The Disciplined Mind:

How Mid-19th Century North American Teachers Described Students' Mind, Mental Ability, and Learning

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Introduction

The discipline of educational psychology emerged in the last two decades of the 19th century with an ever more intense attempt to collect measures of human conduct. As researchers in this nascent discipline determined which measures were to be collected and how implications might be construed from such measures, they were, at the same time, articulating interpretations about what they held the mind to be. Such interpretations often involved the application of presuppositions, philosophical premises, and folk understandings (Danziger, 1990; Rose, 1996) that pre-existed the measures under examination. For example, G. Stanley Hall (1893) argued that a child's ability to recognize objects and the child's connection of ideas with these objects were predictors of that child's mental ability. Hall's belief that mental ability involved making connections among objects and ideas was not a novel psychological hypothesis. Rather, Hall was investigating a notion of mental ability and a popular theory of its constitution that, as we will discuss, had been commonly held by educators in the United States for at least half a century.

Although early studies were often influenced by commonly held beliefs such as those surrounding mental ability, educational psychologists also asserted the value of their work by contrasting with, and refuting, popular beliefs about mind, learning, and mental ability. Thorndike's (1903) refutation of "faculty psychology," for example, was a refutation

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of beliefs about the generality of relationships among reasoned principles, ideas, and mental ability that had been popularly held for half a century and had sources in the philosophical discourse of the European Enlightenment. In short, educational psychology did not start with a blank slate. In terms of both the conceptions that shaped interpretations of quantitative data and the conceptions that were challenged by this new discipline, researchers were influenced by presuppositions, philosophical premises, educational theories, and folk understandings that had sources in the ideas and practices of earlier generations.

In order to understand the foundations upon which key psychological concepts and educational theories have been developed, then, it is helpful to understand how mind, mental ability, and learning were understood prior to the emergence of psychology as a formal discipline. In this article, I examine the discourse of four American educators from 1859. By this time schools were widespread across the United States and there was a burgeoning of journals and books concerned with education. By 1859, a corpus of professional educators had emerged, centered in the towns and cities of New England. These educators were concerned with many of the questions that later became central to the discipline of educational psychology: questions of mental ability, how people learn, and how the mind connects and relates with the world. The four educators examined herein published treatises on education in 1859 that involved discussion on how children should be taught. Through these discussions, it is possible to construe how each of these educators articulated an understanding of mind, mental ability, and learning.

The article is divided into four sections. The first section provides a brief introduction to the historical context within which these texts were written. The second section introduces each educator and, with as low level of inference as possible, provides a description of how each educator referred to mind, mental ability, and learning. The third section considers some possible influences—social, intellectual, and theological—that may have influenced each educator's perspective. The fourth section provides an interpretation of the philosophical and moral sources implicit in the descriptions of mind, mental ability, and learning provided by each educator.

1859 Context

In the first half of the 19th Century there was a steadily growing social movement towards the establishment of common, state run schools (Beck, 1965; Cremin, 1976; Cubberley, 1948; Gutek, 1984). In addition to a sizable array of private schools for the affluent, common schools were

founded that were open to children from all social backgrounds and religious denominations—notwithstanding that religious and moral education were typically conducted within a Protestant framework (Bidwell, 1966; Drake, 1963). By 1860, many states in the United States had appointed a state supervisor of common schools, although compulsory attendance legislation had been enacted only in Massachusetts (Katz, 1976). Civic leaders such as Henry Barnard and Horace Mann sought political support and state funding for common schools. These leaders also sought to professionalize teaching, which, according to anecdotes of the time (e.g., The Two Candidates, 1860), was being undermined by teachers of dubious moral character and low scholarly ability. Professionalizing teaching involved providing qualified and competent teachers to the common schools. A number of normal schools were established that functioned as training centers for common school teachers. Also, by 1859 several professional education journals were established. These journals provided information on curriculum content, hints on how to design schools and hire reliable teachers, discussions on instruction strategy, and often triumphant articles about the establishment of schools in new communities.

In 1859, the goal of providing universal education was incomplete. Compulsory education was not enforced in all states until 1918 (Katz, 1976). The reformers and educators of the 1850s were nonetheless on a mission to achieve universal education. They fervently advocated for schools in every settlement and promoted the values of education throughout their communities. To this end, books by educators were not unusual in the late 1850s and, as some went through more than one edition (e.g., Orcutt, 1858, 1859), one might assume they were fairly well read at the time.

Four Educators

In this section, I will introduce four educators: Northend, Orcutt, Thayer, and Russell. Each of these educators published an educational treatise in 1859. Some background information about each educator will be provided along with a description of how each educator's treatise described mind, mental ability, and learning.

Charles Northend

Charles Northend was born in 1814 and educated in the private Dummer Academy in Byfield, Massachusetts (Spalding, 1891). At the age of 16 he entered Amherst College but left the college before graduating to take a position as assistant in his former school, Dummer Academy. Northend went on to teach in the common schools of Massachusetts

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for more than twenty years before being appointed in 1852 as superintendent of public schools in Danvers, Massachusetts (*Superintendent of Schools in Danvers*, 1852). In 1855, Northend was hired as assistant to the superintendent for state schools in Connecticut, where he was responsible for Connecticut's normal schools. As was typical of teachers and administrators in the common schools, Northend was a Congregationalist. His brief biography (Spalding, 1891) noted that he was a member of the First Congregationalist Church in New Britain, although the degree of his involvement in church activities is unclear.

Northend had been actively involved in the professionalization of teaching since the 1840s. He was a founding member of the Massachusetts State Teachers' Association in 1845 (Massachusetts, 1845), and he started writing about education when still teaching in the common schools. By 1859, Northend had been an active member of a number of teacher associations and an editor of the Connecticut Common School Journal. He had also written a number of books that provided curriculum content for use in common schools (e.g., Northend, 1848, 1851), a book on bookkeeping for common schools (Northend, 1845), and three books on pedagogy (Northend, 1844, 1853, 1859). The latest of the three, entitled The Teacher's Assistant, was published in 1859. The book was organized as a series of 22 letters of advice for a novice school teacher. Topics of the letters ranged across a broad array of issues such as parental cooperation, moral instruction, teaching strategies for particular curriculum areas, and the moral character of the teacher. The following is an outline of Northend's descriptions of mind, mental ability, and learning as construed from *The Teacher's Assistant:*

Incitement to effort. Northend (1859) saw learning as effortful and held that students could be "incited to effort" (p. 203) by the teacher. He mentioned a number of methods to incite effort or diligence in students. These methods included grading students' work, offering verbal encouragement, reading exemplary work to parents, and the teacher providing a caring friendship to his or her students.

Attention. Northend (1859) saw effort as manifest in the students' attention to a task. Students needed to observe and "fix their attention" (p. 135) on salient details of the lesson being presented. Attention to the lesson had to be maintained if students were to learn. Northend recommended that the students would carefully attend if each anticipated that he or she could be called on to answer the next question from the teacher. Once a student was attending, learning could occur.

Ideas and principles. Northend (1859) did not seek to explain the

processes involved in learning. He seemed to assume the processes of learning were already well accepted and understood by teachers. Rather, his focus tended towards expounding on the practices and curriculum content best suited to inciting effort and facilitating learning. Nonetheless, while discussing teaching practice, Northend clearly described and often repeated his understanding of the learning process. When students attended carefully to the salient features of an object or a written lesson, ideas would form in their minds. Ideas depended on principles in order to connect with other ideas and become clear in the student's mind. For this reason, Northend and many of his contemporaries (e.g., Holbrook, 1859; Orcutt, 1859; Russell, 1859) argued that attention to principles was far more important than teaching facts that form in the mind as a number of disconnected and unclear ideas or simply as words to which no clear meaning was connected. He wrote:

In many cases, scholars have committed to memory the entire contents of a text-book, without gaining any true knowledge of language or grammatical science. What I have said of geography is quite as true of grammar,— that words are too often learned and repeated on the recitation-seat, without imparting any definite ideas. (p. 16)

Northend (1859) did not, however, seek to explicate what he meant by the principles through which ideas interconnected and made sense. Again Northend appears to have presupposed that principles were mutually understood by both author and readership. The contexts in which Northend refers to principles were diverse and made use of analogy or anecdote rather than a theoretical articulation. Northend treated principles of classroom management, for example, as analogous to the principles of a complex machine. Only by understanding these principles was it possible to make the fine adjustments that allowed a classroom to run smoothly. All branches of knowledge involved principles. Only with an understanding of grammatical principles, for example, would the ideas associated with nouns, prepositions, etc. become clear.

A pupil may be able to repeat the words of a grammar from beginning to end, and yet have no clear and well-defined ideas of the structure or analysis of language. If he has learned mechanically, no thoughts have been awakened, no valuable impressions have been made.... It is not unfrequently the case that a pupil may perform certain operations with the text-book or a given model under his eye, and yet not clearly comprehend the principles involved. In all your teaching, consider that your true duty is to awaken thought, to encourage investigation, to lead your pupils to examine, to think for themselves. (pp. 95-96)

Math, morality, and religion also involved principles through which words

could become fixed in the mind as coherent ideas. It is clear from the preceding quote, however, that principles could not simply be imparted by the teacher. Rather, all students needed to apply mental effort towards connecting ideas in their own minds.

Mental discipline. The teacher's emphasis on principles was central to the learning process. The effortful attention of students to connecting particular words, mathematical operations, and features of objects to principles was crucial. Northend (1859) referred to the attention and effort required to make use of principles as "mental discipline" (p. 236). For Northend, the paradigmatic example of mental discipline was arithmetic. In particular, mental arithmetic exercises demanded strict mental discipline from the student as principled arithmetical operations were applied to particular numbers. Mental discipline, however, was not restricted to arithmetic. Just as principles pervaded all branches of knowledge, mental discipline was requisite in the learning of all branches. Northend and many of his contemporaries (e.g., Orcutt, 1859) considered student recitation to be the main way to practice mental discipline. Recitation should not involve the memorization of facts and texts or learning by rote. Rather, Northend (1859) supported the "oral method" (p.89). This method involved answering the teacher's questions, questions that probed the same principles as those given in the textbook, without making use of textbook content.

In conducting a recitation, the teacher should not feel confined to the mere questions of the book. With a clear understanding of the subject, he should strive, by incidental remarks and illustrations, and by judicious questions, to awaken thought, and secure true mental discipline. (p. 89)

Object Lessons. Although mental discipline referred to a coherence of ideas and principles in the mind, Northend (1859) and the other educators I will discuss understood the mind as developing through direct experience of the world. A popular instructional practice was the object lesson in which common objects such as feathers, nails, or glass were shown to the class and questions were asked which encouraged the students to articulate properties of the objects and make discernments between objects, hence enriching the students' ideas of these objects. Northend described the purpose of an object lesson as follows:

The true design of [object] lessons should be to cultivate habits of attention and observation, and at the same time lead pupils to give expression to their thoughts and views; in other words, to train them to see and describe what they see. They will even do more than this; — they will cause pupils to think, to compare, to investigate. If, however, you would have exercises of this description productive of the highest

good, make it a point to secure accuracy and propriety in the answers given, remembering that it is a prominent object to train children to give correct and lucid expression to their ideas. (p. 107)

Dull and sluggish minds. The successful student was the student capable of rigorous mental discipline. Some students were not as able to excel in learning as others. Northend (1839) recognized that the minds of some students were "dull" (p. 94) or "sluggish" (p. 16). Like many of his contemporaries, Northend did not discuss the difference between dull minds and bright minds at great length. He recognized, however, that students could be dull for different reasons and that the approach to teaching children should differ accordingly:

Some minds are exceedingly sluggish in their movements—some naturally so, and others by mere habit. The former should be dealt with in the most kindly and alluring manner, while a degree of sharpness may not only be allowable, but desirable, towards the latter. (p. 16)

Intellectual, physical, and moral facets of the student. Northend (1859) believed there were three facets of the student that the teacher should cultivate: the intellect, the physical, and the moral. The processes of learning discussed above were central to improving the intellect. The physical cultivation of children depended on allowing the students to move freely. Students needed to run around after hours of "confinement" (p. 262) in the classroom. Without activity, both their minds and bodies would deteriorate. Moral training, Northend (1859) and almost all his contemporaries argued, was also crucial: "A brilliant and cultivated intellect may dazzle and attract only to poison and destroy, unless chastened and controlled by right heart-training" (p. 72). The intellect and the moral aspects of a person were seen as distinct, and, unless both aspects were cultivated in the schoolroom, the child could grow into a wayward and possibly evil adult.

Hiram Orcutt

Hiram Orcutt was born to a farming family in 1815 and attended a rural school in Acworth, New Hampshire, for ten or twelve weeks during both the summer and winter seasons (Orcutt, 1898). In his memoirs he described his early education as follows:

In that school, and in almost all other country schools of that day, there was no systematic instruction, no class-drill, little mental discipline, and absolutely no practical training for even the common duties of life. Incorrect instruction led to the formation of bad habits of thought and study. (Orcutt, 1898, pp. 17-18)

Orcutt attributed his early education to support from home and corre-

spondence with a playmate in his community. Despite his lack of financial support, Orcutt was able to continue his education. Academies had been established in the first decades of the 19th Century "with a view to assist in the education of poor and pious young men for the Gospel ministry" (Preamble, 1812, p. 329). Orcutt took courses sporadically at four different academies for four years. He paid his way through college by taking seasonal teaching positions in the common schools of New England. Orcutt entered Dartmouth College in 1838, continued to take seasonal teaching positions while studying, and still succeeded in graduating with his class four years later. Upon graduation, Orcutt took charge of Hebron Academy as preceptor. In 1855, he became the first principal of North Granville Ladies Seminary in New York State where, together with his wife, he successfully established a well-attended institution. Like Northend, Orcutt was a member of the Congregational Church. In Orcutt's case, his memoir provides ample evidence that he had been deeply engaged in Congregational discourse on human nature. In 1858, Orcutt compiled a series of lectures originally presented to his students and published them in book format titled Hints to the Common School Teacher, Parents and Pupils. He released a second expanded edition in 1859. The eight lectures included topics such as recitation, school discipline, school instruction, and school management.

Waking the mind. For Orcutt (1859), the goal of the teacher was to "wake the mind" (p. 43) of the student. As also noted by Northend (1859), waking the mind demanded fixing attention on the academic subjects of the schoolroom. The teacher had to be able to encourage and prompt the students in their efforts to attend.

Cultivation. Orcutt (1859) considered the awakened mind to be a fertile ground ready for cultivation. Having gained the attention of the child and having fixed the mind of the child on the material being taught, the teacher could cultivate the faculties of the mind. While Northend (1859) had also alluded to cultivating the mind, in Orcutt this analogy was more prominent. For Orcutt, "this mind must be cultivated; must acquire the power to think, to analyze and reason" (p. 24). Orcutt wrote: "It is for [the teacher] to mould the MIND, that emanation from Deity which, when developed, constitutes the intellect, the affections and the will; which denies relationship to any thing earthly, and claims kindred with the skies" (p. 11). His reference to molding the mind suggested mind as a passive entity upon which the teacher worked. And yet the mind of the student was not just cultivated or molded by the teacher. The student was able to cultivate his or her own mind through mental discipline. According to Orcutt, with an awakened mind cultivated through mental

discipline in the powers of reason and thought, the student was closer to God in this life and eternal bliss in the next.

Learning through recitation. Although Orcutt's views on mental discipline were similar to those of Northend's, his views on recitation differed. The key purpose of Orcutt's (1859) book was to advance his view on how best to cultivate such mental discipline. Orcutt was vehemently opposed to lecturing students and the oral method of recitation (a method supported by Northend, 1859) in which the teacher quizzed the students. Rather, in recitation the student should be self-reliant. Orcutt wrote:

It is important here to distinguish between Instruction and Recitation. The former is the business of the teacher; the latter belongs to the pupil only. The object of the one is to impart information; of the other, to express the thoughts which the scholar has gained by study, observation and reflection. School instruction should aim to interest and aid the mind in self-application; school recitation serves to render acquired knowledge more definite and conceptions more vivid, and cultivates the power and habit of expression. (Orcutt, 1859, p. 64)

Prompted only by cues on the blackboard, the student needed to cultivate an ability to clearly express the principles of the lesson: "The pupil's thoughts are not clear and firmly fixed in his mind until they are in a form to be recited" (p. 100).

A highly cultivated mind and heart. Orcutt (1859), like Northend, saw a tripartite distinction of intellect, body, and heart. To the extent that Orcutt saw a hierarchy, however, it did not involve a primacy of heart over intellect or intellect over heart. Rather, body, heart, and intellect (which Orcutt seems to equate with mind) had to be equally well cultivated in order to support a hierarchy of self-control stemming from God's will. Orcutt wrote:

Nor do such [moral] instructions retard intellectual education. Indeed, moral culture is indispensable to true greatness and aids in the development and growth of mind, as the heat and light of the sun aid in the growth of vegetation. A plant will grow without these influences, in the dark cellar, but its growth is unnatural and distorted. It may be as large as the one whose roots have been nourished upon the hill-side, and whose leaves have felt the gentle breeze and glorious sunlight of heaven,—but it can have none of its health and vigor. So the intellectual man may be great, but it is the greatness of a BURR, a BYRON or a PAINE! The world has felt the influence of too many such men. The true man has a sound body and a highly cultivated mind and heart. His passions are in subjection to self-love, self-love to conscience, and

conscience to the word and will of God. Such should be the result of Common School education. (p. 88)

Gideon Thayer

Thayer was born in 1793 and, like many of the generation born in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, received an informal education at home and as an apprentice (Gutek, 1984), in Thayers' case, as a clerk in a shoe store (Barnard, 1859; Cushing, 1865). His mastery of penmanship enabled him to become an usher (an assistant teacher) in the South Writing School of Boston. He later established himself as a teacher and, as his reputation grew, he was able to establish the Chauncy Hill School to which the affluent in Boston's society sent their sons. Throughout his life, Thayer was active in intellectual and educational affairs. He had been a member of the Boston Debating Society and an active member and teacher in the Sunday School Movement where he taught in a Unitarian Church in Boston and later a Congregationalist Church in Quincy. He was also editor of the Quincy Patriot newspaper and a founding member the Massachusetts State Teachers' Association (along with Northend and approximately 25 other teachers). As a prominent educator, Thayer, like Northend (1859), wrote a number of Letters to a Young Educator that were published in the American Journal of Education. These were compiled by the American Journal of Education's editor, Henry Barnard, and included in an 1859 volume titled Papers for the Teacher.

Mind as mechanism. While both Northend (1859) and Orcutt (1859) tended towards descriptions of the mind as organic and God-given, Thayer (1859) referred to the mind as mechanism involving "mental machinery." He utilized the popular phrase of the time, "springs of action" (p. 8) to describe the processes by which a person's actions are triggered by bodily desires, mental desires, the affections, and the moral sentiments (Whewell, 1852). Thayer's descriptions of the mechanistic mind, however, were not devoid of organic content. Difficulty in spelling could be due to "innate defect" (p. 55), and difficulties in reading may (after long perseverance by the teacher) be attributed to "organic defect" (p. 58). Whereas Orcutt (1859) strongly criticized the notion of mind as machinery and saw the cultivation of the mind as impervious to the instrumental mechanistic practices of his age, Thayer described both the body and the mind in terms of mechanism and operations. Along with many of his contemporaries, including Orcutt and Northend, Thayer categorized human nature into intellectual, moral, and physical aspects. Thayer also stressed the importance of experience in developing ideas. Moreover, Thayer, like almost all educators of the time, saw the human soul and moral conduct as a key focus of education. The distinction between Thayer, on the one hand, and Orcutt and Northend, on the other, is his interpretation of learning as the product of material mechanisms and natural traits that belong to mankind's earthly nature rather than divine gifts, an interpretation highlighted in the following passage:

Most of those traits which make up what we call character in a man, are the results of education as developed not only by the processes of school instruction, but by whatever passes before the eye, whatever sounds upon the ear, excites the imagination, warms the heart, or moves the various passions within us; and the more frequently the mind falls under the same set of influences, the greater the probability that the character will take a stamp conformably to such influences. Hence we perceive, although with some exceptions, a marked similarity in individuals of the same parentage. But there are traits inherent in the human constitution, and widely differing from each other, as strongly marked as the instincts of animals, which lead one species to seek the air, and another the water, without any teaching whatever. (Thayer, 1859, p. 10)

Rousing the torpid and exciting the sluggish. Along with Orcutt (1859) and Northend (1859), Thayer (1859) considered learning skills such as penmanship and terms such as those referring to geographic entities to depend on securing the attention of the students. Among all three authors discussed herein, there was a recognition (albeit barely articulated) that students' attention varied by age both in terms of the number of words and ideas that could be presented and the duration of time for which attention could be secured. All three authors also recognized a very close connection between securing attention and securing the interest of students. Unlike Orcutt and Northend, Thayer devoted much of his writing to addressing explicitly how to maintain students' attention. He asserted that providing a variety of learning activities maintained student interest. Moreover, he suggested relating new terms to personal experience. Where possible, for example, geographic terms should first be related to the local surroundings, then to globes, and then to maps. Theyer also denied that a love of knowledge or duty to learn were sufficient to secure the attention of children. Rather, by analogy with the young of other animals, Thayer argued that children had "innate tendencies" (p. 91) to play and that, in the unnatural confinement of children in a schoolroom, prizes or rewards as springs to action or "motive power" (p. 95) were required. Prizes and rewards "awaken an interest in objects and employments for which [children] have, with few exceptions, little or no natural propensity" (p. 91).

The eye and the judgment. As discussed by both Northend (1859) and Orcutt (1859), Thayer held that connecting ideas with principles

was central to learning. More than the other educators discussed so far, Thayer (1859) also encouraged students to relate new ideas to personal experience and meaningful stories. He suggested, for example, that geographic regions should be related to historical or biblical stories the child may have heard. He also noted that if the learning was pleasant and interesting, children may relate school lessons with what they had learned at home and that this would strengthen learning. Thayer also recognized that learning can be an active process. Both penmanship and map drawing involved "the eye, the hand, the taste, and the judgment" (p. 71). Although Thayer accepted recitation as a standard classroom practice, the few explicit mentions of recitation in his writing referred to the performance of active processes such as solving sums or spelling words rather than recitation as a mental discipline performed for the purpose of integrating principles and ideas.

William Russell

William Russell was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1798. He was educated at a Latin school in Glasgow and then at Glasgow University, where he studied under Professor George Jardine (Barnard, 1859). Jardine was an educational reformer and philosopher who had been a student of Adam Smith. Jardine may also have been under the tutelage of David Hume as well (Lewis Gaillet, 1998). On graduating from Glasgow University, Russell emigrated to Georgia for health reasons (Obituary, 1873). After a few years as a family tutor, Russell taught elocution in a number of academies and grammar schools (including Thayer's school in Boston). In 1825, perhaps inspired by the ideas of Jardine (Barnard, 1859), Russell founded and edited the American Journal of Education, one of the first such periodicals in America. In 1849, Russell became the first principal of McGaw Normal Institute for training teachers in Merrimack, New Hampshire, before moving to a similar position in Lancaster, Massachusetts, three years later. Throughout his career, Russell continued to lecture and teach elocution in a number of academies, normal schools, and seminaries of diverse Protestant denominations (William Russell, 1873). Russell never taught in the common schools. However, Russell was a prolific author. An 1857 bibliography (William Russell: Editor of the first series of the American Journal of Education, 1857) attributed over 40 titles to Russell including common school readers, texts on elocution, advice to teachers, discussions of teacher training, and commentaries on education.

Barnard invited Russell to contribute to the same volume as Thayer (1859), entitled *Letters for the Teacher*. For this volume, Russell contributed a section on "intellectual education" based on lectures he had

presented to trainee teachers in the normal schools of Merrimack and Lancaster.

A Theoretic Unity. Russell's approach to pedagogical discourse was quite distinct from the practical bent of many of his American contemporaries, including Northend, Orcutt, and Thayer. Crucial to Russell's (1859) treatise was a "strict observance of the systematic connection of topic, and the theoretic unity of the whole subject" (p. 6), the subject of Russell's treatise being intellectual education. Russell's more theoretic approach, however, did not signify substantial theoretic distinctions in his descriptions of mind, ability, and learning compared to the three of his contemporaries we have just discussed. Russell began his treatise by noting approvingly that teachers emphasize mental discipline rather than knowledge acquisition. A good education, for Russell, referred

... to the expansion of the mind, to the formation of habits of observation and inquiry, to control over attention, to the clearing and sharpening of the percipient faculties, to the strengthening of the mind's retentive power, to securing, in a word, intellectual tendency and character, as the basis of moral development and habit. (p.10)

At the same time, Russell lamented that teachers were in too much of a hurry to see the results of their pedagogical efforts in students' classroom performance and, as a result,

... we still have, in our school routine, too much of mere rule and repetition, detached fact and specific direction. the lesson of the hour and the business of the day, and too little of the searching interrogation, close observation, reflective thought, and penetrating investigation, by which alone the mind can be trained to the acquisition of useful knowledge, or the attainment of valuable truth. (p. 10)

To provide such an education, Russell believed that the teacher needed "an elementary knowledge of intellectual philosophy, and of logic, in their connection with education, as the science which teaches the appropriate development and discipline of the mind" (p. 9). As Russell noted, intellectual philosophy, by which he meant the "divine laws of action and progress, as prescribed by [the mind's] own constitution and wants, its appetites and instinctive preferences" (p. 8), had been much neglected in educational discourse. Rather, most teacher trainers in the normal schools (e.g., Hill, 1859; Holbrook, 1859) and contributors to educational journals focused on developing taxonomies of knowledge instead of inquiring into the mind itself. Russell's theoretical approach, it appears, was a minority position in educational circles.

The structure of intellectual philosophy. For Russell (1859) the mind

was both divine and lawful, and understanding the mind required "a scientific knowledge of the chemistry of mental culture" (p. 11). To this end, Russell provided an analysis of the mind, which, by analogy, he compared to the construction plan of a master builder. This plan grouped the mind's faculties and mental powers under three denominations: perceptive, expressive, and reflective. While Russell recognized the unity of the mind as a whole, he organized his treatise as a careful analysis of each group of faculties.

The perceptive faculties. For the perceptive faculties, Russell identified four "modes of action" (p. 12): sensation, perception, attention, and observation. The "actuating principle" for these faculties was curiosity (i.e., the desire for knowledge). The tendency or habit formed through use of the perceptive faculties was the habit of observation. The educational processes through which this habit could be cultivated were manifold, including

...analysis, inspection, interrogation, direction, information, comparison, classification, induction. In other words, the appropriate presentation of objects to the senses, accompanied by mutual question and answer by teacher and pupil;—with a view to quicken sensation, awaken perception, give power of prompt and sustained attention, confirm the habit of careful observation, stimulate curiosity, and insure the extensive acquisition of knowledge. (p. 12)

The perceptive faculties, Russell (1859) emphasized, could not be educated as an autonomous intellectual domain. "The phenomena of the external world irresistibly impel the child to utter the emotions which they excite" (p. 58). The teacher had to allow the child to express these emotions even before the child was able to reflect on them. The teacher, then, needed to help young children cultivate the expressive faculties.

The expressive faculties. Russell's articulation of the expressive faculties appears to be shaped by his experience as an elocutionist (Brock- Brentlinger, 1959). The expressive faculties included "Emotion, Imagination, Fancy, Imitation, Personation, Representation, Language, [and] Taste" (p. 58). Russell provided clear definitions of each of these faculties. Imagination, for example, was defined as:

[t]he power by which man recognizes the analogies of form presented in the external world, the power by which he represents these, the power by which he transfers these to his own internal world, and thus images, by analogy, his invisible, impalpable, feelings and conceptions. (p. 63)

Fancy was similar to imagination in that it sought analogy among perceived forms presented by the world. However, fancy was a "lower" (p.

64) faculty than imagination in that fancy attended to trivial details such as color and fashion, details that are but the peripheral effects of expressive art. The actuating principle for the expressive faculties, Russell argued, was "feeling" and the tendency or habit formed through cultivation of the perceptive faculties was "utterance."

In the preface to his treatise on intellectual philosophy, Russell (1859) noted that his treatise in *Letters for the Teacher* constituted just one part of a course of study that also had addressed moral, physical, and aesthetic education. Even so, his discussion of the expressive faculties was closely tied to moral cultivation and constituted, he believed, the source of mankind's moral existence. The feelings that were the actuating principle of, or the springs of action to, expression were also the source of conscious, moral action.

The reflective faculties. When discussing the reflective faculties, Russell relied heavily on etymology to be clear about the terms he was using and the faculties to which the terms referred. He introduced the reflective faculties as follows:

The term "perceptive," (literally, taking through) suggests the intellectual condition in which the mind is in the act of taking, receiving, or forming, ideas through the medium of the senses. The term "expression" implies a state in which the mind is undergoing a process of pressing, or being pressed, from within outward. But the term "reflection," (bending back) suggests, figuratively, that state or act of the mind in which it reflects, repeats, or gives back, inwardly, the images impressed upon itself,—the effects of which t is conscious,—whether produced from without or from within, whether occasioned by perception, imagination, conception, or emotion. In this condition is is implied that attention turns inward, and dwells, more or less consciously, on its internal subjects, rather than on the objects by which they may have been occasioned. (Italics in original) (p. 101)

For Russell the reflective faculties were strictly interior and also intellectual as opposed to the expressive faculties, within which the powers of emotions and passions arose. Russell provided an in depth discussion and delineation of each of the reflective faculties, viz., memory, conception, consciousness, reason, understanding, and judgment. He proposed that the actuating principle of the reflective faculties was inquiry, and the tendency or habit formed through use of the reflective faculties was investigation. He continued by expounding how teachers could encourage investigation in their students.

Russell's (1859) account of intellectual education, for the most part, accorded with the descriptions of the mind assumed by his contemporaries. His discussion of the perceptive and reflective faculties provided detailed

support for the discussions of mental discipline of his contemporaries. Russell's elaboration of the expressive faculties, however, suggested a divergent perspective from Northend, Orcutt and Thayer. Whereas these three educators believed that mental discipline involved the subjugation of the feelings, Russell discussed an array of positive sentiments through which moral concern was expressed.

Sources and Conduits

In the next section I will consider the philosophical and moral sources implicit in the descriptions of learning, mental ability, and mind provided by Northend, Orcutt, Thayer, and Russell. As has been discussed elsewhere (e.g., Danziger 1994; Martin, 2007; Taylor, 1989) these sources have deep historical roots and also permeated the discourse of $20^{\rm th}$ Century education and psychology. We cannot assume, however, that the educators under examination had read philosophical sources such as Hume or Locke, any more than we can assume a contemporary teacher discussing human rights is familiar with the work of Locke or Rousseau. Rather, we need to first consider how the descriptions of mind, mental ability, and learning adopted by these educators had become available to them.

More than the other three educators discussed here, Russell (1859) is likely to have studied the works of Locke, Hume, Rousseau, or other philosophers who influenced nineteenth century understandings of the mind (Taylor, 1989). Although he did not refer directly to philosophers such as Hume or Locke, his rigorous approach, his educational background, his connection of feeling with morality, and his careful discussion of empiricism and the perceptive faculties all suggest that Russell had more than a passing familiarity with the natural philosophy of the time. Not only did Russell's analysis of mental powers resonate with terminology that can be traced directly to Locke (1694) and Hume (1798) (such as "ideas," "impressions," and "sensation") but his project of analyzing and categorizing mental faculties and human sentiment was embedded within the British tradition of natural philosophy of which Locke (1694), Hutcheson (1755), and Hume (1748, 1755) were key figures.

There is no direct evidence that Northend, Orcutt, or Thayer had engaged directly with the natural philosophy of the day or with the writings of Locke and Hume from the previous century. Nevertheless, British empiricist descriptions of the mind as structured by faculties, constituted by ideas, informed by impressions, and organized by principles would have been accessible to educated Americans through theological discourse and educational associations. As senior academics in their communities, educators read broadly and attended the educational

seminars and conferences that were increasingly prevalent. Thayer, for example, had been an active member of the Boston Debating Society and a member of numerous reading groups, groups often led by prominent writers and thinkers in Boston society. One reading club Thayer joined included the well respected Unitarian reverend and writer, Dr. William Ellery Channing (Cushing, 1865). The theological training of Reverend Channing and many of his peers had focused predominantly on British theology and philosophy, including Hume and also Locke's An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Channing 1851). Channing had been somewhat ambivalent in his evaluation of Locke's philosophy, especially in his student years, preferring the more radical philosopher, Richard Price. As a young man Channing had also read and been impressed by Rousseau. As a promulgator of the theory of disinterestedness, however, Channing adopted a concept of the human mind that was distinctly Lockean. Disinterestedness theory was an attempt to provide an account of human nature in terms of the faculties of morality, reason, and duty that allowed people to consciously reflect on their own minds, dispositions, and passions and hence, in their action, choose to love God and love others over and above themselves. In his reading circle, Dr. Channing may well have shared his own writings (e.g., Channing, 1838) with Thayer along with other writings pertaining to the theory of disinterestedness.

Channing described the intellect as

... a force [that] is manifested in the concentration of the attention, in accurate penetrating observation, in reducing complex subjects to their elements, in diving beneath the effect to the cause, in detecting the more subtle differences and resemblances of things, in reading the future in the present, and especially in rising from particular facts to general laws or universal truths. (p. 22)

Channing argued that "[w]e have first the faculty of turning the mind on itself" (p. 13). From within a Lockean psychological framework, Channing discussed at length the operations of the mind and how one ought to cultivate a sense of duty and love of others through one's natural powers of reason. Channing's discussion was rich in Lockean conceptions of mind and a reflexive punctual self (Taylor, 1989), a self of which we are reflectively aware and from which we are able reflexively to distance ourselves.

Orcutt (1898) also took an interest in theological debates on the theory of disinterestedness and claimed to have written a number of articles for a theological journal on one of the theory's proponents, Asa Burton. Burton (1824) wrote a lengthy exposition on disinterestedness, the first chapter of which was titled *On the Faculties of the Mind*. This

chapter presented an outline of a natural philosophy of mind steeped in a Lockean framework of impressions, ideas, and reflexivity (although presented in a much less rigorous theoretical format than Locke's own presentation). Of course, it is an open question whether either Orcutt or Thayer read the books of Channing and Burton respectively. However, it is documented that they knew the authors in person (Cushing, 1865; Orcutt, 1898). Moreover, Russell, Northend, Orcutt, and Thayer were all involved in theological affairs through their educational endeavours, met with pastors through their committee meetings and conferences, and very likely attended Unitarian or Congregationalist churches on a regular basis where sermons on human nature and the (Lockean) mind were common (Lowell, 1855; Parker, 1852).

Whereas Russell (1859) analyzed the faculties in terms of a number of complex and well organized aspects, Northend, Orcutt, and Thayer did not attempt to analyze the processes by which the mind operated and children learned. Rather, each assumed that aspects of learning, such as attention, ideas, and mental discipline, were already mutually understood. All three of these educators, it appears, presupposed an understanding of mind rather than articulated a clear and considered point of view.

Romantic notions of a benign human nature discovered by reflecting on one's own conscience and sullied by society (Rousseau, 1768) were less prevalent. To the extent that romantic ideas had permeated into the theological and educational discourse of the day, these were ideas which in turn had been influenced by the British empiricist tradition. Russell, for example, referred directly to the work of the Swiss romantic educator. Pestalozzi, as that work pertained to training the perceptive faculties through direct engagement with different objects (as was the case in the object lessons that were prevalent in Russell's time). It is not clear, however, whether Russell, Northend, Orcutt, or Thayer read Pestalozzi directly. By 1859, only Pestalozzi's novel Leonard and Gertrude (1801) and some letters (1827) had been published in English. His key educational treatise How Gertrude Teaches Her Children (1894) had not been translated. Pestalozzi's ideas, and in particular, Pestalozzi's classroom practices, had nonetheless been seeping into American schools over the first half of the 19th Century. For example, the infant school movement, inspired by the British educator Wilderspin (1828), took root in America in the 1820s and 1830s. Wilderspin, in turn, was strongly influenced by, and became an eloquent exponent of, Pestalozzi's ideas and practice. Wilderspin adopted Pestalozzi's emphasis on educating the perceptive faculties and also followed Pestalozzi by promoting the argument that education must emphasize the higher powers of cogitation and understanding rather than the weaker mental power of memory—the argument through which the emphasis on mental discipline had emerged.³ Russell was also familiar with the work of Warren Colburn (*Obituary*, 1873) who had introduced an arithmetic curriculum (Coburn, 1823) based on Pestalozzi's inductive method of teaching numeracy in which children start by counting in practical contexts and then moved on to mental arithmetic. Moreover, the education journals of the 1850s included many articles on European educational innovations in general and Pestalozzi in particular (e.g., *Intellectual Arithmetic*, 1851; *Pestalozzi and His Philosophy*, 1855). Notably, these articles typically emphasized Pestalozzi's inductive methods and experientially based teaching while paying scant attention to Pestalozzi's emphasis on expressivism, relationship, and natural goodness.

In sum, British Enlightenment philosophy permeated the Protestant congregations and, through this, Lockean conceptions of the mind as stimulated by impressions and constituted by ideas which, in turn, were inter-connected by principles available to the better educated members of late antebellum society in America. Some aspects of the romantic theories of Pestalozzi were also available through the educational journals of the time, in particular empirical assumptions about the mind that romanticism had inherited from the British Enlightenment and Pestalozzi's inductive method of teaching. However, Rousseau's central idea of a naturally benign individual to be protected from society does not appear to have been a substantive influence on the four educators under discussion in this article.

Interpretation

We can now consider the moral and philosophical sources that shaped the descriptions of mind, mental ability, and learning that we have just discussed. Interpreting the four educators' texts in the light of of these sources offers insight into how each educator conceived the constitution of human existence. As well as similarities, there are notable distinctions among the conceptions held by each of the four educators. As we shall discuss, Orcutt's conception of human existence was closer to that of Renaissance humanism while Thayer's seems to presage the secular, organic conceptions that later permeated the discipline of psychology and remain prevalent to this day.

The Tripartite Person

All four of the authors understood the child in terms of distinct intellectual, moral, and physical aspects. The distinction between the

physical body and the mind can be traced to Plato (1993), and the distinction between the moral and the intellect dates back at least as far as Augustine (1993), who argued that man was possessed with the power of reason and a distinct moral power to determine the good and the divine. Locke (1693), in his essay on education, also drew distinctions among physical, moral, and intellectual education. Locke issued a caveat that later resonated in the writing of Orcutt: A man with a cultivated intellect and uncultivated morality was a danger to society. This tripartite distinction was popularized in education by Pestalozzi (Pestalozzi, 1827; Wilderspin, 1828) who also argued that the purpose of education was to develop the child morally, intellectually, and physically. By the mid-19th Century, distinctions among the physical, intellectual, and the moral were equated, at least metaphorically, with the body, the mind, and the heart respectively.

Lockean Deism

Another notable similarity among the authors was their assumption of what Taylor (1989) has referred to as Lockean deism in their descriptions of mind and learning. God was to be found within the natural order of the world. It was accepted that there were rational laws of nature, that these laws were God-given, and that an account of human growth, learning, and conduct needed to be provided within an understanding of the laws of nature. The mind also cohered with rational laws. Rationality, then, was "a property of the process of thinking, not of the substantive content of thought" (Taylor, p. 168). According to Locke (1694), a self was a conscious and immaterial entity that was able to reflect on its own thinking processes. Hence, as Taylor (1989) emphasized, the Lockean conception of self assumed that people were able to reflect on, rationalize about, and take control of their own thinking processes. By acting as rational individuals and not succumbing to one's passions, a person attains God's grace.

All four educators assumed an organic element to growth and learning and that organic growth was subject to God's natural laws. Growth and learning involved a natural process and given end point. At the same time, growth and learning could be tended both by the teacher and by oneself. Implicit in the assumption of growth and learning was an ability for self-cultivation (see also Bjorkland, 2000). However, only Russell clearly articulated how self-cultivation occurred through expression and reflection. Orcutt (1859) described the mind as constituted by the will, the affections, and the intellect and may have attributed active self-cultivation to the will. Northend (1859) and Thayer (1859) offer no explanation as to how self-cultivation occurred. Rather, the reflexive ability to cultivate one's own mind was assumed.

Renaissance Humanism

Within the framework of Lockean deism, however, the authors possess distinct understandings as to the nature of mind. For Orcutt (1859), cultivating the mind brought man closer to the divine. Orcutt's understanding of mind was situated in a tradition with sources in Platonic and Augustinian philosophy and embedded deeply within the Renaissance humanism expressed in Pico's (1956) *Oration on the Dignity of Man*.

The highest spiritual beings were, from the very moment of creation, or soon thereafter, fixed in the mode of being which would be theirs through measureless eternities. But upon man, at the moment of his creation, God bestowed seeds pregnant with all possibilities, the germs of every form of life. Whichever of these a man shall cultivate, the same will mature and bear fruit in him. (p. 8)

For Orcutt, the mind could only be properly cultivated when it was applied to understanding the divine order, where the divine order was an ethereal ideal. He likened divine order to rays of sun shining on the mind and likened a cultivated mind to that "which denies relationship to any thing earthly, and claims kindred with the skies" (p. 11). At the same time, Orcutt saw divinity emanating from within the soul. A cultivated person's "passions are in subjection to self-love, self-love to conscience, and conscience to the word and will of God" (p. 88). In terms resonant with the philosophy of Augustine (1993; see also Taylor, 1989), Orcutt also saw God's will as a light shining within, which was discovered through self-love. Whether divinity lay within, without, or both, intellect, sentiment, and the passions were of value only in so far as they were subjected to the will of God and strived to break the bonds of earthly concerns.

Russell (1859) also saw the intellect as divine and subject to Godgiven laws. For Russell, the divinity of human intellect was deeply internal, embedded within the "chemistry" (p. 11) of the mental faculties. Perhaps, for Russell, intellect was not so much subject to God's will as it was intrinsic within a God-given human nature. Divinity was within, and could be cultivated from, human nature. For Russell, intellect served a benign human nature, whereas for Orcutt it seems as though human nature was that which must be mastered in order to move towards a higher and more divine mind. As I shall discuss shortly, Northend's (1859) position is more ambivalent with respect to mind, and Thayer (1859) seems to fix the intellect in the material, mechanistic world.

Romanticism and the Good

Despite the ideas of romantic writers such as Rousseau and Pestalozzi

that were available, at least indirectly, to educated American readers of the mid-19th Century, all of the authors discussed herein were ambivalent about assumptions of innate good characterized in Rousseau's *Emile* (1768). Moreover, it is not clear from the texts discussed here how familiar the authors were with the educational philosophy of Rousseau. As discussed above, to the extent that Pestalozzi influenced the four educators, the influence was on inductive methods of teaching more than beliefs about natural goodness. None of the authors explicitly stated that children were naturally good, while all four authors explicitly stated that intellectual training without moral training was dangerous. In language seemingly analogous to Rousseau (1768), Orcutt envisioned goodness as arising from an inward appeal to one's own conscience. However, Orcutt's conscience was a conscience that had to be deliberately subjugated to the will of God. This notion of subjugation was not derived from Rousseau. For Rousseau, man was not to subjugate himself, but rather to discover himself within a deeply inward human nature.

For Russell (1859), moral conduct depended on human sentiment as much as reason. However, the sources for such a belief may not have emerged from the romantic philosophy of Rousseau or its practical application as devised by Pestalozzi. Although Russell's scholarly stature suggests he might have read Rousseau's *Emile*, his conception of the sentiments seems closer to the philosophy of Hume (1755) and Hutcheson (1755). The only explicit reference to romantic notions of personhood in the four educators' writings is Orcutt's disparaging remarks on romantic figures who had not subjected themselves to the will of God but rather had succumbed to their passions. Romantic notions of innate goodness and discovering one's true nature were altogether absent from the educators' discourse. Rather, Lockean deist interpretations of mind, mental ability, and learning were prominent in all the texts. Distinctions between the educators, for the most part, appear to be distinctions within a Lockean deist framework, although not without variation and eclecticism. For example, Russell's attention to the sentiments suggests that, in matters of morality, his views on human nature were less pessimistic than the Lockean deist view that succumbing to the passions led a person away from God's grace. Thayer's focus on inductive methods of teaching appears to be closely related to Pestalozzi's pedagogical methods, and yet his notion of mind as mechanism suggests an almost Newtonian conception of the human mind.

Empiricism

Northend (1859) did not articulate an association between mind and the divine. Rather, he mostly described the objects of education in

seemingly secular terms such as to learn "true and useful knowledge [and] to illumine with the light of science" (p. 11). Northend did share with Orcutt and Russell (1859), however, a strong emphasis on cultivating mental discipline and learning the underlying principles for each branch of knowledge. Northend believed that, in so doing, the student would be "made to honor and glorify his Creator" (p. 11). The emphasis was on providing sense impressions that were represented as ideas, which in turn were connected by principles. Orcutt, Northend, and Russell outlined a description of learning and understanding that was influenced by Locke (1694) and, in some respects, Hume (1748). Unlike either Locke or Hume, however, neither Northend nor Orcutt inquired theoretically into how principles were constituted or how ideas were connected. Moreover, none of the educators discussed herein ascribed to Humean skepticism. They held that there was a truth in science and nature and did not question belief in God. Again, the empiricism of the educators seems embedded within the divine laws of Lockean deism.

Mind as Mechanism

Thayer's (1859) description of human learning is notably different from Russell (1859), Orcutt (1859), and Northend (1859). Thayer recognized but did not emphasize principles and ideas. He discussed learning in more active and evaluative terms. As noted above, connecting current learning with previous experience was more important to Thayer than connecting with principles. Thayer's discussions of learning involved practicing the combination of the eye, the physical body, and the judgment. Thayer's repeated references to "the judgment" (e.g., p. 71) and the assumption that experience is combined with a faculty of judgment suggest Thayer's understanding of learning may also have had sources in Locke and Hume (or possibly Kant, 1933). At the same time, his emphasis on experience and the child's direct engagement in almost all aspects of learning suggests his empiricism was more strongly influenced by Pestalozzian ideas than was true of Northend or Orcutt. It is clear, however, that Thayer, much more than Russell, Northend, or Orcutt imagined the mind in terms of structure and "mental machinery" (Thayer, 1989, p. 1) and that this machinery generated judgment and reasoning. Having assumed a more mechanistic mind, Thayer's descriptions of learning seem to have assumed a more material mind embedded within a materialist and mechanistic natural world, a world that was distinct and separate from the immaterial soul.

The Tripartite Person in a Dualist World

In all four authors, there is an implicit divine-mundane dualism.

The physical withers and dies whereas the divine is eternal. In all four authors, there was explicit recognition of a tripartite person constituted by physical, intellectual, and moral aspects. All four authors assumed that the body was physical and that the soul was divine. However, although none of the authors showed any signs of doubting their own understanding of intellect or mind, each presupposed differently constituted minds. For Thayer (1859), mind appears to belong exclusively in the material world. Reasoning and learning are mechanistic processes that are distinct from cultivating the soul for the next life. Northend's (1859) position appears more ambivalent. He did not refer to the divine or Renaissance humanist principles when he described learning. At the same time, he did not discuss the mind in materialist or mechanistic terms and saw in the underlying principles of knowledge a truth about the world of the Creator. For Russell, the mind was organic, perhaps physical, and yet its operation was governed by divine law. For Orcutt (1859), as we have seen, the mind was not simply a material object and with careful cultivation would live for eternity. Mind, Orcutt believed, was more akin to soul than body.

Conclusion

As the education of citizens became more prevalent in late antebellum America, mind, mental ability, and learning began to be discussed in education journals, books, and conferences. The questions being discussed were similar to those engaged with by the founding scholars of the formal discipline of psychology a generation later. The educators were interested in how students paid attention, how they made sense of the world, how they organized ideas, how they could be incited to effort, and how they learned from experience.

The educators also held some conceptions about being human that were, for the most part, adopted within the later emerging discipline of psychology. The distinction among a person's physical, intellectual, and moral aspects, for example, was adopted by the discipline of psychology and continues in contemporary psychological practice where distinctions between the physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional are still prevalent. The educators we have discussed also conceived of a world in which the laws of nature were a determining influence on human conduct. This notion of laws of nature was often expressed in organic terms. Frequent analogies between human development on the one hand and cultivation and organic growth on the other highlight conceptions of natural, lawful growth. They conceived of an organic element to development that partially determined physical and intellectual growth. Importantly

though, these conceptions of lawfulness and organic development were understood in a deist framework, a framework in which natural law was God-given.

Other conceptions that were later prevalent in the discipline of psychology were less apparent in the texts that we have examined. Only Thayer (1859) drew analogies between human and animal conduct. Only Thayer suggested that character might be heritable. Also, of the four educators we have examined, only Russell (1859) conceived of the sentiments as constitutive of intellectual activity rather than the sentiments as being that which intellectual activity should suppress.

It is also important to note certain conceptions that seem to be altogether absent from the four texts under examination. As noted, there was no reference, for example, to the romantic conception of a benign human nature sullied by society and discovered through reflecting on one's own conscience. Also, there is no clear evidence that the educators discussed herein were familiar with the post-Kantian German philosophers such as Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, or Hegel—philosophers who later influenced Wundt (Wundt, 1877) and the founding generation of psychologists, many of whom had studied with Wundt.

In sum, although the four texts under examination offered diverse descriptions of mind, mental ability, and learning, each, for the most part, can be interpreted within a Lockean deist framework. To the extent that romantic ideas of learning had influenced these educators, the conceptions had been subsumed into a deist framework into which conceptions of an untainted inner nature were unable to penetrate and expressivist conceptions of sentiment guiding intellect were perhaps just beginning to get a foothold. Within this deist framework, there was nonetheless a shared understanding among these educators of how learning occurred and what constituted mental ability. Learning occurred through careful attention to direct experience and connecting ideas to that experience. Mental ability was almost synonymous with mental discipline, requiring a rigorous, discerning application of principles to ideas and ideas to experience. For Northend, Orcutt, Thayer, and Russell, cultivating disciplined minds was a virtue and a central goal of education.

Notes

¹ 4,600 instances of "springs of action" were found in a Google Book search constrained to the years 1850 to 1860. A brief survey of these books suggested that the term was typically used in moral and legal discourse when referring to the sources of intentional acts, and, according to the philosopher Whewell (1852), the springs of action were law like.

² Locke and Hume were both taught in Unitarian seminaries in antebellum

America (Channing, 1851). It is possible that all the authors discussed herein had read British Enlightenment philosophers. However, I found no clear, direct evidence to verify that the authors had read these works.

³Wilderspin (1828) may not have read Pestalozzi directly. He did not refer to Pestalozzi in his 1828 book . However, the parallels with Pestalozzi's philosophy and the chronological appearance of Wilderspin's work suggest a strong influence either directly from Pestalozzi or indirectly from other British sources (see McCann & Young, 1982 for discussion).

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