

# Social Role Valorization News & Reviews

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AS IN EARLIER ISSUES of this journal, my intent for this column is four-fold, at least across multiple journal issues if not in each one.

(a) Briefly annotate publications that have relevance to Social Role Valorization (SRV). Conceivably, some of these might be reviewed in greater depth in a later issue of this journal. Many of these annotations should be useful not only as teaching resources, but as pointers to research relevant to SRV theory.

(b) Present brief sketches of media items that illustrate an SRV issue.

(c) Present vignettes from public life that illustrate or teach something about SRV. Aside from being instructive to readers, persons who teach SRV will hopefully find many of the items in this column useful in their teaching.

(d) By all the above, I hope to illustrate and teach the art and craft of spotting, analyzing, and interpreting phenomena that have SRV relevance.

## **Devaluation, Differentism, Deviancy & Deviancy-Making**

\*One of the many hypocrisies of the politically correct is that specially designated and protected classes (such as females, homosexuals, foreigners, more recently Muslims, etc.) may say and do things that violate anti-discrimination laws for which they would be prosecuted or persecuted if they did **not** belong to these specially favored groups, while members of the non-protected

groups are persecuted or prosecuted if they did or said these things. For instance, one of the worst things a Caucasian could say is the word 'nigger,' but when 'African-Americans' use the word (and many do so freely), nobody is supposed to take umbrage. Some imaginable scenarios are quite humorous, such as a Muslim landlord refusing to rent to homosexuals. If a member of a non-protected class did this, hell would break loose, but a Muslim might get away with it by invoking Islamic religion and religious freedom (5 May 2006 news clipping).

When an Onondaga Indian youth said "I like to be with my own people" about being in an Onondaga Indian school on Onondaga territory near Syracuse, it became a diversity celebration statement worth reporting in the newspaper (*Syracuse Post-Standard*, 13 Nov. 2006). If a Caucasian youth said "I want to be with white people" or "I want to be among Anglo-Saxons," it would have had severe repercussions.

\*This is really funny, but teaches a lot about deviancy-making. In Syracuse (and almost certainly elsewhere too), African-American children have been taunting African immigrant children, telling them that they speak poor English (as if the accusers did not), and are darker than they—so they throw bleach at them, which could blind someone. The politically correct media were mortified, but being incorrigible, blamed white America for

instilling its racial stereotypes into these children. The answer: diversity education for the African-American children (*Syracuse Post-Standard*, 26 June 2006).

\*Probably influenced by social Darwinistic ideology, between ca. 1930-1960, there flourished a discipline of study called 'social disorganization' that focused on individual, family, community, national and international disorganization. For instance, war fell into the latter category; insanity, mental deficiency, alcoholism, crime, etc., were commonly put into the category of individual disorganization. Then during the 1960s, the field disappeared, and another took its place: deviancy. Now, deviancy is being thrown out in favor of diversity, which is to be 'celebrated.' What was yesterday's deviancy, and the day before disorganization, is now a valued characteristic or status, exemplifying Nietzsche's goal of the "transvaluation of all values."

\*When handicapped people in Alaska get sent to another state for treatment or 'treatment,' it is reported in the Alaska idiom that they are being sent 'Outside,' with a capital O, as in the headline, "Children sent to Outside treatment centers" (2004 news clipping). One is reminded of the kind of 'we vs. them' discourse that is so much a part of deviancy-making.

\*There is no end to how, in different societies and at different times, people can be deviancy-imaged. In Northern Germany in the early 20th century, to convey that something was driving one crazy, a person might say, 'this could make one Catholic.' In the north German province of Mecklenburg, a man was convicted of insult for calling another person a Catholic. If a child misbehaved in Pomerania, it was said that it "acted Catholic again" (1914 German American book).

\*In Northern Ireland during a Protestant parade, a reporter was warned by local people that

"he looked like a Catholic," and that therefore, he was in danger (*National Catholic Register*, 18 July 1999). This reveals much about the deviancy-making mentality.

\* The caste system in India was created by invading Aryans more than 3500 years ago(!), and is an instructive and striking example of deviancy-making through social stratification, and how it can endure (*Books & Culture*, 1/2006).

According to Hindu belief, there are four major castes, plus a fifth category of a multitude of outcasts. The highest caste (about 5% of India's one billion+ population) consists of the Brahmins, said to have originated from the head of the god Brahma. (The word 'Brahman' also means divine breath or sacred power.) The second highest caste is said to have come from the shoulder of the god, the third from the god's thigh, and the fourth (40-55%) from the god's feet. These four levels of castes are also associated with colors: white, red, yellow, and black respectively. (There is, in fact, a correlation in India between caste level and skin color, and an obsession with it. Hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent to have one's facial skin lightened. No 'darker is more beautiful' campaign in India!) The outcasts (those below the 4th level), or Dalits—about 25-30% (250-300 million) of the population—are considered below the god's feet, of less worth than animals, and traditionally have been considered impure, untouchable, and allowed to perform only the worst jobs in Indian society.

The Brahmins are believed to be genetically suited for the highest levels of intellectual, rational and ritual skills in both religious and secular occupations. The second caste is deemed to be particularly suited as warriors or rulers. The third are in essence the merchants and entrepreneurs that produce wealth. The fourth use their muscles and dexterity, and have been the backbone of the agrarian economy. They are thought to be descended from ancient conquered peoples, and they themselves believe that they were at one time

warriors and rulers in their own domain who had been reduced to lower status.

The Dalits have been told that they had committed terrible sins in previous lives, that God does not love them, that they were born to serve the four other castes, that they have no rights, and could not visit temples, and were to be untouchable to the other castes. They called themselves Dalit, meaning 'crushed' or 'downtrodden.' The post-World War II constitution and laws notwithstanding, they are commonly refused entry to public parks, barber shops, public wells, and often subjected to theft, violence, rapes and forced prostitution, including unpunished violence by police; and sometimes they are murdered with impunity, and massacred. It dwarfs what went on under South African apartheid, but has received little attention.

One reason why the Dalits have recently been converting to Christianity in masses is because Christianity has told them that they are made in the image of God, and that this gives them dignity, value and self-worth. The non-Dalit Hindus are enraged at this conversion, because it turns the caste system upside down, both by depriving the economy of its bottom workers, as well as in light of Christian teaching that the least in this world will be the first in the next. This is one reason why Christian Dalits in particular have been badly persecuted in recent years, and why Hindu persecution has begun to extend to Christianity generally as the source of all this trouble.

However, Hindu opposition to Christians goes back further than this, and already was expressed in the 1930s by Gandhi himself who is believed to have threatened to legislate against conversion (to Christianity) once India became independent. While laws were passed under the title of 'Freedom of Religion Acts,' the Indian Supreme Court ruled in 1977 that the work of evangelists was a threat to 'freedom of conscience.' (This reminds one of Orwell's 'war is peace,' etc.) There is also a mythology among Hindus that almost any conversion is accomplished through deception,

seduction, or even compulsion. All this helps explain why Hindu nationalist parties have begun to develop militias of their own, and their own training camps (*Christian History*, Summer 2005, plus several other sources).

The politically correct have been interpreting India as a peaceful 'diverse' country, and as a model of democracy in the Third World. This image may soon fall apart, like virtually all PC fantasies. We may see not only bloody mass persecutions of Christians, but also resumption of internal warfare between Hindus and Muslims, of which we have already seen some outbursts lately.

\*Heiderer, T. (1990). Sacred space, sacred time: India's Maha Kumbh Mela draws millions. *National Geographic*, 177(5), 106-117. There were still beggar-masters in India in 1989 who ran begging rings that bought children in order to cripple them and send them out to beg on the owner's behalf.

\*Here is an extraordinary event: one of India's low castes has been lobbying to be classified as members of **the** lowest caste. Usually people aspire to be classified upwards, not downwards. The reason in this case is a form of 'affirmative action,' in that the lowest caste qualifies for certain favorable government quotas (*Syracuse Post-Standard*, 31 May 2008, p. A5). It is a bit like Caucasians in the US clamoring to be classified as 'Native Americans' so that they can run casinos which it is only legal for the Indians to operate on their own lands.

\*In Yemen, a million people comprise the class of 'Al Akhdam' or servants, who are relegated to cleaning tasks and begging, similar to the untouchables in India (*New York Times*, 27 Feb. 2008, p. A1).

\*Miles, M. (2002). Disability in an Eastern religious context: Historical perspectives. *Journal of Religion, Disability & Health*, 6, 53-76. This article explains why deformed, impaired and retarded

people are devalued—often even despised—in cultures that believe in reincarnation: they are believed to have committed sins in their previous lives. Further, their current condition may be a symbol of their sin. For instance, someone who was domineering or over-intellectual in an earlier life may be ‘rehabilitated’ by reincarnation as mentally impaired, so as to progress toward enlightenment.

The idea that a twisted personality goes with a twisted body is ancient. For instance, one can also find it in early Sanskrit writings.

In some cultures, newborn babies were publicly examined for defects a few months after birth, and the defective ones were put to death. Strabo (ca. 63 BC-ca. 21 AD) documented this practice in the Punjab in India, and other Roman writers observed it elsewhere. This practice is comparable to recent proposals in modernized societies to withhold personhood from infants for up to two years.

In many cultures, punishments for crimes included the infliction of a disabling condition, as via amputation of a limb or ears or nose, blinding, castration, excision of the tongue, burning, or beating of the foot soles so as to disable walking. If such mutilations occurred in incarnation cultures, they were often seen as analogous to being born impaired for sins in earlier lives.

Proponents of SRV need to think deeply how SRV should be taught in an incarnation culture.

In Islam, the giving of alms to those unable to support themselves is interpreted as an act of justice, not of charity. In other words, the poor are entitled to it. Modernists would interpret this as a right, though in this case it would be by the Islamic Sharia law that combines religious and secular law.

Already in the early Indo-Aryan languages, there were thousands of ‘defect words,’ and among the almost 15,000 ‘head words,’ about 225 referred to an impairment, comparable to our words ‘bone-head,’ ‘bird head,’ etc. In fact, many of the words referring to impairments in European languages of Indo-European origin are derived from the ancient

mother tongue, including the English words blind, small, thick, short, lame, crooked, deaf, dumb, dull, and stupid. This is one reason why such words cannot be easily expunged from the language.

\*Obviously, there are interesting books in all kinds of languages that never get translated, and often are not even reviewed in other languages. One such book written by a German Protestant missionary (Ernst Christoffel) about his work in the Orient between 1904 and 1955 is of interest to human service workers because it provides a rare description of handicapped people in the Middle East and in Islam generally, and especially describes what the author claims to be pioneer work with blind people of mostly Turkish, Armenian and Persian background. One passage in the book was so poignant that I decided to translate it, and it is presented below. The scene played out at the border of Turkey and the present Iraq.

Christoffel: “What is your name, my boy?”

The Orphan Rasul: “Rasul Oemer oghlu.”

C: “Are you the Kurdish boy who hangs out at Mahmud, the coffee shop operator?”

OR: “Yes, master.”

C: “Where are your parents?”

OR: “Dead; I never knew them.”

C: “Have you no relatives?”

OR: “No, Master.”

C: “How long have you been blind?”

OR: “I do not know. I have never seen light.”

C: “How do you make a living?”

- OR: "I gather, master" (meaning he begs).
- C: "Do you get enough to eat your fill?"
- OR: "No, master; I often go to sleep hungry."
- C: "What do you do then?"
- OR: "Nothing, master. I only cry."
- C: "Does the coffee shop-owner give you nothing?"
- OR: "Rarely; he curses and curses when I cry."
- C: "Where is your bed?"
- OR: "I have no bed."
- C: "Where do you sleep?"
- OR: "On the ground, master."
- C: "Isn't that cold?"
- OR: "I freeze much in the winter, but it is not so bad in the summer."
- C: "Are you unmolested when you beg in the city?"
- OR: "Some people curse and cuss. Children often throw stones at me."
- C: "What do you do then?"
- OR: "I cry. Sometimes I throw the stone back, or anything I can grab. The children then laugh. When I get really mad, I curse them."
- C: "Does nobody love you?"
- OR: "I do not understand your question."
- C: "Does no one ever say, 'my dear boy' to you?"
- OR: "No, master; to me, they speak very differently."
- C: "Like what, Rasul?"
- OR: "You dog, you blind dog, you son of a dog."
- C: "Is there no one who ever puts arms around you, strokes your cheek, or kisses your forehead?"
- OR: "No, master. No one has ever done that."
- C: "Why did you come to me?"
- OR: "Are you not the Aleman Effendi who came here on behalf of the blind?"
- C: "Yes, my boy."
- OR: "I wanted to come to you, master."
- C: "What do you want from me?"
- OR: "I do not know, master."
- C: "An alms, maybe?"
- OR: "I would be grateful for one, but that is not why I came."
- C: "Why then, my boy?"
- OR: "Everyone talks of you in town."
- C: "What do people say about me?"
- OR: "It is said that you devote much patience to the blind, and enable them to see the light."
- C: "Anything else?"
- OR: "It is said that you take in blind children

and become their father. Is this true, master?"

C: "Yes, my boy. Do you also want to come to me?"

OR: "Yes, master."

C: "But my children are not allowed to beg."

OR: "If you give me food, I will not beg."

C: "My children are also not allowed to curse."

OR: "I only curse when people harm me."

Christoffel told the boy that when he returned from Germany, he planned to take the boy in, and in the meantime gave him an alms. Tragically, World War I broke out, and Christoffel was unable to return.

\*In the Pyrenees area of France and Spain, there lived for hundreds of years a people called Cagots who were indistinguishable from other people, but were treated as outcasts, much like the Burakumin in Japan. They lived in segregated areas, could not sit where other people might sit, had to use separate water sources, had to enter churches by special doors, received communion after everyone else, and could not seek shelter from the rain under the eaves of houses of Catholics. Even though they were well-behaved, they had a reputation for being decadent, depraved, diseased and criminal. They were skilled craftspeople in wood, but their skill was attributed to the devil. The French revolution of 1789 released them from their estate, and within two to three generations, they assimilated. Perhaps their descendants no longer even know that their ancestors were Cagots.

There are several theories about who the Cagot really were. One is that they started out as outcast lepers. Another is that they were an amalgam of all outcast groups of medieval society. Strangely enough, a disproportionate number of

them were fair, blond and blue-eyed, suggesting a Visigothic element.

This is a good example of being relegated to a devalued class entirely by attribution, in the absence of any distinguishing characteristics.

\*The freak show is back, namely in the form of the TV 'reality show.' Names of these shows may include, *I'm Obese*, *The 627-Pound Woman*, *Half-Ton Man*, and *Little People, Big World*. There is also a show about a girl with two heads (or two girls with one body below the neck), called *Joined for Life*. Wanting to see freaks, and wanting to exhibit them, seems to be a true universal.

\*Of all kinds of what one might loosely call freakery, it is dwarves who have most persistently been able to hold on to niches in the entertainment world. For hundreds or even thousands of years, they were a common sight in the courts of nobility, though not always for entertainment purposes. There once was probably not a circus without a number of them. In freak shows, giants were more common than dwarves, but with the decline of sideshows in circuses and fairs, giants have disappeared (maybe gone into basketball-playing) while dwarves have maintained a toehold in theater, movies and TV, virtually alone of all the former denizens of the freak show and sideshow.

In the last few decades, there have been dwarves in rock performances, on the Howard Stern Show, in the 'sport' of dwarf-tossing, and in a number of sometimes highly acclaimed films and plays. In 2004, there was a new TV comedy series with a dwarfery theme, entitled *Scrubs*. Also, there were dwarves in single episodes of *The Station Agent*, *Live From Lincoln Center*, and even *American Idol*. More than a dozen dwarves appeared on a dating reality show entitled, *The Littlest Groom*.

In 1936, there was a singing Western movie entitled, *The Terror of Tiny Town*, in which everybody and everything was dwarfed, which had its more recent equivalent in an all-dwarf production of Ibsen's play, *A Doll's House*.

A very big image blow to dwarves was the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*, because of all its weird and initially threatening dwarf Munchkins. The Munchkin image has kept hovering over dwarfery and show business ever since.

In German, there is a 'Dwarf Song,' or 'Song of the Dwarves.' It goes like this.

*One, two, three, four,  
five, six, seven;  
room-peddypoom-poompoompoom-poom-  
poom.  
Schnick-schnack-schnuck,  
schnick-schnack-schnuck,  
schnick-schnack-schnuck,  
schnick-schnack-schnuck.  
La-ha-ha-ha!*

Dwarves have long had a reputation for not being very smart, in consequence of many conditions that stunt growth also stunting mental development. The above song seems to play into this stereotype.

In Sierra Leone, there had been intense advance publicity about the appearance of two Nigerian midgets (Aki and Paw Paw) in the national stadium, and a huge crowd bought tickets. When the midgets failed to show up, the authorities substituted two local dwarves instead, but the public was enraged, and thousands started rioting (*Syracuse Post-Standard*, 7 Dec. 2003). Obviously, this public knows the difference between dwarves and midgets.

The practice and 'entertainment' of dwarf-tossing originated in Switzerland. Near its eastern border with Austria, there is a very remote valley that is difficult to reach even today, in which there has been mining of various ores for several hundred years. In the olden days, a large proportion of miners were very short people who were selected or self-selected for this occupation because it was often economic to make mine shafts very low so that short but stout stature was a great advantage.

Miners in Austria heard of the bountifulness of this mine and decided to take it away by force from its owners. Perhaps their own mines were giving

out, as often happened in the Alps. At any rate, they banded together in a small army of several hundred and marched over the mountains to conquer the Swiss mine. The Swiss miners (who may also have been short), plus other taller people in the valley, seem not to have been taken entirely by surprise, and managed to put up strong resistance and to vanquish the army of invading dwarves, perhaps because some of their fighters were tall. Now comes the awful part: the victors grabbed all the vanquished dwarves and tossed them off cliffs down into the deep valley so that they suffered the fate that the Austrian dwarves had apparently planned to inflict had they won. Depravity is not only ubiquitous but amazingly ingenious.

This list by no means exhausts instances of dwarf roles in the entertainment world of the last several decades.

\*A 19 January 2000 cartoon shows a computer correspondence that goes: "Dear Valued Customer: Our records show that you have repeatedly ignored our previous requests for payment. Therefore, you leave us no other alternative. Dear Devalued Customer:"

\*As part of emergency preparedness planning, some localities have established registers for people with temporary or permanent 'disabilities.' The merits of this have to be considered in light of the historical fact that registration has never ended up being to the benefit of devalued groups, but is often initiated early on in a slippery slope that ends in persecution or genocide.

\*Jagendorf, M.A. (1957). *Noodlehead stories: From around the world*. New York: Vanguard Press. (American Folklore Series.) Noodlehead stories were reportedly very popular in the British army, except that they were called 'knucklehead' stories.

All over Latin America and the Caribbean, a stock mythological stupid person is called Juan Bobo. Stories and jokes about him could fill

books. His equivalent in Cajun Louisiana was Jean Sot (John Fool). In Turkey, noodlehead stories were called hodja stories. The Danish story of Peter the Fool relates that he did all sorts of stupid things that by sheer luck end to his advantage. As his mother said, 'fortune often favors fools.' In the end, he got to marry the dour princess because he made her laugh twice in one morning, 'and for a noodlehead he made a good king. He was not much worse than a smart one.'

\*When Governor Eliot Spitzer of New York had to resign in disgrace in March 2008, he was replaced by the nearly-blind African-American Lieutenant Governor David Paterson. After a relatively normal upbringing, when he was 14, Paterson's parents sent him to a mobility course for blind children—and he abhorred it. "I fought going to that course, because there I was, in with the blind kids from the special schools, and they were almost helpless. And I hate to say this, but I had the same anger I think some successful black people who were raised in white neighborhoods have against poorer blacks. They think, 'These people are bringing me down.'"

"When they called me 'blind' in that course, I thought, they're not talking about me, they are talking about themselves; these are the people who are causing me the problem; they're helpless; they can't do anything. I thought of myself as different" (*Syracuse Post-Standard*, 20 March 2008, p. A9).

### **Issues of Segregation, Congregation, Integration & 'Inclusion'**

\*The segregation to which lepers were at one time subjected was about as sad as sadness comes. Also, prior to bacteriological tests, it was often based on erroneous diagnostics. For instance, in 1908, the Philippines established a leper colony on the small island of Culion, and collected a large number of 'lepers' there, but upon microscopic examination, it was found that only about half of the 'lepers' were leprous (*Scientific American*, June 2008, p. 16).

\*In 1955, an omnibus institution for 1000 handicapped people was built on Chongming Island in the Yangtze River, just north of Shanghai. Even by 1995, when it held at least 650 retarded persons, it could only be reached by boat or Hovercraft (*Hartford Courant*, June 1995).

\*A theater group in New York City puts on plays by blind, sighted, and partially blind actors, and said that the audience cannot tell which is which. But the group that developed this is named Theatre by the Blind. Even more role-valorizing would have been theater by a generic group in which only one or two persons were blind, and indistinguishable from the other actors.

\*For many years, blind chess players have held their own tournaments, which is perfectly understandable insofar as they play by special rules that make sense, such as being able to touch all the pieces on the board while thinking. However, one is dumbfounded (pardon the expression) to learn that for the first time, deaf chess players were getting together for a world championship tournament in 1984. If anything, being deaf is an advantage in playing chess, since one will be less distracted by noise, which chess players detest while playing. One is even more distressed to learn that it is the National Association of the Deaf which sponsored the event, and that the event took place at Gallaudet College (for the deaf) in Washington, DC. The event shows how insensitive people are to the meaning of separatism and division. It would make just about as much sense to have a chess world championship tournament for midgets.

\*There actually exists a Disabled (stamp) Collectors Correspondence Club with its own website.

\*Gambling casinos certainly want to get as many people as possible to come and gamble there, and they will not discriminate against anyone with money. Therefore, gambling casinos have an interest in being 'accessible' to the handicapped. In

April 1996, the Upstate New York Chapter of the Multiple Sclerosis Society presented its accessibility award to the Oneida Indian Nation's Turning Stone Casino Resort.

\*The Syracuse Automobile Dealer Association sponsored a special segregated auto show for retarded participants in the Special Olympics, and other handicapped people and their families. Aside from the absurd segregation element, events like this continue to underline the low consciousness among the leaders of the Special Olympics movement, and how it is contributing not merely to unnecessary segregation in sports but also in other life domains of retarded people.

\*A class of college students was shown a slide presentation depicting a woman engaged in Special Olympic activities. Another class saw a slide presentation of the same woman engaged in activities with non-handicapped persons in community settings. In the Special Olympics presentation, the students judged the woman to be younger, and as needing segregated school and recreation (Storey, Stern, & Parker, in *Education & Training in Mental Retardation*, March 1990).

\*Little League baseball in one Massachusetts locality has been trying to keep handicapped children out with the argument that since the Special Olympics is available for them, that is where they should go and play. In fact, the National Little League Organization is trying to get the Special Olympics Committee to add baseball to its program. This sort of thing underlines how the very availability of a segregated program can be an obstacle to integration.

\*A man who has a very large family owns a small van so that they can all go places together. To his surprise, he noted that whenever he drove somewhere, handicapped people on the street would stop and wave. It turned out that the handicapped people automatically assumed that a van full of

people ranging from adults down to little children must be from an institution or group home, or must belong to some service that transports handicapped people.

\*A handicapped woman is very active and goes to all sorts of activity groups, meetings and associations. But despite it all, she said, "I'm so lonely." In all likelihood, a lot of people will see this amount of activity and assume automatically that a great deal of meaningful interactions and relationships are being transacted. But this is not necessarily so. Service programs can involve their clients in all sorts of community 'activities' that are not very integrative, or even social. Examples are going to movies, banks, parks, or going shopping as a group.

\*This is a follow-up to items in the SRV News & Reviews columns of December 2007, pp. 78-79, and June 2008, pp. 87-90, on integration. 'Real integration'—that is, valued presence and participation in society—for many kinds of competency-impaired people is difficult to achieve even under good conditions, and even more difficult if conditions are not positive, including when the person at issue lacks social graces.

In recent decades, one strategy for integration has been to cultivate friendships from early childhood on for a competency-impaired child with non-impaired children, in the hope that at least some of these friendships would last. There have been positive results where this was done, but it has also turned out that the friends grew apart as they grew older, leaving the impaired person fairly isolated. An example is found in the story of Catherine Schaefer, as documented in her mother's (Nichola Schaefer) 1997 book *Yes, She Knows She's Here*.

One reason for the failure of such efforts seems to have been that the interests and activities of the two parties grew apart over time, subtracting a viable foundation for continued joint engagements. Another way of putting this is that these friend-

ship efforts did not sufficiently involve continuing roles centered on shared interests and activities.

As at least one alternative, we propose that families concentrate on developing a person's interests, activities, skills and hobbies that are not—or are only somewhat—negated by the person's impairments (i.e., which are realistic given the person's impairments), **and** that are likely to be shared by enough people in many locales so that one is always likely to find an organization or interest group that a person with that interest can join. Examples might be singing, raising a particular kind of plant or animal, collecting items that other people also collect (maybe stamps or model cars, pottery, glassware), perhaps hiking or nature study, bird watching, etc. Most hobby and interest groups have open enrollments, and periodic official get-togethers that can sometimes be a springboard to less formal smaller meetings and joint activities.

Some interests are less likely to result in shared activities. For instance, being a fan of a particular sport may entail not much more than attending large-crowd events where one is not likely to become acquainted with new people, or to engage in enduring joint activities with those people one may get to know personally.

There are all sorts of examples of impaired people having found enduring associations in an activity that was not impeded by their impairment. In our SRV teaching, we give the example of one man who, for his health, started to play the saxophone, as well as of someone who started playing chess in his youth, both of which were converted into many relationships and lifelong roles. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was non-ambulatory, collected stamps, and in at least urban areas, there is likely to be a stamp collectors club that meets regularly, and has periodic exhibitions. Swimming, running, etc., can be an avenue to integrative contact with fellow swimmers or runners. And so on.

Ballet lessons are typically given to groups of children, thereby affording much opportunity

to meet other children. Many people who have taken ballet lessons continue to practice, which might be an opportunity to have ongoing social contacts around a common interest and activity.

\*The good news is that the field of communications can provide many employment opportunities to handicapped people, for instance as radio announcers, data processors, etc. The bad news is that one handicapped man started a radio station in Connecticut, to be run **by** handicapped people **for** handicapped listeners. We can easily imagine handicapped people who may live either in segregated settings or alone, who may work only with other handicapped people, if at all, and who recreate only with handicapped people, if with anyone, and who possibly ride on transportation conveyances shared only by other handicapped people—and who now turn on their radio and listen to nothing but handicapped people talking about handicaps and handicapped people.

Also, the radio station apparently heavily emphasizes programs about sex, cults, and drugs (*Syracuse University Alumni News*, Fall 1981). This enterprise has been receiving much favorable publicity, but how much preferable it would have been for programs about handicapped people to be part of the regular radio station program, or for a national group to produce high-quality programs about handicap and handicapped people which local stations in general could use on a selective basis.

\*The supported employment sector has emphasized receiving payment—at least minimum wage—as being just about the sole criterion for whether a particular job for handicapped persons should be pursued. How destructive this can be was exemplified by the practice of one so-called supported employment program: the agency received government monies to pay the handicapped person for up to six months, but at the end of that time, if the employer did not hire the person at full wages, the person would lose the

job and often end up back in either idleness or the sheltered workshop.

There was no reason why the agency could not simply place the person in jobs even on an unpaid basis, since most handicapped people receive government pensions and therefore have at least some income. This way, the person could learn, be active, and be integrated. Then, if after six months the employer still did not want to hire the person, at least the person could continue to be present, contributive, and benefiting in a voluntary capacity. This would also mean no loss in income since such persons would still be receiving their government pension. Further, chances are high that at least over time, many employers would eventually hire the person, or at least slip the person some recompense under the table.

\*In the 1970s, there began an explosion of 'special need' children's camps, mostly for summer camping. There are now such camps for people with every conceivable condition: cerebral palsy, epilepsy, mental retardation, muscular dystrophy, diabetes, hemophilia, sickle cell anemia, heart disease, Tourette's syndrome, etc., etc. There are 130 asthma camps alone! (AP, in *Syracuse Post-Standard*, 22 April 2008, p. D3).

Camp About Face in Indiana is for children with all sorts of facial and head deformities, supposedly to help them overcome their hurt at being different. One of the activities for the children there is to design and make all sorts of fantastic—even hideous—facemasks out of paper sacks (*Indianapolis Star*, 25 June 1989). Also, considering the camp's clientele, its name is almost grotesque.

A social worker at the Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C. who co-founded one summer camp claimed that epileptic children camping together 'normalizes the experience.'

There is undoubtedly a benefit in such specialty camps, but also a paradox in that in almost all other respects, so many families seek or even demand 'inclusion.'

\*Adams, B. & Adams, R. (2008). Inclusion: One family's perspective. *TASH Connections*, 34, 24-25. Here is a startling assertion made by this article: "... in 1987, the concept of full inclusion was not familiar; in fact, most people were using the term integration. Inclusion was a new concept with emerging research and legal support established by the Rachael Holland case in California." The article also spoke to a point we have made, namely that integration into a decadent culture may not be good for devalued people: "Because he was with his peers he had the opportunity to pick up the mannerisms of the students around him. He even picked up a couple of swear words as a high school senior, which was so very age-appropriate even though it was not appreciated by the school! Everyone did it and so did Caleb."

\*We have encountered yet another definition of 'inclusion,' namely that, "True inclusion brings together people who differ from one another by race, religion, gender, class, ethnicity, and sexual orientation" (*Education Exchange* (Syracuse University), Spring 2008). Thus, we see once more that inclusion is not necessarily 'real integration' as SRV defines it, but can be a juxtaposition of deviant people to warm the heart of a political correctionist.

\*Here is an almost worst-case scenario of how not to do integration, or how to do it in a way that is practically guaranteed to turn teachers, parents and possibly students against it. In one middle school in 1994, a teacher of 4th and 5th graders went from having no handicapped students one year, to having, in the next year, 3 children with limited mobility, 4 with so-called 'attention deficit disorder,' and 5 with emotional problems, in a class of 27! That is almost half the class comprised of handicapped students of undoubtedly tremendously divergent need—all this under the banner of 'inclusion.' (Personal communication from that teacher.)

\*Five Tennessee public school teaching assistants who were willing to do all sorts of good things for handicapped children were fired in 1993 because the one thing they refused to do was to catheterize the children who needed this, in part because they were afraid that they might do something wrong. Amazingly, the US Supreme Court had ruled in 1984 that catheterization was not a 'medical procedure,' and that is why the schools could require that teachers' aides would do this (*Newsweek*, 20 February 1993).

\*A recent (May 2008) news item reported that an elementary school teacher in Florida led her class of 17 kindergartners (5-year olds) to vote a classmate "who is in the process of being diag-

nosed with autism" out of the class; the vote was 14 to 2. (Perhaps she had watched the 'reality' show in which a group of people 'stranded' on an island successively vote off one of their members after the other until there is only one 'survivor.')

The boy is said to have 'disciplinary issues' (note the code language), and to have spent much of his time in the principal's office for that reason ever since he arrived at the school four months earlier. He also made a scene when his mother dropped off a sibling at the same school each day. As usual, the mother threatened to sue (*Scripps Treasure Coast Newspaper*). Allegations are flying back and forth between the family and the teacher and school, but however the issue is resolved, the incident underlines that integration will not

### LEARNING TO TEACH SOCIAL ROLE VALORIZATION (SRV)

SOCIAL ROLE VALORIZATION, when well applied, has potential to help societally devalued people to gain greater access to the good things of life and to be spared at least some of the negative effects of social devaluation. This is one of the reasons why it is important for people to learn to teach SRV, so that its ideas and strategies are known and available to the right people in the right places who can apply it well. Unless people continue to learn to be SRV trainers, the teaching and dissemination of SRV will cease. Many SRV trainers for example could teach lots of people how to **implement** SRV, but not how to **teach** it to others. At a certain point there might be implementation of aspects of SRV, but the knowledge of SRV itself might not be passed on to others, such as the next generation of human service workers. Teaching about SRV, and learning to teach SRV, can be done in many ways, depending in part on one's abilities, interests, resources, and so on.

The North American SRV Safeguarding, Training & Development Council has developed a specific model for teaching people to competently do two things: (a) teach Social Role Valorization; and (b) teach other people to teach SRV. People who can do the former, the Council calls "SRV trainers." Those who can do the latter, the Council calls "trainers-of-trainers" of SRV. The Council named this a "Trainer Formation Model," i.e., a model for forming or developing SRV trainers and trainers-of-SRV trainers. A description of the Trainer Formation Model is available if you are interested ([http://www.srvip.org/about\\_mission.php](http://www.srvip.org/about_mission.php)); also see the article referenced below.

To find out more about studying SRV and learning to teach it, please contact Jo Massarelli at *The SRV Implementation Project*, 74 Elm Street, Worcester, MA 01609 USA; 508.752.3670; [jo@srvip.org](mailto:jo@srvip.org). She will be able to help you or to put you in touch with someone more local to your geographic area who can be of help.

### RESOURCE

SRV Development, Training & Safeguarding Council (2006). A Brief Overview of the North American SRV Council's Trainer Formation Model (November 2005). *The SRV Journal* 1(1), 58-62.

be real, or successful, unless the person's presence and participation is valued by the integrators; and adaptive behaviors and social graces (cooperativeness, obedience, etc.) are among the most important things that parents and families should inculcate into their impaired children—not to mention into their non-impaired children.

\*Kauffman, J.M. (1993). How we might achieve the radical reform of special education. *Exceptional Children*, 60(1), 6-16. James Kauffman has long been a prominent special educator. In 1993, he said the following.

"Place has varied literal and metaphorical meanings, including location, perspective, status, and power. The issue of where students are taught has been at the center of efforts to restructure special education. Physical place has been the hub of controversy because it clearly defines proximity to age peers with certain characteristics. A student's being in the same location as others had been assumed to be a necessary if not sufficient condition for receiving equal educational opportunity. Physical place can be measured easily, can be reduced to simple images, and has immediate and deep emotional overtones; thus it is fertile ground for fanaticism.

"A sense of physical place—location in space, where things are, and where things happen—is basic to human thought. Place, as a set of coordinates in the physical world, is a central issue in identity or belonging. It is the basis for many ethnic, tribal, national, and religious conflicts. Every society is structured by assumptions and rules about what is appropriate behavior in certain locations and by the observation that some events or outcomes are probable or possible in some places but improbable or impossible in others (cf. Goffman, 1973). What is assumed to be possible, probable, desirable, or permissible in certain places may change, either because of empirical findings or because social values change, or both. Small wonder that physical place is a pervasive and highly emotional topic in education" (p. 7).

Kauffman also said that the quality of thinking and discourse in special education has not been any better than that in general education. Many special education reformers appear to have an "aversion ... to careful scrutiny of their rhetoric and interpretation of data." "Reform proponents have failed to address even the most obvious questions regarding the effects of their proposals on students with learning disabilities." He said that what he called "debasement of language" plays a large role in this discourse. It is "an effective way of oversimplifying complex ideas, eliminating ambiguity, and constructing powerful images." "As in many other aspects of our lives, image is replacing idea: image is becoming the measure of truth" (p. 9).

As one alternative to either mindless 'inclusion' or traditional patterns of segregation, Kauffman suggests "disaggregation" of special education populations (which is similar to the concept of dispersal that first normalization promoted since the late 1960s, and then SRV has done), at the same time as there would be a better grouping of handicapped youths.

Kauffman also noted that the business management concept of 'total quality' has in turn spawned a construct of 'total quality education' which is supposed to cure all of the ills of special education.

\*Fuchs, D. & Fuchs, L.S. (1994). Inclusive schools movement and the radicalization of special education reform. *Exceptional Children*, 60(4), 294-302. This article should be mandatory reading for people concerned with educational integration and the so-called 'school inclusion movement.' It is one of the most credible and well-reasoned critiques of contemporary inclusion radicalism which has become increasingly strident, and has in effect cut itself off from the mainstream of education and concern from the welfare of children in general. The article makes the point that general education is doing so poorly the way it is that it seems unreasonable to expect that it would be capable of meeting the grand expectations that

the full inclusionists place upon it. The authors conclude that the full inclusionists simply do not understand general education or they would not expect from it what they do. Inclusionists are also accused of in essence virtually wanting to get rid of legitimate educational goals of the schools for the sake of inclusion as its own end. (I would add that political correctness prefers diversity to competency acquisition.)

Indeed, it is becoming more and more apparent that the inclusion radicals in education have put the attainment of inclusion above the learning and growth of children. Whatever pedagogies that enhance competency, learning and growth stand in the way of 'inclusion' are being made war against. In the lower grades, having handicapped children in the classroom is viewed as more important than anybody learning the 3Rs. On a more advanced level, the inclusion dynamics might be given preference over—let us say—non-handicapped students learning calculus. This idolatry also expresses itself in all sorts of ideological restructuring of the classroom process. For instance, students are forced to learn as teams and to become peer teachers, despite the fact that some students simply do not work well in teams and would work much better alone, as has always been the case in history. This is very remindful of the way the communists forced everybody to work only in groups. And of course, such a strategy is profoundly deindividualizing, potential rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding.

Another expression of this religion is warfare against special provisions for highly gifted pupils, who historically had been notorious for often working much better on their own, or with other gifted pupils. Their talents will now be sacrificed to the moloch of the group and the team, equality, inclusion, etc. In fact, one recent book has interpreted special programs for the gifted as "a disruption of community."

\*In Summer 2008, the Syracuse, New York, public schools got the bright idea that in order to teach English to children of immigrants, children with

other first languages should all be gathered from around the entire US into a 4-week summer science program in a local urban school (deceptively called a 'camp'). All this was enthusiastically endorsed by the local newspaper in an editorial (*Syracuse Post-Standard*, 9 July 2008, p. B3 & 11 July 2008, p. A12). In the past, such children used to learn English almost overnight by being integrated with native English-speaking children. Now the children are supposed to learn English by being around children who all do not speak it! This is a good example of ideology overriding scientific empiricism.

\*Skinner, C.E. (Ed.). (1936; 1937 printing). *Educational psychology*. New York: Prentice-Hall. (Prentice-Hall Psychology Series.) About 16 illustrious writers contributed to this book, including some leading authorities in their fields. In Chapter 16 (of 25) on "Intelligence: Its nature, development and measurement" by Paul Witty (the authority on giftedness in those days), there is a section on "The feeble-minded and the dull" (pp. 464-469) which reported on a little-remembered 1932 study of 540 special segregated classes, with almost 12,000 children! Essentially, what these children got was the so-called 'watered-down curriculum.' Play in special classes was said to have been of the kind that had little value. The author said that since almost all teachers will deal with 'retarded' children, they need to be better prepared for it.

\*NBC TV *Nightly News* of 30 January 2000 carried a story about a 7-year old boy in an elementary school in Lincolnshire, northern England, who is profoundly deaf. (He also obviously had cerebral palsy, though this was not mentioned.) The school district wanted to place him in a special school for the handicapped, but neither his schoolmates, the teachers nor his family wanted that to happen. So a large proportion of his fellow pupils learned sign language, and the vast majority of his class became fluent in it; they present school assemblies, plays, etc., both in spoken and

sign language. He has an aide who works with him almost full-time, and he is now going to stay in the regular school system.

\*A very scientific article (with many statistical tests and 5 charts) in *Child Development* in December 1989 announced that the integration of handicapped children in wheelchairs is facilitated if they are accompanied by a dog, because the dog will elicit interactions from other people. One conclusion reached was that “service dogs may assist in normalizing the social interactions for children with disabilities.”

\*Some handicapped children taught non-handicapped children to play basketball in wheelchairs. In consequence, a number of non-handicapped children acquired wheelchairs so that they could play wheelchair basketball. One child cried bitterly when he discovered that contrary to his hopes, his parent had not given him a wheelchair for Christmas (source information from Dr. Jimmy Calloway).

\*A large headline in the *Syracuse Herald-Journal* (26 Nov. 1998) proclaimed, “Girl Conquers Albinism to Become Cheerleader.” Did she turn some other color? No; the cheering team gradually accepted her.

\*A star baseball player of the late 1800s was deaf, and asked an umpire to signal strikes with his right arm. He did, and others adopted the same custom which has persisted to this day. The fans also accommodated the deaf player by standing and waving their arms and hats whenever they wanted to applaud him (Significa column, *Parade Magazine*, 31 July 1983, submitted by Dr. Bernard Graney).

\*In 17th century England, nonconformist religious groups (Baptists, etc.) developed a custom of treating their insane or unhappy members by jointly fasting with them, and meeting with them for prayers, often in the houses of these afflicted

persons. While some of this was interpreted as a form of exorcism, it really was also a way of socializing together, and affirming group membership. This seems to have been a very effective approach, as SRV would have predicted (MacDonald, M. (1981). *Mystical bedlam: Madness, anxiety, and healing in seventeenth-century England*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press).

\*Persons with mental disorders have not fared well when they show up in US hospital emergency rooms. In response, in 2008, the American College of Emergency Physicians released a study of emergency room directors, 80% of whom recommended the establishment of “dedicated emergency psychiatric facilities.” However, where that had been done, it was found that such patients were treated even worse, often with utmost callousness, neglect and abuse (Interlandi, J. (21 July 2008). The woman who died in the waiting room. *Newsweek*, 48-49). SRV could have warned of this. After all, such ‘dedicated’ units are segregated, and totally under psychiatric control, which has not been good for people for about 130 years. At least in generic emergency services, they are treated more ‘like everyone else,’ problematic as that may be. There is more public scrutiny, more valued people are among the clientele, the staff is ‘generic,’ etc. Many more protective elements are in place.

### Normalization & Social Role Valorization Forerunners

\*Parry-Jones, W.L. (1972). *The trade in lunacy: A study of private madhouses in England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: University of Toronto Press. From this book, we learn the following items of relevance to SRV.

A practice that became very common in England in the 18th and 19th centuries was for private institutions to cluster in certain locales. This was either because the locale was a popular vacation spot, such as around Bath and Bristol, or because employees of an asylum believed that they

had learned enough to now open their own asylum, and they would do it in the area where they had worked and with which they were familiar. For this reason, the Oxford area also had a cluster of asylums, despite the small population there.

A Quaker physician, Edward Long Fox, started a small private madhouse at Cleeve Hill, Downend, near Bristol, England, in 1794. He was among the first private proprietors to practice humane treatment without restraints. He continued this practice when he built a new palatial facility in the same area in 1806, called Brislington House, which he ran until 1829, to be succeeded by two sons. Family members continued to run the establishment until 1951. Brislington was long considered the best private asylum. There was excellent food, greyhounds were kept for the residents' amusement, and some inmates had fancy pets such as pheasants and doves. In some moral treatment asylums, residents could have their own personal servants, and some kept carriages and horses, or exotic pets such as eagles. Some had entire aviaries.

Many moral treatment facilities emphasized bodily activity, which we now know to be a universally beneficial strategy for almost anything that ails one. Also, many such facilities held joint morning and evening prayer sessions with the director's family, which was said to have very beneficial effects, perhaps because it motivated self-reflection, or what is now called 'mindfulness.'

Writers of the moral treatment era often commented on what we would now call the expectancy effect, namely that inmates tended to respond the way they were expected to, as communicated to them by the attire they were given, the tasks and roles, the physical environment, and of course, verbal means (p. 183). In some establishments, inmates were dressed like ladies and gentlemen in fashionable and high-quality clothes, and had their hair done up accordingly ("**bien poudré, fries, et arrangé**").

There were other harbingers of the normalization principle. It was commented on by an Eng-

lish asylum proprietor in 1864 that the smaller private asylums "rendered life as much like home as possible and enabled those who are mentally afflicted to conduct themselves as much as they can like other members of society. The more this is done, the more successful generally will be the treatment" (p. 184).

In many asylums, the moral treatment movement resulted in a recovery of an inmate's former societal work and occupational role, much as had been the case in many early Christian and medieval hospices. For instance, a former craftsman might be enabled to set up a shop at the facility, to enable him to practice his occupation as a tailor, cobbler, candle-maker or whatever (p. 183).

Wealthy families sometimes employed special attendants for their idiotic children, the same as they employed governors and governesses for their other children (p. 188).

### More on the History of Normalization

\*Overholser, W. & Richmond, W.V. (1947). *Handbook of psychiatry*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott. Surprisingly, this book is not written for psychiatrists, but for the public. Interestingly, on p. 55, the question is posed, "Can't training in a special school or under a psychologist normalize a child?" and the reply is "The answer can only be no."

\*Jancar, J. (1986, June). The history of mental handicap in Bristol and Bath. Part 1. *Bristol Medico-Chirurgical Journal*, 51, 53-56; Jancar, J. (1986, August). The history of mental handicap in Bristol and Bath. Part 2. *Bristol Medico-Chirurgical Journal*, 51, 79-81. This series of two articles briefly reviewed the history of several residential institutions for people with mental retardation in the area around Bath and Bristol in the west of England. The oldest of these, Holy Cross Hospital in Bath (later called St. Mary Margaret Hospital), had once been a leprosarium. The second article concluded with the following acerbic comment (p. 81) about community services and normaliza-

tion that was quite out of character with the rest of the matter-of-fact scholarly text.

*A recent wave of the 'magic' solutions for Mental Handicap, that everybody should be cared for in the community, thus resolving all the problems, is spreading through America, Scandinavia and Italy to this country—spearheaded by an Alliance with monetarists and so called 'normalisers.' Unfortunately the Alliance got the sums wrong. Community services, if run properly, are not cheap and 'normalisers' are not resolving the variety of mental and physical problems facing patients and families, but sometimes causing new ones. There is a gradual admission of failure by this Alliance and they are bringing a new idea of 'Advocacy' to cover the shortcomings of the philosophies they created.*

*In a recent report by the Social Services Committee—Community Care—to the House of Commons, the statement was made 'Any fool can close a hospital' and may I add to it that 'Not any fool can look after the Mentally Handicapped.'*

*I wish to conclude this address with the dictum from Cicero 'DUM TACENT, CLAMANT'—'While silent they cry aloud'—while the Mentally Handicapped are suffering their disability in silence, they are crying aloud for your help and mine.*

The author was a psychiatrist working at Stoke Park, a mental retardation institution in Bristol, and had junior-authored (with R. Eastham), a text on *Clinical Pathology in Mental Retardation* (with many autopsied brain pictures) in 1968. By the term 'mental handicap,' he meant mental retardation. He was totally oblivious to the fact that the idiot asylum in Bath that evolved out of the Holy Cross Hospital had been a small community group home.

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