

Teacher Selection, Moral/Spiritual Education, and Character Formation for Confined Learners

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It is clear that in whatever it is our duty to act, those matters also it is our duty to study (Arnold, in Quick, 1916, p. xiii)

Can a person be an educator without having an aim? (Soltis, in McMillan and Schumacher, 1989, p. 441).

Where there is no vision, the people perish (Proverbs 29:18a, KJV).

Part One: Introduction and Historical Context Introduction

Correctional teachers have an aim. It is our duty to study that aim and how it has been conceptualized. Our aim is to help students who are ready to "turn their lives around." Correctional education is an intervention strategy. We seek transformation. We use social learning activities to interrupt and help stop asocial, nonsocial, or antisocial behaviors.

Lives are rarely turned around through non-controversial, officially approved, fragmented, factual knowledge. How valuable is the work of a correctional educator who cannot influence lives? Students who are ready for transformation turn their lives around in response to a thoughtful teacher's intervention.

Role modeling has proved successful with confined learners. Wards and inmates are often "late bloomers," in need of guidance about how to move through life. Many confined learners respond well to good teachers when they are ready to make life adjustments. However, role modeling in correctional education has left many questions about whose role should be modeled, and what cultural rationale should be applied. This article is about how views on correctional teacher characteristics have changed over time—how teacher aims have been linked directly to aspirations for student character formation. The article is designed to initiate dialogue. It has four parts, outlining historical and cultural contexts, teacher selection issues, and summary/conclusion.

An Overview of Changing Attitudes

Most veteran correctional educators have observed how fads and emphases come and go over the years.

There have also been larger patterns, over the decades, which are only available through the historical literature. Figure 1 displays the main perspectives that were historically applied in our field.

Part Two: Cultural Context Identifying the Larger Patterns

Pitirim Sorokin's ideas can be applied to correctional education. In 1942 Sorokin's four volume synthesis of Western culture was published, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*. After decades-long research, Sorokin had identified a cycle of cultural aspirations with three elements, based on three different kinds of culturally defined "truth," associated with faith, reason, and the senses. Sorokin did not propose that any culture is ever entirely consistent with its main theme—merely that cultures tend to represent the aspirations of the great mass of their people. Further, he maintained that each system of "truth" was flawed; none could be maintained permanently.

Truth of Faith

Truth of faith was most clearly evident during the Middle Ages, when most people took their duties very seriously. Innocence and purity of heart were real aspirations of everyday folks. Religious authorities helped them gain access to heaven or paradise; this is the central agenda of truth of faith. Most people who lived during these periods were not attentive to issues of political freedom or economic equality. Art tended to be austere and formal, emphasizing symbols with inherent religious meaning. Although there are still people and communities that subscribe to truth of faith values in modern North America, theirs is not the conventional world view.

Most modern culture(s) are not based on duty or the pursuit of purity. We tend to think that people from truth of faith cultures must be insane, misguided, or naive. We have difficulty accepting truth of faith motivations. Indeed, some Middle Eastern nations are now in the truth of faith mode, and Westerners frequently comment that the actions of people from those nations appear irrational. Nothing could be more inaccurate. Instead, our current cultural values seem "out of synch" with the religiously oriented truth of faith view.

Truth of Reason

Truth of reason is "middle ground" between the truths of faith and the senses, because the other modes may exert influence during a truth of reason period. This was the culture of our founding fathers, when the American republic emerged. In truth of reason, people believe they can think their way through most problems. Education is a tool of empowerment, and ignorance and tyrannous governments are the great enemies. In this mode people fear that freedom or self-determination will be denied by tyrants, that ignorant people are vulnerable. Citizenship is the ideal. Art is naturalistic and idealistic (many

Figure 1: A History of Good Intentions*

Reform-Oriented Group	Their Idea About What was Needed by People Who Erred	Name of the Resultant System	The Problem With that System
Devout Quakers	A peaceful place for reflection (solitary cell with Bible)	Pennsylvania Sys of Prison Discipline	Devout Quakers rarely commit violent crime
Enterprising 19th Century Merchants	Harsh regimentation (Lockstep, striped uniforms, work)	Auburn Sys of Prison Discipline	Enterprising merchants rarely commit violent crime
Industrious Capitalists	Factory work	Industrial Prisons	Industrious capitalists rarely commit violent crime
Psychiatrists/ Psychologists	Quiet hospitalization	Prison Hospitals	Psychiatrists and psychologists rarely commit violent crime
Modern, conscientious employees	Get a job	Emphasis on literacy, coping, and vocational skills	Modern, conscientious employees rarely commit violent crime

Summary: Various reform groups have influenced prisons, each projecting its own needs onto the system. All these systems failed.

*Note: This title is from Blake McKelvey's book on American Prisons.

"golden ages" were in the truth of reason milieu). This world view aspires for democracy, as expressed through education, to preserve freedom.

Truth of the Senses

The truth of senses mode is characterized by pursuit of material possessions, decadent fashions, fragmentation of values and visual images, and the sensuous. Individualism and precocious acquisitiveness are held in high esteem; most people aspire to be independently wealthy. Science, which measures and extends the evidence of our senses, is seen as the path to progress. Writing about an early truth of the senses period, Quick found that "education had come to be [merely] an intellectual training to enable one to make the best use of his personal opportunities" (1916, p. 73). In art, the masculine side of femininity is emphasized, and the feminine side of masculinity; artistic fads pursue the glamorous or colossal. Ownership of things is the primary measure of success. Yet the discretionary authority of the wealthy is seen as a threat to a happy life.

Both the "communist" and "democratic/free enterprise" systems attempted to provide safeguards against precisely the same threat—the arbitrary, discretionary authority of the wealthy. The communist world sought to accomplish this agenda through economic equality and the nationalization of capital. The West sought to accom-

plish it through bureaucratic regulation of "robber barons." Both systems failed in their attempts.

Sorokin's Findings and Correctional Education

Two massive cultural transformations marked the beginning and the current status of the American nation. Both influenced our times, including the correctional education agenda. North American correctional education was born on the heels of the American Revolution, in 1789—the same year as the French Revolution. Another massive cultural transformation occurred two hundred years later. The demise of the Soviet Union, in part, represented the success of the American government's "destabilization" policy, by escalating the Cold War arms race. The beginning of that success was most evident in 1989, when the Berlin Wall came down and the Eastern Block was rent asunder. The next year the international correctional education agenda was evident, with the first truly international Correctional Education Association conference and the conceptual birth of the International Forum for the Study of Education in Penal Systems. Internationalism helps unify the modern world, a result of our intense desire for peace.

Is a New Truth of Faith Period Emerging?

According to Sorokin, truth of senses is always followed by a new truth of faith period. The elements of a

new cultural period are emerging everywhere. Observers are aware that social/cultural patterns are disintegrating all around us, but do not yet know what will replace them. This situation existed during other periods of massive cultural transformation, as well—at the end of antiquity and the eve of the industrial revolution.

We long for the end of the Cold War and the recession, but we are not yet certain that these events will be assured. The economy is being restructured, but we do not know exactly how or why. Our ideas about how we relate to each other and to the planet are going through massive realignment: “new” concerns are frequently expressed about the quality of life, wellness, and the environment. Many people seem ready to believe in something again. Sorokin predicted that the matrix of seemingly unconnected events and trends will be linked through a vast new cultural emphasis on truth of faith issues.

From the current evidence it appears likely that this new truth of faith culture may emphasize spiritual concerns without being “religious,” at least in the way we usually apply the term. For example, the normal accouterments of religion (a place of worship, a priestly class, holy days, prescribed rituals) have not been associated with the emerging new spirituality. However, the signs of the new beliefs are already in place. These include new concepts of duty to health, ecology, and our inner selves; clear aspirations for peace and an end to world hunger; a growing focus on dedication to exercise and purity of diet; and renewed emphasis on an array of issues related to the quality of life. New communities are emerging, and great interest is directed to maintaining personal balance, even in the midst of turmoil. Bioregional or “Green” political movements have been dominated by postpatriarchal and deep ecological concerns, from a social activist perspective. The green banner of the new activism has replaced the red banner of the old, as outlined in Figure 2.

One of the greatest obstacles to the emerging world view is the old truth of senses scientific tradition. People who think they are “objective” and possess the whole truth are rarely open to different perceptions. Nevertheless, even this obstacle is being overcome by the “new physics” and an emphasis on qualitative research from a holistic perspective.

Roof (1993) commented on the large numbers of

people who subscribe to the emerging spirituality. He wrote that they place

great emphasis on the unity of things, on combining belief and feeling...and the inner and outer worlds. Unity arises not from faith as handed down from the past, but out of one’s own encounters. Choice is essential: Each person must follow his or her bliss wherever it leads. Sixty percent [of polled “baby boomers”] think ‘people have God within them, so places of worship are not really necessary.’... [They] are...inclined to practice meditation and to believe in psychic powers... They speak of spiritual growth and healing... their own well-being and that of the planet. They prefer meditating alone to worshipping with others... [There is also] an upturn in interest: 12-step groups, men’s groups, holistic health, positive-thinking seminars... healing rituals, environmental causes. The [baby] boomers are broadening the range of activities normally associated with spiritual concerns... [They] are not as secular and materialistic... Far from being anti-religious, they are deeply spiritual and devoted to a renewal of outlook and values; remarkably few are unconcerned about spiritual matters... (pp. 4-6).

In correctional education these trends and aspirations are reflected in patterns of professional identification, even though they have not yet been applied in many classrooms and schools. Most teachers are now ready to address the needs of the “whole learner,” instead of merely being responsible for classroom management. Knowledge- and skill-based incremental activities are being replaced with attitudes-based developmental activities. We are stretching from a behavioral/medical model (diagnostic-prescriptive method) to a cognitive or cognitive-moral model. The old formula that “drove” education, “knowledge, skills, and attitudes,” is being replaced with one more appropriate to correctional education: “attitudes, skills, and knowledge.” Student maturation is a growing focus. In addition, many institutional teachers are beginning to identify with prison reform rather than with traditional institutional management. However, it is still too early to determine where all these changes will take the discipline of correctional education.

Figure 2: Social Activism in Truth of Senses and Truth of Faith—Spiritual

20th Century Truth of the Senses Milieu		20th Century Truth of Faith—Spiritual Milieu	
Banner	Aspiration	Banner	Aspiration
Red, white, and Blue	Political Freedom	Red, White, and Blue	Political Freedom
Red	Economic Equality	Green	Ecological Post- Patriarchalism

Further Applications to Correctional Education

All three of Sorokin's previous cultural periods, and the emerging or expected one, have been relevant to correctional education. In part, this resulted from the "eddies" that exist in complex cultures, as well as the main "currents." The original movement for institutionalization, and the subsequent one for prison reform/correctional education, was generated in one American community—the Quaker community. These movements resonated among English Quakers, and in the replication of the Pennsylvania system of prison discipline throughout much of Europe.

Although they lived in a truth of reason world, the Quaker communities adhered to truth of faith principles. Later, correctional education was influenced by the pre-Civil War reform movements of Jacksonian democracy. Those movements represented an extension

and consolidation of the American Revolution (which epitomized truth of reason ideals). Truth of reason waned during intense industrialization after the American Civil War, as North America gradually settled into its current truth of senses mode. These cultural transitions applied to correctional education, which mirrors the larger culture in most attributes, with the exception of its anomalous origin in a truth of faith enclave within the larger truth of reason continental environment.

Figure 3 applies this trajectory of cultural values to correctional education. It suggests how role modeling, and its influence on teacher attitudes and student character formation, has historically been applied to correctional teacher selection.

**Part Three: Teacher Selection Issues
Attitudes Toward Character Formation and**

Figure 3: "Truth" and Teacher Selection in Correctional Education

Sorokin's Cultural "Truth"	Relevant Years	Perceived Causes of Crime	Perceived Strategies for "Correction"	Correctional Education Strategies	Themes of Correctional Teacher Selection
Truth of Faith (Religious)	1789 to 1875	Intemperance and immorality; ignorance of God's word; sin, idolatry, and neglect of duty	Literacy for Reformation: memorize Bible verses; duty; gratefulness; good works; a pure heart	Rote memorization and teacher domination/student submission; religiosity	Good teachers were innocent, evangelical, pious, zealots, who reminded the students of their guilt
Truth of Reason	1876 to WW I, 1920s to WW II	Lack of self-determination	Citizenship/Socialization: Stage 1—avoid recidivism Stage 2—participate in the community	Stage 1— industrial education, basic skills Stage 2— community organization	Good Stage 1 teachers were earthy and did not trust; Good Stage 2 teachers were charismatic community leaders
Truth of the Senses	1946 to 1988	Inability to supply basic material needs; poverty and environmental press: "Society"	Literacy for Basic and Marketable Skills: become employed, and stay employed	Coping and survival; diagnostic-prescriptive classroom management; medical model	Good teachers were clinical, non-controversial, and fair; prosocial, "objective," loyal
Truth of Faith Aspiration (Spiritual)	Gradually emerging since about 1989	Impulsivity, poorly developed cognitive skills; a lack of social reciprocity and ethical community standards	Maturation: Skill development + personal growth for ethical decision-making; reflection; community organization	Cognitive or cognitive-moral development; cultural education; democratic community life; humanities, social sci.	Good teachers are balanced people; concerned about health, the environment, social issues; with activist aspirations for the society and the program

Teacher Selection

There have been three general stages in the historical development of correctional teacher selection. The first stage consisted of very specific advice from 19th century correctional education leaders, in response to local conditions and personnel selection processes. This advice is not easily accessible to modern correctional educators; it generally corresponds with the truth of faith—religious milieu. The second stage consisted of attempts to systematize the correctional education personnel selection process professionwide. None of these systems remain influential today beyond specifically defined geographical regions; they generally correspond to the truth of reason and/or truth of the senses milieu. The third stage consisted of three encyclopedic systems for comprehensive purposes, including but not limited to personnel selection. These are the only rosters that are widely applied at various locations in the field today. They generally correspond with the truth of the senses mode, with one exception which is applicable to the truth of faith—spiritual mode. The next paragraphs introduce the clergy's role in early correctional education.

Stage 1: Advice from 19th Century Correctional Education Leaders:

During the 19th century most correctional educators were chaplains. Some wardens and keepers focused on control, and actively encouraged convicts to feel guilty. In 1827 Mr. Powers, the keeper at New York State's Auburn Prison, recommended

A resident chaplain [institutional teacher] should, in all cases, and under all circumstances, strictly conform to the rules and regulations of the institution, especially in not furnishing convicts forbidden intelligence, or the great hypocrisy, and tend to insubordination. He should deal plainly with them, and dwell emphatically upon their deep depravity and guilt in violating the laws of God and their country; convince them of the justice of their sentence; awaken remorse in their consciences; press home upon them their solemn obligations; make them feel pungently the horrors of their situation; and by all other means make them realize the necessity and duty of repentance, of amendment, and of humble and strict obedience to all the regulations of the Prison. This course would tend powerfully to make them better convicts, and, when restored to their liberty, make them better citizens." (BDPS, vol. #1, p. 92).

In 1832, at England's Great Yarmouth Gaol (Jail), teacher Sarah Martin identified another focus, quite different from the one suggested by Mr. Powers. She sometimes suffered

distress at the depravity of one of the turnkeys. 'Yet,' she declares, 'even he could not deprive me of respect from the prisoners, nor

destroy my influence over them. My only safe alternative was trust in God... My influence with the prisoners was simply supported by what I taught of truth.'" (Banks, 1958, p. 16).

Banks suggested that correctional educators should be selected for their ability to "stand up" to prison staff who resented the educational opportunities offered to inmates.

There was a long tradition of selecting correctional educators for their missionary zeal. By 1839 Auburn Prison chaplain B.C. Smith successfully utilized the services of 50 volunteer teachers from the outside community to teach 300 convict students. He wrote of the teachers "They are full of zeal and hope in the school, and have a special weekly prayer-meeting in behalf of it." (BPDS, vol. #3, p. 440).

At Massachusetts State Prison in 1842, chaplain Jared Curtis described the reformation of inebriates in the school as a "holy cause." Curtis subscribed to a religious orientation regarding his identity as a correctional educator, and quoted Jesus: "I was in Prison, and ye came unto me." (BPDS, vol. #4, p. 144).

This emphasis on religious zeal was articulated at New Hampshire Prison in 1844, when Mr. Atwood was hired as chaplain, with an annual salary of \$50. Atwood's service was exemplary, characterized "with benevolence and zeal for the reformation of the convicts." The State expressed its pleasure by raising his annual salary to \$300. (BPDS, vol. #4, p. 387). And in her 1851 organizational manual for juvenile reform schools, English author Mary Carpenter reiterated the need to hire zealous instructors (Carpenter, 1872/1970, p. 122). All the examples cited so far correspond with the truth of faith—religious milieu.

Another set of 19th century emphases was rooted in the need to hire institutional teachers who would not be gullible or naive in their sentiments toward sophisticated convicts. These emphases correspond with the themes of the truth of reason mode. In 1870, before his famous career at Elmira Reformatory, warden Zebulon Brockway hired Professor H.S. Tarbell to direct the Detroit House of Correction School. Tarbell later wrote

The most important element in the whole arrangement is a suitable teacher... He must be a painstaking, consistent, steadfast man, of so much character and scholarship as to secure the respect and confidence of the prisoners. There must be no sham, no mere assumption about him, for [of] all shrewd observers of men and motives, of all lynx-eyed detectors of humbug and affectation, the inmates of our prisons are the sharpest. (Wallack, 1939, pp. 7-8).

Early advice on correctional education personnel selection was in response to local conditions, addressing the themes of a) controlling convicts and reminding them of their guilt, b) being guided by a sense of missionary zeal, c) "standing up" to institutional staff while maintaining trust in God, d) not trusting students,

and e) maintaining personal and professional integrity. Much of this advice was useful, but narrowly focused. Indeed, some of the themes seem mutually exclusive to a modern reader. Nevertheless, they all fit with the ideas of Figure 3. The next stage consisted of attempts to eliminate identified problems through the establishment of standards for institutional settings, throughout the entire correctional education field.

Stage 2: Attempts to Systematize Teacher Selection Processes

Figure 4 references fourteen selected studies, arranged chronologically for the 1931 to 1992 period. Interested readers may wish to pursue the sources. Seven of the studies were intended for nationwide application, three for Florida, one for Texas, two for California, and one for the Federal Bureau of Prisons. They were all attempts to move from earlier truth of faith/truth of reason, particularistic themes to a universal, truth of reason/truth of the senses ("scientific," measurable-behavioral) approach to teacher attitude/character formation link.

Collectively, these fourteen systems represented a vast improvement over the narrow and localized advice of 19th century correctional education leaders. They also represented the trend toward secularization and science. Nevertheless, each of the Figure 4 contributors had either a particular emphasis which prevented universal application throughout the correctional education field (despite the aspirations of its author) or was designed for another purpose. The current, encyclopedic

systems which have succeeded them represent an attempt to attain maximum generalizability and usefulness in correctional education. Even in the three encyclopedic systems, however, there are important differences in methodology and product attributes. Those differences are the focus of the next section.

Stage 3: Encyclopedic Systems

The three encyclopedic systems that have attracted recent attention are the National Institute of Corrections' (NIC's) DACUM procedure, Helen (Nell) Eano Pecht Miller's analysis of the behaviors of prison teachers perceived to be effective, and the Robert Presley Institute research project on **Correctional Teacher Skills, Characteristics, and Performance Indicators**. These systems were applicable in the truth of the senses milieu. The Presley product is also applicable in the emerging truth of faith—spiritual milieu. The following narrative introduces each system.

DACUM stands for Developing A Curriculum. It is a training activity that has been adopted by the NIC's National Academy of Corrections. DACUM is implemented by a staff of professionally trained facilitators. Like the other encyclopedic systems, the DACUM product is designed to be competency-based and measurable.

The behaviors of prison teachers perceived to be effective were documented by Miller. This research was implemented in Maryland, but is generally applicable to all prison teachers. The complete report is included in her 1988 Ph.D. dissertation.

Figure 4: Main Contributions to the Stage 2 Literature

1. MacCormick, A. (1931). **The education of adult prisoners**. New York: National Society of Penal Information, p. 128.
2. Austin, R. (1973). **Characteristics and competencies of effective correctional education teachers as perceived by supervisors of education in Federal correctional institutions**. Michigan State University (Ph.D. dissertation).
3. Dell'Apa, F. (1973). **Educational programs in adult correctional institutions: A survey**. Boulder: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.
4. Dell'Apa, F. (1973). **Education for the youthful offender in correctional institutions: Issues**. Boulder: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.
5. Texas Education Agency (TEA). (1975). **College curriculum for correctional instructional personnel**. Austin: TEA. ED 131 306.
6. Shannon, T. (1978). **Certification and teacher education for vocational teachers in state correctional institutions**. Ohio University (Ph.D. dissertation).
7. Norde, G. (1978). The correctional education performance competency standards. **Quarterly Journal of**

Corrections, 1(2), 39-42.

8. Ravin, L.A. (1980). **A survey of teacher preparation in juvenile correctional facilities**. Long Beach: California State University (M.S. thesis).

9. Duncan, C. J. (1982). **Identification of competencies for correctional education certification in Florida**. Florida State University (Ph.D. dissertation).

10. A Consortium of Florida Adult Educators and Practitioners. (No date; probably 1982). **Competencies for adult educators and an assessment inventory**. Tallahassee: Florida State Department of Education.

11. Platt, J. (No date; probably 1983). No title ('Call it **Correctional/special educator competencies**). Morgantown: West Virginia University.

12. Correctional Education School Authority (CESA). (1990). **Instructional personnel performance appraisal system guidelines for implementation**. Tallahassee: CESA.

13. Kersting, J. (1991). **Goals for corrections education students**. Macolm: Western Illinois University.

14. Ashcroft, R. (1992). Training teachers for institutional and alternative instruction settings. **Journal of Court and Community Schools**, 3(2), 12-16.

The Presley Institute study is useful in designing correctional teacher preparation and inservice programs, but is equally applicable for job descriptions and teacher evaluations. This product resulted from four separate rounds of research, spanning the 1977 to 1992 period. The last, sponsored by California's Robert Presley Institute of Corrections Research and Training, resulted in measurable performance indicators (Gehring, 1992). This roster of measurable performance indicators presents prerequisite correctional teacher skills (which accrue from learning/training) and characteristics (which accrue from maturation). The inclusion of maturational issues has made the Presley material as applicable in the emerging truth of faith—spiritual milieu as in old truth of the senses milieu.

Part Four: Summary and Conclusion

Summary

Correctional education is an intervention strategy: correctional teachers help confined students turn their lives around. This issue is profoundly relevant to character formation. The traditional and most effective strategy for character formation is through role modeling. During the history of North American correctional education, various emphases have been allied to correctional teacher selection, in order to influence the dynamics of role modeling. Sorokin's synthesis of cultural aspirations fits these emphases.

During its approximately 200 year history correctional education was immensely influenced by each of the cultural aspirations Sorokin described: truth of faith, truth of reason, and truth of the senses. An emerging new truth of faith period has recently become identifiable. It is likely that patterns of correctional education service delivery will be adjusted to accommodate the sentiments of this emerging truth of faith—spiritual period. The development of criteria for the selection of correctional teachers corresponds with these four periods. Stage 1 (19th century) criteria generally corresponded with themes of the truth of faith—religion period, with some correspondence to truth of reason. Stages 2 (local criteria) and 3 (encyclopedic/universal) generally correspond with truth of reason and truth of the senses attributes. At least one encyclopedic system for correctional teacher selection corresponds with the truth of faith—spiritual aspiration.

Conclusion

Correctional teachers have an aim, and it is our duty to study that aim. Our aim is transformation. During periods of relative stability, transformation may be more appropriate for students than for teachers. During massive cultural transformation (like the current period), however, teachers and students each have learning agenda. Although correctional teachers and confined learners may have different learning needs, we all need to enhance our ability to succeed in perplexing and

unsettling times. We are all in this difficult situation together, teachers and students alike; we all have something to learn.

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*Note: See additional references in Figure 4.

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Biographical Sketch

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