.e., the practitioners who must then act on the so-called "objective information" obtained or follow "the advice" provided). Knowing a situation and acting with respect to a situation in which we find children and adults responsible for the growth of these children constitute a unity of being and oriented being, of ontological rationality. Only in retrospect can we make distinctions based on external criteria. It is impossible to develop pedagogical thinking which is not based on its own reflective understating of the complexity of givens which make up a situation. Pedagogy cannot proceed without its own situation anlysis. After all, every "simple fact" which can obviously be "noted" or "observed" in a particular case, has in the life of the child and educator, the special significance of a charge of something that must be left "undisturbed," that must be "preserved" (and therefore "guarded"), of something that must be "fostered," that must be "worked on," "gotten rid of" at all cost, and so forth. In other words, the so-called "facts" about a child's
life, cut off from their ontological ground -- from that which is binding, that which behooves us -- lack concrete meaning for the child and for this process of personal becoming. No matter how often an educator acts out of having a sense of knowing what a child is about and what this child is capable of, no less often should the educator reflectively wonder what exactly can be expected from this child. It is quite possible that the educator (parent or teacher) does not have a clue about the latter and it is entirely possible that the educator will never be able to get it, at least not in a time frame and in a form which will be of pedagogic help for the becoming of this child. At this point a mother or father may call on the expertise of a professional pedagogue; and a teacher may call on the advice of a colleague or a psychologist, etc. In other words, somebody who is able to come to an understanding of a situation by collecting the facts and impressions which, from the point of view of this child's education, must have relevance. In this task the professional pedagogue may resort to means derived from psychology or say from the social science disciplines, but it should be foremost born in mind that the educator's task and his or her responsibility is essentially pedagogic. Professional preparation and professional conduct must always ensue from the normative auspices of pedagogy. This becomes even more clear when for a certain period of time the help which is extended to the child and the child's care givers becomes a systematic intervention.

It follows from the above that pedagogy as scientific analysis of the pedagogic situation -- that is, as analysis and as reflection on the praxis of giving form and direction to the situation -- forms an inseparable unity of ontic and deontic, of factual and leading-giving, of reflective and practical, of descriptive and normative moments. It speaks for itself therefore that "child study," the study of the growing child in all situations, phases and aspects, are the flesh and blood of pedagogy itself. Such child study, such anthropology of childhood, may have found its originating impetus in the appearance of developmental psychology, but also in the physiological development of the child, and also in family studies, and indeed also in the sociology of youth, and in the study of the historical and cultural contexts of the lives of children. In spite of the emerging heterogeneity of particular fields of child study we should not lose sight, from a concrete and fundamental point of view, of the existence of a certain unity and relatedness. Of course, there are various ways of integrating such fields of study. For example, the study of child physiology and physiological development may constitute an aspect of one of the medical or biological sciences. Similarly, from a sociological point of view, the study of the historical and societal contexts of child study could be applied to criminology and crime prevention. But the fundamental condition of all human becoming is that of education or child-rearing; and so the primary principle of integration, of all human intervention and of all scientific aspects of child study which we can distinguish, is the principle of the pedagogic situation and education. Child psychology, or more generally, developmental psychology, is thus one dimension of pedagogy or education. Moreover, developmental psychology is curiously dependent on the fact that its object of study (the psychological development of the child) is always already a child who is being educated. This realization stands in contrast to the fact that most developmental psychology is based on the false assumption of developmental processes which occur in accord with bio-mechanical and autonomous principles. If this has some truth then it is only noticeable in a rather reductionistic sense. The more deeply we reflect on children, the more we see the totality of the developmental phenomenon of the life history of each child as a process of humanization and thus essentially as an educative phenomenon. There is no denying that within this phenomenon, developmental processes and processes of human growth are visible, but it is also clear that the process of growth itself does not represent anything psychological. The process of growth is experienced and rendered meaningful by the child and by those who live with this child first, and only then is this complexity of meaning available as subject matter for developmental psychology. Pedagogy is not only concerned with understanding the child, it also must be concerned with understanding those adults who are involved in helping this child grow up and in educating this child. Here too it is pedagogy which establishes what are the relevant facts because it is only pedagogy which knows what is going on here. Is it not precisely pedagogy which knows what it means to be an educator or pedagogue? And so whose task could it possibly be but that of pedagogy when it comes time to gather, structure, and interpret the data which pertain to the educational situation in general and to this concrete educational situation in particular?

Evidently it is first of all the task of pedagogy to study the process and the processes of child-rearing and education.

No specific psychological theory of learning is necessarily pedagogically significant, in fact it hardly ever is of much pedagogic significance. Some psychology of learning by the child in an educational situation or with respect to an educational end is typically pedagogic work. In the latter case "learning" is not considered in some clinical or abstracted learning context, devoid of pedagogic meaning, rather it is an organic part of being educated, or being brought-up, or being involved in a self-formative process. Of no less importance than the above is the knowledge of the pedagogic situation gained in very different areas; the influence on the personal development of the child through close and intimate relationships with others, the acquisition of tendencies towards certain sensitivities, the learning of particular ways of expressing or suppressing aspects of oneself and one's experience, identify oneself with certain cultural forms of life, the deep living of a life history -- all these too find their source in the primordial meaning of pedagogy.

If we now go back and read over the above comments in order to determine what approaches, what methods there are which could assist us in acquiring knowledge which is pedagogically worthwhile, the following picture emerges.

It is possible to distinguish methods which help to realize (to make real) educational growth, or some aspects of it; these are the practical methods, and then there are methods of inquiry, research methods. Now we are concerned with the latter. But whether we are actively involved in educating children or doing research, we must be careful not to confuse the two kinds of methods. For example,
when we assign a test in order to evaluate the results of the educational process we usually are doing two things at the same time: we assess what our students should have learned (and thus we find out if we may have to go over some material again) and in this manner we are pedagogically involved; however, we also and simultaneously gather evidence about the successfulness of the approach we have used in teaching the material. And thus we have arrived at (or crossed) the border of the practical methods, in the sense that, at the hand of a good assessment, we obtain insights which extend beyond our particular educational situation. We may now begin to entertain conclusions such as: "children with this kind of background can(not) handle this" or more tentatively "children of this kind of intelligence can(not) handle this." Then the question arises whether we should corroborate our tentative conclusions with groups of children from different educational backgrounds; and with this we find ourselves in the midst of research methods. This is an essential pedagogic course of action: from the concrete, pedagogical situation to the more general research task. Going the other direction often leads to discomfort; for then we do not know whether the methods we employ are still derived or descriptive of pedagogic situations or how these methods might need to be interpreted or possibly altered. Our concern is not to deal with methods which are analytically or conceptually derived from pedagogic situations in general, instead, we are only concerned with those methods which are specifically related to the pedagogically fundamental aspects of this situation.

When we are concerned with methods of a longitudinal character or when we need to look further ahead towards the prospects for a child then the pedagogical task is also of prime importance. When we look at the educational experiences of children from such larger frames then we can no longer assume that existing school structures, forms of education, curriculum methods, curricular divisions of subject matter, standards of evaluation, etc. will remain unaltered. Only too often do experimental test methods assume such static educational circumstances.

So it is clear that predictive measurements derived from experimental methods must remain extremely tentative; and yet we should not doubt that there is a need for predictive methods of a concrete pedagogical nature. Next to the tentative and unsatisfactory vagueness of such predictive pedagogical principles, there is our responsibility to provide the child and his parents or teachers with the opportunity to demonstrate the incorrectness of our predictive prognosis so that, ongoingly, we can bring about corrective interventions in our initial pedagogical policy decisions. and with this observation we arrive at the most essential element of all methodological insights which have a bearing on all pedagogical practices: the aim of all pedagogy is to help this child to realize his best possible potential given his concrete life circumstances (this mother, this father, this milieu, etc.)

From the pedagogical point of view those methods are absolutely fundamental which lead to individualized knowledge. These are the methods which carry the decisive responsibilities for generating, not a generalized, mechanistic, but an insightful and action-oriented kind of practical knowledge for the benefit of this particular human child.

Characteristic of every practical science (such as law, medicine, education) is the inseparable unity of the interpretive-empirical and the practical-ethical determinants -- even though these only make available pedagogical possibilities which concern the growing development of the person. the practical sciences are distinguishable from each other by the object of their study and the respective praxiology which belongs to it and which produces the normative levels and the value structures which in turn render interpretive sense to object and conduct. To separate the normative and the practical moments in education, as indeed is suggested by the very departmental and scholarly divisions made at faculties of education, is in essence undesirable and even unscientif. This happens, for example, when the philosophy of education, the psychology of child development, and the methodology of pedagogy are offered and pursued in isolation of each other. If these divisions are not born merely out of professional ambitions then they are only intelligible as divisions of labor within pedagogy.

Those who, from the viewpoint of "realism" and "science" are involved in research, often feel offended by applying the name "scientific" to a discipline that is obviously normative in nature. They would rather use the term "arts" or "crafts" for such endeavor. And to the extent that such attitude reflects a desire to earn higher respect we will just leave this issue to their vanity. However, there may be a deeper significance associated with such nomenclature. This is the case when one identifies "reality" with "nature" and when one attempts to reduce subject matter of the human spirit such as human institutions and human relations to objects of study that are a-normative. And connected to this "scientization" of the human world there is the second error of reducing pedagogic action to some sort of technical intervention usually associated with managerial or mechanistic knowledge--and now pedagogy has been converted into a collection of artful procedures and tactics which aim to serve the efficient execution of the business of education. In this kind of framework terminology such as "technique," "therapy," "method," are employed easily and unquestioningly.

In the context of this kind of trend I would like to make just a few remarks. We need to remain mindful of the fundamental notion of pedagogy: that human beings are after all the only beings that need to be humanized to come into their own. The human being is the animal educandum: "the animal that needs education." In other words, the human being needs to be educated or brought up in order to become truly human. This is the requirement of humanization. Every action of the adult is therefore a showing of where one stands: either the action humanizes or it does not humanize. And this indicates already that pedagogy is concerned with action that is normative. But that humanization, and the education which that process of humanization subsumes, does not result in identical products as would happen under some system of technology which produces its goods according to certain designs, rules and
calculations. After all we are concerned here with pedagogic action (parenting or teaching) which is fundamentally creative, in the sense that its object (the child) wants to be somebody him or herself, and he or she often co-determines our actions. And in other respects too, the child subsumes in his or her own actions the actions of the adult in accordance with an increasingly personal and yet always singular image.

The distinction between "practical" and "theoretical" sciences is sometimes referred to as "pure" and "applied" research, and this distinction rests on the intention of the practice of science: one does research because one wants to know how things are or one does research because one wants to know how to act. In the former case the intention is theoretic in the latter case it is practical.

If one wants to relate pedagogy to such classification then it is clear that pedagogy is a science which starts from the experience of life, that it is a human science (geesteswetenschap), and that it is a normative discipline in which one engages with practical intentions. It is an experience-based science because it locates its subjectmatter (the educational or pedagogic situation) in the world of everyday experience. It is a human science because the educational or pedagogic situation rests on the human intention of a particular human being, this child. After all, we do not just abandon the young child to his or her "natural state" or interpret the being of the child in a manner that is characteristic of natural objects. Rather, we interpret the subject matter of educational research at the least as a product of human living, and as an expression of human spiritual activity and of cultural form. Pedagogy is a normative science because it is based on moral choice, on what one considers good for this child and good for human beings, and on what one disapproves of. Pedagogy as a science is practical because one wants to know how to bring one's understanding to bear on one's active living with children and on one's understanding of everyday life situations so as to be able to give direction to them.

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Children are not formed and influenced by schooling alone; they are drawn just as much by their own world and their own self-constituted environments. And for this, children do not need just the formal upbringing of the school curriculum; they also need freedom and openness to the beckoning of that which is as yet undetermined and uncertain. We want to observe the child in this situation in order to come to an understanding of the whole child. Do we know homes, old or modern, which offer the child those special places in otherwise familiar and trusted environments: places like the attic, the deep closet space, the tucked-away corners in the basement or storage shelters, or the space behind the full and heavy curtains?

In the lifeworld of the child there exist hidden places which permit the child the possibility of experiencing in a normal manner access to strange and unfamiliar worlds around him. Where does the child find his as yet indeterminate worlds? Worlds pregnant with the possibilities of new meaningful experiences? Let us, by way of example, turn to the home life of the child.

**The Attic as Secret Place--Temporality**

Has there ever been a stranger place than the attic as it reveals itself to our spellbound eyes when we climb up through the trap-door or hatch? The attic confronts us with a gaze that comes out of nowhere. Its omnipresent stare is not aimed at us directly, rather it suddenly reveals and observes everything at once. As soon as we (after having shut the door) have descended the stairs or the ladder and find ourselves in our own safe familiar world, then its gaze instantly ceases to encompass us. At that very moment the attic resumes guarding its privacy and ours as well, our own privacy, which we had wanted to conquer through our venture into the attic. Let us climb back into the attic and stay there for awhile. Now suppose someone else (mother or father, perhaps) comes up suddenly to peer through the trap-door. Whoever it is will come from a different world, a different reality, than that of the attic. The head of the newcomer belongs to that of an intruder who disturbs the quiet peace of the attic. The intruder's voice is out of place here. Why? Because the secret place has its own life--the intruder destroys it as if it were a soap bubble. The unknown world of the secret place becomes our property. It has curiously become more trusted and personal than any other part of the house.

The secret of the spell of the attic can be encountered both in the deserted emptiness of the attic as well as in the overcrowded condition of another attic. Sometimes a threatening atmosphere hovers in an attic; the attic becomes weird, foreign, unearthly, secretive. The attic does not seem to belong to the normal atmosphere of the rest of the house--the trusted home. The attic can become completely severed from the house and turn into a ship which crosses many treacherous waters--or a grotto carved into the cliff of a foreboding mountain--an eagle's nest crowning on an unreachable mountain top--a perch from which to watch an unfathomable mystery play. The attic covers the normal living spaces below, and yet it seems to stretch unendingly over prairies and oceans bathed in the light of the setting sun. Thus, the attic separates itself, and frees itself from the house in the guise of an airplane or a ship, and so it takes on the changing dimensions of its new being.

But sometimes the attic is just an available space, a room to be used. One can lay a train track there running through savannas. To be sure the train does not travel without hindrances, but these hindrances are not the familiar hindrances one bumps into in the normal living spaces of everyday objects. This uninhabited world of the attic is full of new significations. Here the train winds its way through a landscape of bundles, boxes, suitcases, and baskets. One encounters furniture or objects which once were furniture. In the living room it would always be a table and nothing else; tables and chairs and such exist within the boundaries of meaning set by their use. Now that it has been discarded, this piece of furniture takes on an unending array of identities in the free and undisturbed world of the attic. It offers itself as a tent on the prairies in which the chief of the Sioux crouches and smokes the peace pipe with Old Shatterhand. The most common things acquire new names which in the stillness of the old attic seem to be whispered in our ears. Soon we will actually be using these new names.

Although you might not have expected it, this crowded attic shelters hidden places. There are places to crawl into and hide; there are huts and havens, places of refuge, retreats, sanctuaries, dens, caves, holes, and narrow passes to travel through. Every object assumes a meaning which best fits it and makes it a part of this landscape. Except for that familiar storage cupboard over there which we know

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as the "apple keeper." This cupboard is a stranger to the scene just because of its definite identity and significance. It shows an inscrutable and even disagreeable face. We don't want to bother with it because it obviously refuses to "play along." We don't expect anything from this cupboard. It will remain merely itself. Just look at it. How it stands there: heavy, dense, unmovable. And because of this immutable familiarity, it forfeits its worth and significance. It is precisely the fixed and "everyday" character of this common cupboard which robs it of any possibilities of expression in a world where every object secures a voice of its own. Let us listen to the language spoken by these things. In listening to this language, we may gain a deeper understanding of the nature of the secret place in the world of the young child.

Can I be sure that behind the curtain these lifeless objects are not gazing at me while crouching and getting ready for an unexpected leap? Let us look behind the ruffled creases of the curtain: There stands a docile stove doing what a good stove seemingly should be doing. However, we only need to lift the curtain and let the stove into the familiar world of our lived in daily activities—the stove may only hesitate a moment. But when he seizes the opportunity to serve as ship cannon or robot, he abdicates the idle usefulness of ordinary appliances. He assumes special meaning and thus becomes an essential aspect of the world in which we live. And yet, this world is not entirely "fulfilled by us." There is something vague and indefinable that seems to force itself upon us. For example, we sense this when behind us the lightly lifted curtain suddenly drops down. We catch our breath and the blood rushes to our head: "Who did that?" The "unperson" of the secret place has stirred himself in space, in the flashing moment of the fleeting instant.

In the attic time stands still or time flies: It really amounts to the same. But if time has stopped, it is not because it has been blocked by the weary recoil or by the nervous density brought about by anxiety or fear. Time simply has disappeared altogether. And when we find our way back from the attic to the livingroom downstairs, the clock looks at us pokerfaced. Maybe time took a rest; but it is also quite possible that the clock stealthily moved his arms forward three whole hours as soon as we had left the room. The time which we lost while dwelling in our secret place, or the time we forgot ("I forgot the time, n we say), has really nothing to do with this clock. We don't lose sight of the time, but it is the clock itself we temporarily forget. The secret place does not know the systematic classification of hours, minutes, and seconds. In the domain of the secret place, time is not being managed nor kept within our sphere of control. Somehow, the secret place knows how to remain outside of the boundaries of time and of space. Neither time nor space have room for the indeterminacy of the secret place. And therefore, this is truly a place of secrecy even though it lies there openly for all to see. And so the child finds here a condition for which he would no longer feel ashamed at school—a state of aimless daydreaming which knows no discipline of time.

Loneliness and Aloneness on the Attic

The lonely person who visits the attic learns from experience that the unwavering look of this realm of the indeterminate makes his stay unwelcome. Often the lonely person has come here to overcome his loneliness. He places himself amidst the used furniture and the old suitcases, which, through their own superficiality and worthlessness, have become redundant, silly, powerless, and yes, even lifeless. Dead to the dead. This is how he sees himself in the midst of these objects: But even if the lonely person is misplaced here, still the normal child is glad to be alone in the attic. Company is only thinkable in the experience of a commonly felt joy. This commonly held enjoyment of the secret intimacy of aloneness can be experienced in many different places: for example, in bed, in a quiet evening at home, during a hike in the wilderness, or in the simultaneously exchanged glance with a beloved pet, etc. In the attic the mundanity of the quarrels, irritations, and conflicts of daily living fall away from us because here we are asked to create our own world, a world we live through as an indulgent illusion. Above all, it must not be merely-disguised illusion, an illusion in which one partakes with bad conscience. Whoever wants to live in the secret place but hesitates to give himself over to the sense of illusion it requires has already forsaken the place before he has even entered it. He has been driven into the straits and must realize that he has lost his freedom. He wastes his time here. He is displeased with himself and feels himself frustrated. He is ashamed of his childishness. He will soon feel lonely if he is not already lonely. But whoever truly enters the secret place, enters a true illusion. The reality of the world he himself has created is experienced with an honesty of immediacy. And yet, like the dawning of the morning glory, there is a dawning awareness of the personal quality of this new world and a personal familiarity with it; at the same time, the road to the normal world of shared relations remains familiar and open. But the secret place knows no bad conscience. Here we live in a true state of innocence.

The secret place is, then, a home where one finds oneself at home, a place where one is with oneself. Its intimate character is determined, in the first place, by the fact that one finds oneself in the unexpected presence of one’s own self without having tried to make oneself a project of study. Here, one has every opportunity by doing or dreaming to realize, to make real, a world of one’s own. Nothing interferes with the multiplicity of relations the objects of this world have to “reality.” This box can be a box, but it can also be a cave which surrounds me, or a fortress, a cliff, a boat, an airplane, or a building block. I myself can be an explorer, a pirate, a pilot, or a scientist.

The Staircase

At the same time, to spend time in the attic means still to be at home. For there is still the stairway. There one can still climb down.
But the stairway has its own significance as well. And this significance becomes stronger when we look up the stairway towards where it leads into the unknown or to the unseen. In case we cannot remember this feeling, we should consult the etching by Odilon Redon in which a stairway is shown in a hallway. In the background to the left one sees the reverse side of the stairs. This room has an air of uncertainty about it precisely because of the presence of the stairway which leads up to the unknown and to the invisible. There dwells the anonymous being, the unperson. Watch out! Soon he will peek over the ramps and look at us.

    Halfway up the stairs  
    Isn’t up,  
    And isn’t down,  
    It isn’t the nursery,  
    It isn’t the town  
    And all sorts of funny though~  
    Run round my head:  
    It isn’t really  
    Anywhere.  
    It’s somewhere else Instead.  

(Miline, "When We Were Very Young")

Indeterminate space, indeed, that is what the stairs represent because we cannot see where they lead. Of course, the staircase can be very familiar and trusted with the exception of those which lead up to the attic since these always contain an element of mystery. For the attic is the indeterminate space itself. Sometimes the staircase looks at us through the eyes of a distant piece of furniture, visible from below and which, in spite of its distance, gives us a feeling of trustfulness. At other times the staircase is a dark and threatening space precisely because of the peculiar way it is kept bounded by the over-arching roof; yet the unbounded dome of a dark or starlit sky tends to create no fear in us at all. At other times we may have the feeling that the stairs lead into nothingness. The Jacob’s-ladder, and the ladders without end are familiar dream themes.

The Closet

Sometimes children have found their secret place in a deep closet. One barely opens the door to see a gaping, dark space, whose emptiness strengthens the sense of indeterminacy. This indeterminacy is not to be equated with meaninglessness. Emptiness is a space which speaks to us to be filled, or it can invite us to explore its cavities and corners. Moreover, the empty space is the dwelling place for occasional visions and strange creatures or appearances: what is empty at one moment suddenly shows an invisible life. In fairy tales there were always princes and fairies who suddenly became visible. And then there are the shuddering experiences of Edgar Allan Poe such as when we hear knocking from a closet which we thought was empty. But this is not what we are referring to here. For that experience no longer belongs to the hidden place in the life of the child—instead it would truly be a threat.

The full utility closet certainly loses its significance as a secret hiding place. For it is simply one of those ordinarily useful cupboards. At best one can only hope to find an unexpected object there. This search for something worthwhile in the inside of a full cupboard or closet bears no relation to the experience of the secret place. For here there is nothing indeterminate; everything belongs to someone. Here the re is no mystery, no drawing back of oneself from the objective time and space boundaries. Here there is no seeing of oneself as the "other." Even the shallow closet is a purely useful object, completely without mystery, without practical freedom.

The Lookout Post

In contrast, the lookout post from a tower, or from a tree, or from the roof, or from any such kind of place is for many a child a retreat from the nearness of things. The things to which we direct our attention from a lookout post are always far away. It could even be something from which we are normally barred or locked out. That is how it is for Piers Sparkenbroke in Sparkenbroke by Charles Morgan. The twelve-year-old hero retreats to his observation post so that he can follow the annual festival pilgrimage to the family burial grounds. He was not allowed to go along because he was considered still "too small!" Now he finds five windows covered with heavy curtains. "He pushed two of the curtains to the side, slid inside and let them fall shut behind him." Now he stands in an empty room, cloaked in darkness where only the sound of the church bell enters. This clear sound only heightens his feelings of being shut out, but at the same time it increases his pride which he, Piers, discovers in his search for an encounter with death. He knows, of course, of the fear and anxiety with which the others approach the trip to the grave. For Piers the bells do not signify fright, but rather revelation. He is beguiled by their incomprehensible novelty, which (if only he could distinguish them) could fulfill his consciousness of that other life, that out-of-body life, of which he already knew more than a little. Outside of the realm of time, which is seen as if it were a measuring tape which, unravels, hour after hour, like a kitchen clock, Piers encounters a mode of being totally unexplored by man. The world which he observes while in hiding is the world of isolated and separated secrets. One knows what is "actually" going on there. One looks, as it were, unnoticed over the shoulder of the worker and follows with one’s eyes the impulses which flow into the
world through his hands and his expressions. In this secret place, then, two experiences come together: that of being the outsider at a distance, and that of having understood a reality. The experience of the outsider, the onlooker, and that of the initiated, the knower, are here united. And that is why, without participating in what is happening, we can be happy in that place.

Piers was unable to give expression to his experiences, and yet he could not help but show in his very way of being and behaving that the experiences were somehow consequential. He could no longer deny that he had encountered the indeterminate mode of being. And although it may be true that Piers was an extraordinarily sensitive boy, in some deep sense every child has knowledge of some such experiential encounters with a secret place, even though it may not always be in the same manner.

Piers stood behind the curtains of a familiar and trusted room in his house. When these curtains are drawn, they close in the familiar world; when they are open, they provide a view to the world outside. But whoever stands behind the curtains next to the windows stands in no-man’s land, as it were. This is a land which belongs neither to the living room inside, nor to the world outside the window. Here we are dealing with a narrow, intercontinental strip. Here we are at home, in the real and immediate vicinity of the others, so that really nobody needs to notice our absence. “But look, I have been right here!” answers the child after we have been searching for him all over the house. “I was here, in the room!” But to himself he might say: “Indeed, I was here, and yet . . .”

**Fantasyland is No Secret Place**

Whoever is spying or hiding himself, therefore, cannot find shelter in a secret place. There are even fantasy worlds which have no relation with the notion of the secret place. We all know how children construct make-believe places and make-believe objects out of ordinary things in the house. Once I heard of a place called “Relevia,” a name which the children gave the make-believe land which they inhabited and which ran criss-cross through the whole house they shared with their parents. The children had made up this land. It included many everyday household objects, and they spoke of it with such certainty that their mother, who has since become the grandmother of her children’s children, could not rid herself of the picture of this Relevia whenever she wanted to think of a new world. Much later she published a book entitled Relevia, A New Economic System—an order under which I myself would have liked to live.

The comprehensive scheme of a community in which the children go their own way was included in this ordered illusion. Such illusionary worlds are not at all rare. Think of the island of Robinson Crusoe and of how often parents themselves show an indulgent attitude towards such fantasy. The world of fairy tales and actual history interchange here in the yearnings after an ever lasting childhood. Here we encounter a phenomenon wherein some of the characteristics of the secret place are found in extended vision.

It is true that the child may lose himself in the experience of the secret place. But why should we insist on the priority of the need for systematization, formulation, explicitness, and order? In the modern world everything tends to become rationalized and is therefore more available to the adult. In contrast, fantasy may create an ordered world but only to work out possible arrangements within the confines of a world of open possibilities which is, after all, still a world in the style of the everyday and shared world. Relevia, for example, had its own monetary system.

The secret place, however, never has such orderly structure. Or, to say it differently, the secret place is not a world built up by fantasy and creative imagination. Rather, it maintains the character of a creative simplicity of effortlessness, of the waking dream, of something unique, a mood, which can be recalled time and again. In Relevia, tales like “Eselhaut” or “Rumpelstilzchen” represent a form of celebration, as they do in the normal world. They are related to the spirit of the secret place, albeit distantly. But the actual experience of the secret place is always grounded in a mood of tranquility, peacefulness: It is a place where we can feel sheltered, safe, and close to that with which we are intimate and deeply familiar. In his retreat, the author Jan Ligthart was forever involved in arranging and rearranging his small, unread religious tract. Others will take their treasures or collections to the secret place to be reinspected and reorganized for the thirty-sixth time. And, although the secret place is an actual place where one feels safe and secure, still it is not a hiding place for something like hide-and-go-seek. But it is the place where somehow direct understanding reigns when one child is in the company of another child. Words are unnecessary here. Speech occurs in the deep silence of an a priori understanding. Often the tone of voice changes into the tonality of intimacy.

Let us summarize. All examples of childish fantasy—like Relevia— all of these occasionally entered worlds have a determinate character. They are not places like the secret place,—where the experience of deep mystery is possible; they are not places, like the secret place, untouched by the mood of everydayness.

Precisely because the secret place is devoid of anything determinate is it a place where the experience of peace and contentment is possible. The secret place is withdrawn from involvement, and therefore it is a place of rest. Peace reigns there only because human interaction is suspended: it is held in abeyance. In the secret place the child can find solitude. This is also a good pedagogic reason to permit the child his secret place and to respect his right to asylum, or at least to tolerate it. Although the child’s interactions with others are temporarily suspended in the secret place, this does not mean that others are not in some sense present in this space. Physically others remain on the outside, but they are still present on the inside because they are still seen or observed by the child.
And this normal and disinterested observation can turn into an attentive watching when the child's interest is sparked by something. At that moment the "other" is again there and becomes an object of interest, and the secret place becomes part of the usual world, a simple hiding place, or lookout post.

**The Curtains**

How deep is the stillness behind the heavy curtains even when the room is full of noise and conversation. All the more reason to keep oneself quiet and still. For just as the transparency of the window pane opens up both the outer and the inner world, so the curtain allows sounds to pass through. And just as through the window one sees and is seen, so behind the curtain one hears and is heard. So much more reason to be quiet and unobtrusive behind the curtain. All that this curtain shows us—its snake-like boundary at the floor, the unpredictability even of this shifting and easily moved border, its pliancy, which betrays one at the slightest movement—all of this urges us to remain quietly within our boundaries. Don't move! Don't touch the curtain!

At other times the curtain hides the location where the mysterious Something remains hidden: the unexpected, the surprise. This is the place which guarantees intimacy and which is always enveloped in stillness. Who is disturbing the curtain? "A Rat?—No, Polonius!" But when Hamlet stabs his sword through here, he neither kills the one nor the other. Instead he inflicts retribution on that what was really hidden: Him, the marriage-wrecking lover of his mother, his father's murderer.

The poet Milne knows that in the child's world there is someone who lives behind the curtains:

> In a corner of the bedroom is a great big curtain,

> 'Someone lives behind it, but I don't know who;

> 'I think it is a Brownie, but I'm not quite certain.

>Milne, "When We Were Very Young"

At first the child lives on this side of the curtain. But now he is about to make the curtain his hideout, his retreat. When he has entered his secret kingdom then "the world" lies "on the other side" for the child. The curtain becomes his sanctuary. The view of life changes completely at the moment when the child enters this haven and becomes an occupant of this hermitage. During the day it is very bright there behind the curtain and in the nearness to the window. In this miniature room the presence of Tangible Mystery hovers and recedes into the jungle of cords, strings, and rings and pulleys of the curtain rods.

The child does not hide as Polonius did behind the tapestry or behind a curtain which is used simply as decor or as a sound barrier in front of a door. No, it is behind the heavy curtains that frame the windows; this is where the child hides himself and where he may play even when it gets dark outside. The window belongs to this secret place because it allows light to enter, because it allows a view to outside, and finally, because—like the curtain—it separates everything while still supporting unity. How subtle, therefore, is this stay of glass and cloth which surrounds this secret place. It is also a favorite place for self-communion. Here one can quietly withdraw, daydream, and meditate; here one can slip into a slumbering sleep, but this sleep will not be filled with adventures or perilous deeds. The unusual character of this secret place is very unlike that of the attic or the basement cellar, which can be scary or spooky. The secret place behind the curtain is normally an unthreatening place to withdraw for the young child. Children who are still younger may hide instead under a table or simply turn their backs to us and play in a corner.

Looking out of the window from behind the curtain is a bit like looking at the world from a look-out post. And yet, this looking is not like spying as one may spy on people by looking at them from a balcony, for example. No, a child does not hide in his secret place behind the curtain with the intention of spying stealthily on someone. If that were the case, he would simply look for just any kind of place from where he could not be noticed. A child who spies on others still maintains a relationship with these others. The others stay with him in his present world as it were. Even the child who playfully hides himself from others' view in order to play or stimulate them into seeking does not find himself in a secret place behind the curtain. Because, in playing hide n' seek, he still remains oriented to the "other" as an object of his intentions from whom he hides himself. Whoever truly wants to enter the secret place must relinquish any intentional relationship toward others. Either he is fully immersed in the mood of the secret place or he is observing the wide world, which, though it may be far away, is still mysteriously enclosed in this space with him. So whether the child is dreaming or looking out at the world, in either way he is totally encapsulated and submerged in mystery.

This capturing and captured observing, this trance-like look of staring eyes, can nevertheless suddenly turn into an awareness of the environment which destroys the experience of mystery of the secret place. One says of someone who is simply staring beyond until some object captures his attention that he "awoke out of his dream" and that his "interest was stimulated."

**The Place Becomes Determinacy**

http://www.phenomenologyonline.com/articles/langeveld2.html
The secret place changes with age. The three year old, crouched in the corner with his back to the others, has as yet no secret place. The four or five year old discovers by accident the stirrings of the secret place behind a piece of furniture whenever he may feel sanctuary there, but he will make sure that he is still connected to the familiar, normal world.

Sitting under the table is such an experience. It is pleasant and cosy there. Not too dark. You can see the shadows on the walls, and here are the feet of mother or father. You can hear especially well what is being said. This kind of place does not force the child yet to encounter the availability, the emptiness, and his ultimate creative responsibility. So the child still tends to look outward: that is, to continue to talk with others and to keep an open eye for his interests out there. But at eight years of age the child begins to create his own world—between the fence and the bushes, behind the garden fence, and in the ditches. These are "secure" places, and so he plays games quite openly. The shed and the workshop belong there too; these rooms serve the interests of the practical and the necessary, and yet a different "spirit" reigns here as well. Here one has escaped out of the world of grown-ups in which one is only "just a child. Here one is free from this world, and now one can create totally useless and wonderful and fascinating things out of odds, ends, and pieces. Here one may gain a glimpse already into the mysterious world of the secret place.

First Santa Claus dies. Children over eight can hardly accept him anymore in real life. Increasingly, make-believe and legend gain favor in the world of adventure created by the child himself. Life or adventure stories take the place of fairy tales. The child is no longer dependent on the completed pictures offered him. And that which one has called the age of the "reality-fanatic" is, much more accurately, the age of fantasy, discovery, and the production of personal creativity. The attic, now transformed into wooded and forested fields, becomes a new play area. Such places are full of dynamic and expansive characters—Indians, cowboys, cavalry, and robbers. Now the most significant period of the secret, mysterious places begins. After a time, when the business of shaping the world and the self stops being a free and carefree past time, then the secret place becomes childish, and the child descends from the attic into his "own room." But the "own room" of the adolescent remains a very personal space. The child's need for creating a personal form finds its expression by means of secret diaries, poems, and true friends. Emptiness and darkness do become motifs in the life of the older child, but now they no longer say, "Stay." The child is already a more social being and spends more of his time with grandiose and deep thoughts. He may now even begin to think about planning his own life. And his own room becomes the possibility and precondition for creating a personal life. More and more the child will experience preference for a certain and determined place. Having been a vagabond for some time, he now develops into a youth who is looking for "his" place. During the change from youth to adult, this search loses its diffuse "serious play" character, and one slides into situations which belong to the social and adult world. Now one inhabits neither one's secret place nor one's own room; now one lives at home and works at one's job.

For the young girl, her own room may become more and more a living place, an intimate milieu, and there may already be a concern about the creation of one's own home life. For the boy, in the second half of his youth, his room becomes a garrison, or his own workplace. The adult too knows the notion of one's own dwelling, one's own home—our house, our room, our shop. Primitive man had his hut, and as long as we do not have a hotel or a room which can become home, we do not feel right in a strange country. From there we begin. This room, this native hut in the wilderness, is intimately tied up with our personhood. This home will also become our place, full of us, reflecting who we are, made by us, as, in an earlier time, it was the case with our hut, our attic, our room.

**Body and Space**

In other areas, too, we find that the child pursues his original childhood or, better, that aspect of his youth which is not affected by school. This is typically visible in the way that the child experiences his body and its relationship to space. We want to watch the child in this area so that we can clearly see the contrast with school experience and therefore the specific contribution of schooling to the growth of the child. We need only remind ourselves how strongly the classrooms of the school are determined by interests of exactness and objectivity in order to ask whether the child's experiences differ from this. We also know how the school dictates the bodily behaviour of the child according to unyielding codes and policies. But how does the child experience his body when he is allowed to live it in his own subjective world?

In my lived space the phenomena present themselves to me, and the space is simultaneously the place where I can move and dwell. It is also the world in which the eidetic image, the sensory illusions, the dream images, appear; here, too, the centaur appears, the calling voice, and the approaching car. It is the world in which the stone we throw flies upward and falls downward again, in which I am either rash or timid, in which I can take the way home and the way to the centaur.

At the center of our space there is something of which the spatial character is of secondary significance: the body, our corporeal self. Its visibility is therefore so much more important. The body is an "object" in visual space. At the same time "my" body is known to me for the claims it makes on me; I am hungry, have a toothache, my hand itches, I admire my well manicured fingernails. It is a fact that we are dealing here with my body which is growing and recording my personal history. And yet, I "find" my own body, or encounter it in space only under specific and often not favorable circumstances. The disturbing alienation of his own body which the child experiences at the time of puberty is no less conspicuous than that found by the psycho-pathologist in his practice. Sometimes a child falling asleep in a darkened room can frighten himself with the appearance and movement of his own hands. Here, then, we are
dealing with the encounter of one's own body as an object. This is something quite different from "knowing" one's body and its peculiarities, that is, having knowledge about one's body.

What interests us here is "my body" in as much as it is that through which I can shape the space of my world–the path I am walking along, the space, which I create, in which I wander, dance, or stagger towards an unreachable resting place. We are dealing here with a being who lives corporeally, not like an angel, a dwarf, or the spirit of light which is everywhere and nowhere present and which could inhabit any space. However, this corporeal being perpetually escapes its body and thus creates its space. It finds itself there where the ball will shoot over its goal. It is there where the victim will fall, there where he himself will soon be. Since Sartre, one has seen all this explored under several categories. But this body which I ordinarily pass over has also been given to me so that I can help it to meet its aims, and so that I can reach a goal. And then I may experience it as slow, tired, too hot, aroused, or stirred up, etc. In this manner the child is put emphatically in touch with his body: he cannot reach every goal because he is "too small"; he cannot keep step with adults because his legs are too short; he cannot carry a suitcase because he is not strong enough; he works clumsily because his hands are too small and too weak. But parallel with this experience is the positive experience of the self-assured, supple and moveable body which grips and reaches. Of course, the child is naturally inclined to grabbing and reaching, and in this way he steps into the world of the reachable and "grabable," but this being directed towards is not thinkable without an "I" which reaches and grabs. And so it is this "I" who stretches out the hand and reaches, or does not reach that which it wants, who is therefore experienced as too small or too weak or not fast enough.

The body, then, is never completely shut out. The body is both the challenge of the jump and the jumper. The child shows this in childlike fashion. But the adult who sees how a child walks, climbs, slides, dances, jumps around, runs, rolls, and bounces, perceives these actions in the context of what he believes to be a shared space. He runs and jumps in the same space as the child. The adult concerns himself with the jumping as if it were simply an altogether proper and normal thing for people, animals, and even things to do. And he is convinced that this occurs in the same space in which one finds this vase, or in which that siren howls, or the doorbell rings. But such normal adult assumption is only minimally correct: He classifies activities according to rules which shut out that which moves itself. That is exactly the opposite of what a psychologist should do.

The teacher, too, believes himself to be in the same space, this "room," as the child. He is wrong for the child lives this "room" in his own reality. Thus, the large classroom can really be quite small for a child if he is frightened or feels trapped. The same room, however, becomes quite big when one is chasing around in it. Even here the physical aspects mislead us adults for they can be experienced differently by children and by adults. However, school proceeds on the basis of a common perception, and in this it brings the child to learn to conform to whatever is considered normal. If we do not want to keep the child infantile, then he must go through some patterns of development, and it is our job to lead him through it.

Undoubtedly Froebel had a clue in this matter. But he hid his clue in a theory which could not benefit the psychological research of the child. On the one hand, the theory puts forward the notion of "acting-space," but, on the other hand, Froebel remains true to the mathematical idea of space–the empty shell which sometimes becomes embodied as a "thing," for example, as a round ball, a pail, or a tub.

But space is something that "happens"; it "overwhelms" the child. The child gains a hold of it when the experience of perspective is encountered, when one goes "behind" something which, like a piece of stage scenery, represented, until now, the end of the world; or when one goes "around the corner," by changing direction in order to avoid an obstacle. The child masters space through other discoveries as well: some obstacles he may not be able to get around, but he is able to get over them.

The particular aspects of so-called "objective" space, for example, its three-dimensionality, are, psychologically speaking, secondarily perceived. Primary is the fact that we can move ourselves, spread about, reach toward, walk through, see and hear what is somewhere over there. The corporeal existence of the child must be understood here in essentially anthropological categories: the body is no stone or tree. It is my own manner of being for the world and in the world. My corporeal existence in the world also shows itself in that the moveable parts of my body–my eyes, hands, feet, fingers–seem to be drawn as it were by the things or objects of the world. This is true already for the very young child: he sees something, stares at it, and tries to grab it. As we get a bit older, we become more mobile and go to the things by ourselves. We crawl to the chairs, under and around them. We climb on them, fall of them, and walk around them. "That is so because they are three-dimensional!" No! On the contrary! They are "three-dimensional" because we can sit on them, etc.

The lived experiencing of space is dynamic; space is "created" personally. The chair loses its peculiarity as a place under which one sits as soon as other bodily proportions begin to make sense of the space. The "big" objects become "small," what used to tower over me is now my height, that which was distant draws nearer, what was hidden becomes visible and reachable. The skipping child shapes his world differently from the child who is simply walking, or the one who jumps over the fence in one motion. The world of the hopping child structures itself jumpingly; these jumps are guided by the patterns of the ground or the drawings on the streets: it goes from one side to the other, and the direction of movement is determined by the shape of these patterns. The child that moves forward in this
way, hops through a space which shrinks to the short distance that one can cover in one leap. By simply lifting one foot and hopping, the small child finds gratification already in the hopscotch play, even if he cannot move from his place as yet; the shape of the space, which he will jumpingly explore, has begun to form itself already.

The child who is involved in games such as sack races or running a distance while balancing an egg on a spoon has the same experience. For the former, the distance grows immeasurably far as soon as his legs are caught in the sack. For the latter, the way ahead becomes unbearably bumpy and seems to resemble a trip. On all sides he is surrounded by a crowded and threatening space. He runs a gauntlet while attempting not to bump against the surrounding air and letting the egg fall— "Hey you, don't bump me!" "What do you mean? I wasn't even close to you!"

When the boy Kees, in the familiar Dutch novel by Theo Thyssen, puts on his running shoes, he becomes a famous gymnast and he flies through space like a long-distance runner. "What misfortune has prevented him from achieving fame? It could not have been his fault." Such a child creates a personal world, in which intentions, motion, and space complement each other. Such things actually happen in a gymnasium—one need only look for them.

We have already mentioned that the proportions of the child's body change continually; especially during the period which begins in the tenth year, and then during puberty one encounters sensations like those of Alice in Wonderland. Everything becomes "curiouser and curiouser." The whole body grows unendingly. "It unfolds and opens like the biggest telescope. Goodbye, dear feet." As she watched her feet, they retreated from her at "such a rate that she lost sight of them." This is how Alice lived the experience of discovering her own growth.

And so the child of this age is a tireless wanderer who becomes a hiker and a vagabond. For the one as for the other, the horizon stretches further and further ahead. First there is the feeling of untiring bodily energy, and later the unsatisfiable yearning for some other far place. The body and its movements create a world in which this life unfolds, in which "I live."

From a psychological point of view it makes no sense to emphasize the "three-dimensionality" of the child's space. This space takes on a personal shape of the environment: in this secret and hidden place under the table, behind the curtain, in the attic. Space also arises out of the personal shaping of movement—in the school yard, place and movement call each other forth.

The Uniqueness of the Secret Place--The Secret Place as Task

In adults the need for an appreciation of a private place, a space which assumes personal meaning, never disappears because this need is inseparably connected with the essential personality of humanness. However, it is no longer a "secret" place: that is, a place without destination which has not acquired fixed meaning and in which the world is still free, uniformed, and indeterminate. Now it has become the place where we live with our family, with loved ones; this is our home, our studio, and our neighborhood pub where we are patrons. In case of emergency, this place can become a refuge or a place of adventure. A person does not withdraw to the "secret, quiet, mysterious" place for hatching wicked schemes. Rather, he comes there to be with himself and to give his dreams and his senses free rein. In the "secret" place one can surely experiment with fantasies, like in the closet of Cagliostro. If a misfortune happens to occur there, then it was not a planned one--it just happened by accident. If a child withdraws in order to contemplate some evil, then it is not to his secret place, but rather to the place that is merely hidden from others and must remain that way so that evil can be prepared. The secret place is the world of guileless good will, the place where the subject innocentlyreshapes himself and his world. So it is not the world of an adult, whose life consists of fulfilling tasks and duties, who holds notions of himself as having the creative duty of the artist and the childrearing duty of parents. It is also not a place for the "elder" whose personality has already taken on a gain-finished form, nor for one in whose life there is no place for creative activity of the individual "I." We have referred to that aspect of the world which has no fixed determinant meaning as the "secret place," and we have seen that this lived space has the pedagogic significance of a task, a necessary part of growing up in our personal life history. Therefore, the school, too, must have a fundamental understanding of this indeterminate place and must not fall into the mistake of viewing the whole world as school. Many things must be learned outside of the school-world. And although so much must be learned, it does not follow that we must teach it all.

The usual kind of awareness found in the secret place is not oriented towards anything in particular, not focussed onto any special object or event. Rather, this mode of awareness is diffused, object-poor, scattered, and often dreamlike. It acquires significance in the sincere experience of depth, happiness, or melancholy, which can accompany the special quietude of the mode of being which belongs to children. From the phenomenological point of view, quietude is not only the opposite of noise, but it is much more the opposite of the noise of life itself. This place, then, is not simply hostile to "loudness" but rather to "noise" in a deeper sense. From this place the child awakes with a sigh of deliverance. At this moment his view is panoramic, free. In other words, the child is permitted a new and open attentiveness to the life of his personal world, a world which includes inner and outer life, a world therefore in which both possibilities meet. Only when some "thing" in the world or some other person calls on the child in a manner that forces the child again into an attitude of spiritual distance and objective participation is the world again experienced as separate from us, devoid of the inner force. Then disgust can rise up and wash over us like a flood which throws us back onto the steep cliffs of an objective form of being.
stripped of all spirituality. Now we are given back to the world of things, and we find ourselves in a common world which we share with others. But were we ever farther away from these others than just at this moment? Only after the world has taken us back and greeted us with her trust can we concern ourselves with our everyday work, our usual activities.

**The Secret Place is Unlike the Place for Punishment or Work**

Sometimes we find ourselves in a brief in-between-time, an interregnum between the secret place and the common world, in which there is as yet no embroilment: the clock hesitates as it is about to strike the hour; we stand still absentley at the threshold. "What is it then, son? Are you not quite awake yet?" And there is the noise! Brother and sister are gabbling; we become aware of mother's voice; the scraping sounds of knives and forks. Is the bus arriving at the stop? A quiet, embarrassed smile signifies the recognition of the others and our relation to them. The child has then, as we say, finally "come to himself." An appropriate expression in as much as this return to the common world actually signifies a coming-to-oneself. To make it easier for the child who was "beside himself" to "come to himself," one sometimes leads him out of the common space where the other family members reside. The child may be sent away in punishment to come to himself by himself.

At moments like this the child may take refuge in a secret place. And so, one finds him behind the curtain in the living room again, or maybe under a bed, in a closet, in the basement or in the loft, possibly asleep, maybe just relaxing, or still pouting. Usually just the absence of a "public audience" has caused the flowing back of affectivity. The secret place can call forth still more powerful results than quietude and passivity which were meted out as punishment and which release inner experiences of such imbalance that the interference of another person is sometimes necessary to end this mood. But something positive grows out of the secret place as well, something which springs from the inner spiritual life of the child. That is why the child may actively long for the secret place. But if a child is forced to go there, he may begin to panic. This could be wordless panic, and just because of its unspeakable nature it is all the more frightening and disturbing. Certainly, the punished child can, if he finds himself in this space, come to himself and find again the value of the secret place as soon as the feelings of punishment have vanished. "To come to oneself" means to be ready again to adopt an attitude, ready to give oneself in trust to the place where one finds oneself. At that moment the "space" of punishment is shut out, and with it fear and anxiety also disappear.

The secret place is only safe and peaceful when it is the act of a free choice, a preferential place. It could also be that one just came there to look for something or to take something there. A place where we are productively engaged is, of course, a safe place, but it is not a place of indeterminacy, it is not a secret place. There need only be a bench there and already it is Peter's workshop, and everyone will know it as Peter's workshop. He works there happily, whistling or singing, making hellish noise, etc. Neither the happy quiet of contemplation and inner life nor the aversion thereof can enter this place. Here we are totally "at home." And so this is not the other, strange, and self-made world of self enclosed secrecy. "John, watch out for the bedroom lamp! Don't make so much noise!" - "Yes Mother." No longer a secret place, the attic is once again a part of the house.

Let us watch the child who not only has secret places in his home, but who also has forbidden places and who therefore knows areas of the house as defined and distinct places. In some homes, the parents' bedroom provides this forbidden area, in others, it is sometimes the formal living room, the study, or the furnace room downstairs. Only the "well behaved" children seem to be able to live as if the forbidden areas simply do not exist. But the child who cannot remain indifferent to these places is called "bad" or at least somewhat "bad." He finds himself at the threshold of transgression, and the door, which slowly opens, lures the child towards transgression. One throws a quick glance into the forbidden realm. The things in there all make long faces and look back at us darkly. At any rate, they are uncommunicative and unrelenting. They don't speak to us. If one wanted to hide, this probably would be the place where no one would search. But one does not dare to enter. In a forbidden place like this we would feel as if someone were looking at us with threatening eyes. The silence, if not hostile, is at least lifeless and therefore paralyzing. Nothing can win us over to interest us in its presence. And that is the reason why we get bored in a forbidden place. We flee from it like the lonely person flees from a place like the attic. For here we are not in No-Man's land. Here we are quite definitely in "foreign lands," out of place.

The phenomenological analysis of the secret place of the child shows us that the distinctions between the outer and inner world melt into a single, unique, personal world. Space, emptiness, and also darkness reside in the same realm where the soul dwells. They unfold in this realm and give form and sense to it by bringing this domain to life. But sometimes this space around us looks at us with hollow eyes of disappointment; here we experience the dialogue with nothingness; we are sucked into the spell of emptiness, and we experience the loss of a sense of self. This is also where we experience fear and anxiety. The mysterious stillness of the curtain, the enigmatic body of the closed door, the deep blackness of the grotto, the stairway, and the spying window which is placed too high to look through, all these lead to the.experience of anxiety. They may seem to guard or cover an entry-way or passage. The endless stairway, the curtains which move by themselves, the door which is suspiciously ajar, or the door which slowly opens, the strange silhouette at the windows are all symbols of fear. In them we discover the humanness of our fears. For the animal neither the curtain nor the door, neither the stairs nor the grotto are grounds for panic. The animal suspects no threat in the darkness. Only humans know this kind of anxiety which arises in a world created and given significance by humans themselves. The very small child does not know this specific human anxiety. His life is in such an intense, organic-dynamic symbiosis with his immediate environment that his sense-
making of the world occurs in a fundamentally dialectic mode. The child sees himself already formed in comparison to things outside himself; these things ground his existence, but his "I" has distanced very little from his world. As soon as the child begins to be able to distance himself, that is, as soon as we can feel that the child is accomplishing the impossible— the separation of the previously united elements as soon as the first contrast is traceable in him, even if it is only the opposition of his "I" to the world—then human anxieties gather themselves unto him.

This happens during the third, fourth and fifth year of his life. And gradually, as the "I" begins to assert itself against the world, the anxieties disappear in degrees. So we see in the research of Jersild and Holmes that anxiety lessens greatly after the fifth and sixth year. Their beginnings then signify initially the development of a unique human personality in which the first opposition between world and "I" becomes conscious and in which the world is experienced as "other"—a world that is not yet fully understood or under control by the child, a strange world! so it seems, a world to which also the school belongs!

We have seen that the indeterminate place speaks to us, as it were. In a sense, it makes itself available to us. It offers itself, in that it opens itself. It looks at us in spite of the fact and because of the fact that it is empty. This call and this offering of availability are an appeal to the abilities of the child to make the impersonal space into his own very own, very special place. And the secrecy of this place is first of all experienced as the secrecy of "my-own-ness." Thus in this void, in this availability, the child encounters the "world." Such an encounter the child may have experienced before in different situations. But this time it encounters the world in a more addressable form everything which can occur in this openness and in this availability, the child must actively fashion or at least actively allow as a possibility.

In the world-shared-in-common things acquire their significance exactly because of this in-common-ness. The others constantly remind us as it were that a spoon is to be used only as a spoon. It is not a boat. The common world is a statute which comes to the child from the past. One cannot argue with it. Our parents, all people, and even all things indiscernable in their particular characteristics, in their materiality, are completed facts. And so we say, "That's just the way things are." We can make them the center of our playful games; we can spin dreams around them; we can project in them whatever it is that we want ourselves to be or become. But they always answer us in their own particular way of doing things, which in turn awakens our own. In the secret place, in comparison, we are far removed from all this. The world is delivered from us—and also, we are delivered from the world. It's the same thing. The path that the child must travel to get from the world-in-common to his own place is not too far, for this place borders on his own everyday living space. It is an enclave within it. From the familiar everyday living space one can dare to take the step into the unformed and just this unformed realism then becomes part of the "personal" life or part of what is the secret of this place. During all the stages leading to adulthood, the secret place remains an asylum in which the personality can mature; this self-creating process of this standing apart from others, this experiment, this growing in self-awareness, this creative peace and absolute intimacy demand it—for they are only possible in alone-ness.

Notes