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Newman's Practice of Method Completes Vygotsky
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Lev Vygotsky, who many consider the most significant and relevant Marxist psychologist of the early years of the former Soviet Union, was 21 years old when the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917. For the next seventeen years until his untimely death of tuberculosis in 1934, he wrestled (in the tortuous context of Stalin's rise to authoritarian power) with political and philosophical-methodological issues raised by the creation of the first socialist state. More seriously than most, Vygotsky recognized that socialism could not succeed unless "a new human being" was developed. People, Marx had made plain, are not merely determined by the existing conditions: we collectively transform the very conditions that determine us (which include, of course, "us"). More a dialectician than a vulgar materialist, Vygotsky disagreed with those of his colleagues who believed that simply transforming the economic mode of production would "naturally" transform human subjectivity.

Vygotsky's life-as-lived was a search for a new psychology in the service of a new human being, in the service of a new society, culture and civilization. It was a search for a science of/for human development. It was Marx's methodology--his dialectical-historical monism--rather than the rationalistic empirics in his analysis of capitalism, that Vygotsky took most seriously. In turn, Vygotsky's revolutionariness and brilliance was as a methodologist, not a laboratory psychologist. For him, a new psychology required a new unit of study. And a new unit

of study required--indeed, was inseparable from--a new method for studying it. The search for method was central to understanding uniquely human activity; it was "simultaneously prerequisite and product, the tool and the result of study" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 65).

Vygotsky described his activity as finding out "how science has to be built." He likened the task to "creating one's own *Capital*" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 8). It has been 127 years since Marx created his *Capital*, 77 years since the Bolshevik Revolution, 58 years since Vygotsky's death and with it the end of any serious Soviet search for method, and five years since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the demise of the first socialist state. Is a new society possible? A new human being? Can we create "our own *Capital*?" Can we create "our own psychology?"

Fred Newman, the controversial American Marxist psychotherapist and political strategist, has taken up where Vygotsky left off. Using a concept Newman and I took from Vygotsky (Newman and Holzman, 1993a) because we believe it captures as best language can the complex, activist process we are engaged in, Newman "completes" Vygotsky. While there are many ways to characterize Newman and his 25 year practice of synthesizing politics and psychology, for me, his work has always been intimately tied to Vygotsky. At the beginning of our eighteen year collaboration, I had already begun to study Vygotsky's work in my research as a developmental psychologist and psycholinguist. To me and my

academic co-workers, Vygotsky's writings were invaluable in our critique of cognitive psychology as "ecologically invalid" (Cole, Hood & McDermott, 1978; Hood, McDermott & Cole, 1980). I began to identify myself as a Vygotskian and had just a glimmer of his breakthrough in methodology. It was years of working with Newman, whose knowledge and skill in both traditional Western and Marxist methodology was already extensive, that I came to appreciate--in practice--that questions of method were not only central to Vygotsky's work and to psychology, but that they are central to the continued existence and development of human beings.

Vygotsky came to play an increasingly important role in our work. About three years ago while writing *Lev Vygotsky: Revolutionary Scientist*, we realized that he had become the third member of our team. Vygotsky's voice added a richness and intimacy to our dialogue. It is thus aided by his voice that I, with the perspective of a revolutionary Marxist and developmental psychologist, will discuss the practice and significance of Newman's method.

Newman came to left politics, Marxism and psychology already a trained methodologist (Newman, 1968). He spent 1959-1962 at Stanford University's philosophy department, debating explanation, ordinary language philosophy, positivism and neo-positivism with fellow students and professors, some of whom are today counted among America's most esteemed philosophers (for example, Donald Davidson). Scrutinizing concepts and constructs such as explanation,

description, causality, and objectivity--part of the grossly underexamined foundation of psychology--is standard practice in philosophy. In this environment, Newman "cut his eye teeth" critiquing psychology as pseudo-scientific and, ultimately, mythic (see Newman, 1991a). After receiving his Ph.D. in 1963, he taught at several US colleges and universities until 1968, when he left academia to do full time community organizing and "radical politics." This was within the broad social movement of the 60s in which politics and psychology were consciously bound together. Newman's early projects were among the thousands of radical political-educational-therapeutic alternatives that sprang up all over the US, and consisted at varying times of educational-therapy centers for adults, free schools, free food programs, communes, and health clinics. Through the mid1970s, Newman developed a successful radical therapy collective, studied left politics, and got involved in New York City community organizing. These years saw the development of a radical politics-radical psychology synthesis best characterized as having a "serve the people" politic.

By the late 70s, the majority of alternative and radical projects in the US could no longer sustain themselves, and either went under or got co-opted into the liberal mainstream. In a growing conservative environment Newman and his colleagues and co-workers sharpened their tactics--moving toward the creation of independent

institutions, particularly in electoral politics and psychology--that were necessary, they believed, to bring into existence a new, *politically* defined working class in the US (Newman, 1983). The new psychology--social therapy--is the focus of this discussion. (See Fulani, 1992 and Goldberg, 1992 for a history of independent politics in the US and their electoral tactics.)

Newman's background in methodology and philosophy of science shaped (and continues to shape) his practice/ understanding of both psychology and Marxism. In relation to psychology, for example, philosophical training had made him well aware that the reification of "inner life," mental acts and cognition within psychology and psychotherapy are philosophically and methodologically problematic.

Wittgenstein's later writings (1953; 1965; 1980), which he had studied, were especially valuable in this regard.

However, a fascinating thing occurred when Newman himself entered semi-traditional psychotherapy in 1968--he found it remarkably helpful. Not only *could* one talk about one's inner life, but doing so was valuable--*despite the fact that there is no inner life!* It was, he posited, the *activity* of talking to another person about how one is feeling that is therapeutic. Psychology's "presenting problem" for him became: how could the therapeutic activity be so helpful when the science upon which it was based is so flawed? Psychotherapy, as it evolved theoretically from Freudian through neoFreudian to post-Freudian approaches, has little

to do with *human social activity*. It is, rather, permeated with metaphysics, reified objects and assumptive methods. How can we minimize the pseudoscientific elements (for example, the insights, interpretations, intrapsychic phenomena, mechanism and causality) of psychotherapy and maximize the human activity of it? The development of social therapy is Newman's response to this question raised for him twenty-five years ago.

In 1979, when the New York Institute for Social Therapy and Research opened its doors in New York's (then) Liberal Upper West Side community, the collective of community activists, social workers and academics had two goals: to create a therapeutic approach that did not harm anyone and to eliminate poverty (Hood and Newman, 1979). From the beginning we believed that a revolutionary psychology in the service of revolutionary politics needed to be built. Within the highly sophisticated network of institutions of social control that characterizes the contemporary Western world, psychology is perhaps the most powerful for being everpresent. We live in a highly psychologized culture that socializes women and men to an *anti-developmental world view*--where life is viewed as a series of problems to be solved, where what's possible is only what already exists, where "you can't change the world" but only "yourself" (or isolated parts of yourself, such as behaviors), where quantitative acquisition has replaced qualitative transformation. Many Marxists and nonMarxists have

discussed this characteristic of postmodern capitalism. With social therapy, Newman and his colleagues have created a practical-critical environment for the carrying out of a *developmental world view as human activity*--a deconstructing/reconstructing of the existing anti-developmental environment (world view, psychology), an anti-psychology, a *developmentology*.

In relation to Marxism, Newman's sensitivity to methodological issues influenced how he approached the writings of Marx and Marxists. Like Vygotsky, Newman saw Marx's brilliance in his (never complete) denunciation of both idealism and vulgar materialism. Marx's pithy statements about method--for example, that history (and its method, dialectical historical materialism) is not devoid of premises, but that the premises are people "in their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions" (Marx and Engels, 1973, pp. 47-8)--seemed sufficiently nondualistic and noninstrumental to be considered seriously in the formation of a new psychology. In addition, Marx had identified the fundamentality of human productive activity (labor and laboring) for a bona fide non-perceptualist theory of knowledge. Human beings are not primarily perceivers or cognizers, but producers; more specifically and most significantly, producers of "revolutionary, practical-critical activity" (Marx and Engels, 1973, p. 121), producers of their own continuous development. For Marx, then, both the object of study and

the method of study are practical, that is, practical-critical; they are revolutionary activity. The world-historical environment, spatially and temporally seamless and qualitative, can only be comprehended by a scientific practice that is itself seamless and qualitative (in Vygotsky's words, prerequisite and product, tool and result).

To Newman's way of thinking, however, the Marxian method of practice was as subjected to revisionism as the rest of his work and was not the complete rejection of idealism necessary to create a truly human (that is, revolutionary activist) psychological science. In transforming the object of study--from abstractions to real people in their everyday practice--Marx indeed challenged the philosophical tradition which held to a dualistic, ahistorical and idealist conception of premises as separate from what follows from them. For Marx, human practice becomes the starting point for an interpretation free science. But, following Derrida, isn't a starting point (a premise) itself an abstraction (Morss, 1992)? One can always find a beginning, a starting point, a premise to impose on seamless, continuous life-as-lived. The question Newman poses (following the later Wittgenstein's critique of explanation) is: what if we don't need any, in the sense that none is required to understand and, therefore, there is none that makes any difference? In our most recent work,

Newman and I discuss these methodological limitations of Marx's method of practice and the need to go beyond it:

Marx's method leaves unanswered (and, it appears, unmasked) how it is that the discovery that premises are people was made--surely, it cannot be that what is discovered is identical with the act (or activity) of discovering it. What is discovery? Marx's method...does not self-reflexively engage what the discovery of discovery (including his own discovery) is. Marx does not replace Descartes' method of doubt with a method of affirmation or discovery, i.e., with a dialectical theory of learning. To answer these questions we must go beyond Marx's method of practice to its seeming inverse--the Vygotskian-social therapeutic *practice of method*. (Newman and Holzman, 1993b, p. 62)

The question, what is discovery? embodies the question, what is method? These philosophical-scientific questions turn out to be essential (in a practical-critical way) for revolutionaries and therapists. In the method of practice, practice (or praxis, to use a more traditional Marxian term) is methodologically central and method is something to be applied or used. In this dualistic instrumentalist way, it is no different from the non-materialist, non-dialectical dominant Western philosophy and science which presupposes a theory of knowledge that requires objects of knowledge and

tools (method) for attaining knowledge about these objects. In the practice of method, by contrast, method is central; method is inseparable from what it is, presumably, a method for. There is no object of knowledge and no knowledge separate from the activity of practicing method. In Vygotsky's words, it is a tool-and-result (Newman and Holzman, 1993a). Methodology, in this case, is not what one applies or even practices; its "result" (coming into existence together with the tool of analysis in a relationship of dialectical unity) is not an analysis but a continually transforming methodology.

In spite of its commitment to dialectics and materialism, Marx's method of practice (and to some extent, Vygotsky's) fails, in the hands of the revisionists, to break completely with the dualism and idealism of the Western scientific "observer-observed" paradigm. The "method of practice" methodologist (or more precisely, practitioner) views history--the object of analysis--still from the vantage point of an observer, not from the vantage point of a participant in history. Dialectics, for Marx a characteristic of seamless history, transforms into a tool used in the orthodox Marxists' observations. The result of applying this tool (*for result*) is a dialectical materialist interpretation of history (in spite of Marx's admonition that the point is not to interpret the world but to change it). The practice of method, in sharp contrast, is not interpretive. It is not about history (it is not about

anything at all); it is of history. Social therapy, as the practice of method, is the making of history.

Perhaps you are now thinking that this is either a trivial point (after all, as Marx told us, it is people in their everyday life conditions that make history, and social therapy is but one of those life conditions)--or a vast overstatement. I think it is neither. I think it is a fairly precise formulation of the central characteristic of Newman's social therapy. Let me tell you why.

According to Marx and Marxists, history is most clearly (that is, activistically, not interpretively) recognized/experienced in the midst of Revolution because the institutionally overdetermined organization of any given event breaks down in the context of Revolutionary Activity. One can most directly (unmediated) relate to history (make history) during Revolution. But Revolutions occur sporadically and relatively rarely. If one makes (and sees and shows) history during Revolutions, then how can ordinary people in non-revolutionary times make history? And how can they do that in psychotherapy?

There is a critical distinction to be made here between Revolution (the making of the revolution, seizing state power) and revolution (transforming ordinary, everyday human actions into revolutionary activity). For Newman, Marx's statement that "communism is only possible as the act of dominant peoples 'all at once'" (Marx and Engels, 1973, p. 56), suggests this distinction. For Marx, communism is not

a state of affairs, but an activity, more specifically, an activity with a "world-historical existence," engaged in by "individuals whose existence is directly linked up with world history" (p. 56). Thus, in order for communism--the activity, the social process--to occur "all at once," it must take place, not in society, not spatio-temporally, but in history. The revolutionary process ("the real movement which abolishes the present state of things" p. 57) is, for Newman, the continuous transformation of mundane, specific life activities into a qualitatively new way of life, brought about by individuals who, by their revolutionary activity of abolishing the present state of things, are "linked up with world history."

Revolutionary process, then, occurs not through the application of a fixed method but through practicing methodology--a constantly transforming methodology which, by its transforming, continuously provides feedback to the ongoing transformative process. Social therapy is a revolutionary process (the making of history) in that it is the practice of a continuously transforming methodology, simultaneously the creating of an environment for the transformation of mundane life activities and the transformation of these activities into a qualitatively new way of life. To participate in social therapy is to participate in its continuous creation. Creating "our own psychology"--practicing method--is what is therapeutic.

The tragic consequences of the failure to continuously create a new psychology (to self-reflexively engage the discovery of discovery)--including a new theory/practice of development, of subjectivity, of learning and of communicating--consistent with Marx's discovery of practical-critical, revolutionary activity are evident in the 75 year failed Soviet experiment. With the benefit of hindsight, we can see that the Soviet Communists tried to bring into existence a qualitatively new human being with an outmoded psychology and methodology, which included nineteenth-century rationalist and mechanistic methods of teaching and modes of communication. To Newman, embracing/practicing "a new human being" does not come "after the Revolution" but is itself the revolutionary process.

What is Vygotskian Completion?

Vygotsky's goal of creating a science that could both shed light on the historical development of human beings/human culture and address the myriad challenges faced by the new socialist state led to a life-long concern with the relationship between development and learning/ instruction. He made several important discoveries about how children develop and learn, about speaking and thinking, and about the developmental role of play. Of greatest relevance to an evolving practice of method (creating one's

own psychology) is how his methodology and empirical findings reveal the tool-and-result character of human life. In his work are the seeds of a dialectical theory of learning, the method of affirmation and discovery that Marx never formulated.

The dominant view of the relationship between learning and development in Vygotsky's day (and ours) is that what, how, and how much a person can learn is dependent on her/his level of development. Vygotsky criticized this perspective on both methodological and pedagogical grounds. To Vygotsky, learning and development are neither independent of each other nor a single process; they are in a relationship of dialectical unity (learning-and-development). Further, the very notion of "pure development" is an idealization--abstract, ahistorical and acultural. Vygotsky made the provocative claim that in the unity (learning-and-development), learning leads development. Newman and I call this *the dialectical unity learning-leading-development* (Newman and Holzman, 1993a).

The revolutionariness of learning-leading-development is completed by Vygotsky's discovery of the zone of proximal development (zpd). The person, the mind, development, learning, psychological processes such as thinking, speaking, remembering, problem solving, etc., are produced through participation in and internalization of social-cultural-historical forms of activity. Simply put, the zpd is the difference between what one can do "with others" and

what one can do "by oneself." Vygotsky was neither the first nor the last to notice that children and adults can "do more" in collaboration with others. But he specified the social-cultural-historical process by which this occurs. Learning-leading-development--a social-historical, revolutionary activity--both creates and occurs in the zpd.

The zpd strongly suggests that individual and species development depend on the continuous practice of tool-and-result methodology, on the creative process of tool-making. We could never develop if we only employed tool for result methodology, if we were only tool-users. At least since Piaget, human development has been described as an active process: children "come to know the world" through "acting upon it" or "constructing" it. The many and varied cultural and psychological tools mediate their relation to the world. But such a view (held in some fashion by social constructionists, neoVygotskians, and orthodox Marxists as well as Piagetians) subtenually embodies a separation of human being and the world, resulting in the necessity of employing an abstract explanatory mode in order to understand how "in the world" an individual ever develops. In this way, it is a psychological version of the method of practice. Children and adults, to be sure, use tools. But to my way of thinking, following Newman, the "active process" human beings engage in that is developmental (qualitatively transformative) is that of tool-making.

In our recent explorations of Vygotsky's methodology and its influence on social therapy (Newman and Holzman, 1993a; 1993b), we describe the zpd as the life space in which/how we all live *inseparable from the we who produce it*. The zpd "is where and how human beings--determined, to be sure, by empirically observable circumstances--totally transform these very circumstances (making something new); it is the location of human (revolutionary) activity. The zpd, then, is simultaneously the production of revolutionary activity and the environment which makes revolutionary activity possible" (Newman and Holzman, 1993b, p. 29). Over nearly two decades social therapy, as practice and independent institution, has grown into a quantitatively small but modestly significant force within progressive psychology. As a *developmental* clinical and educational approach, it has steadily attracted clients and practitioners. In addition to the social therapy centers that function in several American cities, the post-graduate training center (East Side Institute for Short Term Psychotherapy) and Vygotskian elementary school (Barbara Taylor School) have a growing international reputation. The social-therapeutic approach also has direct impact on federally-funded child and youth programs, particularly in relation to violence and teen pregnancy. I see this work as the ongoing creation of varied and overlapping zpds.

Vygotsky identified the language-learning environment of the infant and very young child as a natural and,

perhaps, paradigmatic, zpd. Children learn to talk and to use language by engaging in the revolutionary activity of making meaning. They take the elements of their "life space" and reorganize them to make something new. In very early childhood, the activity of language completely dominates the use of language (it must, because very young children do not yet know the societally appropriate way to speak--language use--or even that there is such a thing as language use). Playing with language--using the predetermined tools to create something other than what is predetermined--is the "joint activity" that occurs in the zpd of early childhood.

What is the role of the adult in this zpd? Mothers, fathers, grandparents, and older siblings who jointly create the developmental environment (zpd) for the young child becoming a speaker are obviously more developed as language users. How do they use their expertise to create an environment in which learning leads development? What they don't do is relate to the child's developmental level (if they did, they would either not speak at all to babbling babies or they would perhaps say things like, "Here's a dictionary and a grammar book. Study for a couple of years and when you learn to talk let me know."). No, they relate to babbling and cooing babies as speakers. By relating to children in this way as "ahead of themselves," by admitting them into the human community of language makers and language users, adults are supporting children to perform

ahead of themselves (to do what they don't know how to do), thereby creating the revolutionary (joint) activity of learning-leading-development.

Vygotsky further identified the specific activities that are dominant in this linguistic zpd. It is *imitation* that makes it possible for the child to do what s/he is not yet capable of. Not the rote imitation or mimicry of the parrot, but an imitation that produces something new. For Vygotsky, imitation is "the source of instruction's influence on development" (1987, p. 211). In imitating in the zpd--for example, saying what someone else says, picking up a pencil and "writing" the way a skilled writer does, waving bye-bye--the child is being related to as/relating to her/himself as a speaker and a writer and a social being. The "product" is something other than (beyond) imitation--it is a new total environment of speakers. The capacity to speak and make meaning is inextricably connected to transforming the total environment of speakers.

Put another way, you can't be "ahead of yourself" by yourself. In the joint activity of creating the linguistic zpd, the child imitates the more developed speaker and the more developed speaker *completes* the child. In making this claim, we are advancing considerably on Vygotsky's notion of completion, which evolved as he struggled to articulate a dialectical materialist theory of the relationship between speaking and thinking. According to Vygotsky, speaking and

thinking are a dialectical unity, in which speaking completes--rather than expresses--thinking.

The structure of speech is not simply the mirror image of the structure of thought. It cannot, therefore, be placed on thought like clothes off a rack. Speech does not merely serve as the expression of developed thought. Thought is restructured as it is transformed into speech. It is not expressed but completed in the word. (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 251)

The implications of *language completing thought* are, according to Newman, philosophically and psychologically profound. The dominant Western paradigm that serves as the foundation for most studies in communication, linguistics, education, and psychotherapy rests on the assumption that language expresses thought. Vygotsky does not merely reverse the order; he rejects the bifurcated and static view of language and thought and, thereby, does away with any need to "reconnect" them. Gone is the overdetermined and overdetermining conception that language denotes, names, represents, expresses--in other words, the overidentification of language with use and reference. Language completing thought (the unity thinking-speaking) identifies language as fundamentally activity.

The mother who responds to her infant's "ba-ba, ma-ma" by smiling and saying "Are you hungry? Yes, Mama will get

your bottle" is completing for the child. She is not saying anything about what the child said, not probing for its underlying meaning or referent, not identifying or opposing. She is engaging in a discourse style that is completive and remarkably cooperative. She is using her expertise as a speaker--not as an authority on correct language use, but as a co-creator of language activity--to continuously create a developmental environment by relating to her non-speaking child as a speaker. The total discourse environment of early childhood is completive, not competitive. (Some particular utterances might indeed be competitive; the claim here is about the totality.)

For Newman, Vygotsky's focus on activity and notion of completion fit well with the later Wittgenstein's views on language. Language games, for example, "bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity, or a form of life" (Wittgenstein, 1953, p. 11). Much of Wittgenstein's philosophical enterprise was an attempt to see and show language as activity (a form of life), rather than to simplistically identify meaning and use. In tool-and-result fashion, he claimed that this could not be done without stripping away the abstraction and reification of denotation (language expressing thought)--without exposing language as activity. In example after example, he showed the extent to which our thinking is overdetermined by notions, assumptions and presuppositions about language and ways of thinking which derive from its

reification and identification as fundamentally and passively mentalistic (as opposed to socially activistic). For Wittgenstein, the institution (not the activity) of language is a carrier of pathology. He tried to cure philosophers of their obsession with interpretation and explanation, and their need for order, causality and consistency. In short, he tried to cure philosophers of doing philosophy! (Newman and Holzman, 1993b)

Wittgenstein was well aware that the views and values of science and philosophy greatly inform "common sense." In fact, some--including Newman--believe that his philosophical enterprise was as much directed toward ordinary people as toward philosophers. Ordinary people (non-philosophers) are just as socialized to a metaphysical world view as are philosophers. The difference is that ordinary people have the disadvantage of being unself-conscious that the way we speak affects how we think and feel and experience our lives and, further, that how we speak and think is profoundly metaphysical, anti-activistic and anti-developmental (filled with causal connections, all manner of dualisms, including inner life and outer reality, and an obsession with explanation). Everyday conversation is replete with what Wittgenstein calls "pictures that hold us captive": "the thought just popped into my head;" "I couldn't get out of bed because I was so depressed;" "I just can't learn math; I don't have the head for it;" "No wonder he beats her; he was abused as a child."

The dominant discourse style of contemporary culture is equally metaphysical, anti-activistic and anti-developmental; common conversation in everyday life is interpretive and essentially competitive. The total adult communicative environment is not conducive to jointly creating new meanings. People take turns "expressing" their thoughts, identifying with what someone else says, and trying to figure out its deeper meaning and significance. The completive, activistic, cooperative--and more poetic than representational--discourse modality that is jointly created in the linguistic zpd of early childhood is nearly universally practiced by ordinary people the world over (as far as we know). But it is rare after childhood and even, for many, difficult to imagine. To Newman's way of thinking, the continuous creation of "new human beings" that Vygotsky described as occurring in/by creating the zpd, including the completive mode of discourse that is a tool--and--result of development, needs to be and can be reinitiated by a revolutionary methodology--a practice of method. To see and show language as activity requires that we create a philosophical environment--what Newman and I call a *Wittgensteinian zpd (wzpd)* (Newman and Holzman, 1993b).

In retrospect, it is more than a coincidence that the arena for Newman's "completing" of Vygotsky (and, to my admittedly non-philosophically trained mind, of Wittgenstein) is psychotherapy. Two factors are at play:

the fact that so many people are emotionally underdeveloped and the nature of the psychotherapeutic environment itself. By emotionally underdeveloped, Newman does not mean that a person is stuck at a particular stage (whether Freudian or neo-Freudian) or that one's emotional responses are causally determined by culturally-biased societal conditions. Neither does underdevelopment (and therefore development) imply a cultural or moral hierarchy. To Newman, emotional development is the unlimited capacity of human beings to continuously create new emotions.

In Wittgensteinian fashion, an approach to reinitiating emotional development must be sensitive to the fact that limitations on emotional growth (creating something new) are intimately related to the limitations of our emotive language. As one example, in our culture we are socialized to speak of emotions as individual possessions that have a cause, are located within us, and "get expressed" (like our thoughts supposedly do). Further, when it comes to speaking about our emotional lives we have a remarkably small and restricted vocabulary. At the level of discourse, if we reflect for a moment on the last conversation we had on how we were feeling and compare it to some other recent conversation we were involved in on current events or a scientific matter, the emotive discourse will no doubt appear seriously impoverished. It has always been a source of frustration to me as a developmental psychologist and psycholinguist that the development of emotive language has

rarely been investigated and that emotional development has traditionally been confined to the areas of child pathology and psychiatry. Social-therapeutic practice helps adults see that the emotional language they have learned is part of their "pathology" through their participation in building an environment in which they can become free of the constraints of emotive language and thereby be freed up to develop emotionally. Just like mothers and other adults help create a zpd for language learning-and-development, Newman is concerned to create a zpd for emotional learning-and-development--an *ezpd*.

Creating an *ezpd* in Psychotherapy

One of the few places that emotive discourse takes center stage is in psychotherapy. The psychotherapeutic environment is an especially rich one for evolving a practice of method, precisely because of the nature of therapeutic discourse. That the talk occurring in "the talking cure" is different from other forms of communication is acknowledged by experts and experienced by therapists and clients, but it is very little understood. Two recent sociolinguistic analyses begin to delineate the uniqueness of psychotherapeutic discourse. Lakoff (1990) points out that of all forms of communication it is psychotherapy that takes language most seriously. She sees language primarily as instrumental, a tool for result; it is, among other

things, "the major means for transmitting information from client to therapist and from therapist to client," and "an instrument of healing; interpretations--the right understanding in the right form--create change" (p. 59). A more constructionist view is presented in Ferrara's (1994) discourse analysis of several individual psychotherapy sessions in which she attempts to explicate the nature of psychotherapy as an emerging speech event, to understand how the norms of interaction come to be established through discourse, and to show how discourse can be therapeutic. She states, "language is paradoxically both the method of diagnosis and the medium of treatment in this cultural practice" (p. 4).

Both Lakoff and Ferrara note the lack of attention therapeutic discourse receives, given how important it is to the psychotherapeutic process and how unique a linguistic environment it is. Even before the emergence of discourse analysis as a subfield of linguistics, the tendency among philosophers, linguists, and psychologists interested in language has been to ignore emotive language, focusing instead on cognitive language (a practice, no doubt, that is a product and perpetuation of an overly masculine view of what language is and what is of scientific value).

In Newman's view, the nature of psychotherapy is such that the self-conscious and self-reflexive concern with language makes it possible for the discourse itself to have a transformative influence on the environment. In most

institutional arrangements where people engage in discourse (stores, schools, on the job, meeting an acquaintance on the street, parties, etc.), the nature of the environment determines how and when we talk, how what we say will be understood, etc. The organization of the discourse presupposes maintaining the institutional, societal and ideological roles and rules that make that environment what it is. In other words, the environment overdetermines the discourse. There is little chance that what one says, for example, in a bakery can give transformative shape to the bakery, so overdetermined is bakery discourse by the institutional arrangements of an environment designed for the purchasing of breads and cakes. Therapeutic environments (even very traditional ones)--precisely because discourse is both the subject and the vehicle of human interaction--are more like philosophical environments than they are like pragmatic, consumerist environments.

Newman has extended this feature of therapeutic discourse in a self-consciously philosophical therapy. Creating an environment in which people can develop emotionally involves "doing philosophy" because of how permeated our everyday thinking, feeling and experiencing is with metaphysical presuppositions, despite how disinterested ordinary people, even those who come to therapy, are (Newman and Holzman, 1993b). Creating a philosophical environment involves, in Vygotskian terms, relating to people as ahead of themselves; it involves supporting them to do what they

don't know how to do--philosophy. It entails deconstructing the existing environment (competitive and interpretive) and reconstructing a new environment (completive and activistic)--through the activity of discourse. (See Newman and Holzman, 1993b for annotated transcripts of therapeutic discourse from several social therapy groups.)

Social therapy, Newman's discovery, is an unusual environment in which discourse, far from being completely determined by the institutional arrangements of the location of the discourse, becomes dominant and gives transformative shape to the environment. Building the philosophical/therapeutic environment--the Wittgensteinian, emotional zpd (*wezpd*)--is the revolutionary process of continuously transforming one of life's most pervasive mundane, specific activities.

It is transformative, methodological, deconstructivist-reconstructivist revolutionary activity. When Newman speaks of the patient as revolutionary (1991b), he does not mean that social therapy politicizes people or "makes them" Revolutionaries. He is not referring to the beliefs, values or intentions of particular individuals. People in social therapy become revolutionaries by virtue of functioning within a revolutionary historical environment--*inseparable from their participation in creating that environment*. They are participating in an historically specific revolutionary activity--the reshaping of the existing elements of the environment (rule-governed emotionality and discourse about

emotionality) into something qualitatively new (new emotional activity, a new activity of speaking, etc). They are creating their own psychology and, thereby, reinitiating their development. This is making history. The experience closely replicates the conditions of Revolution where institutionalized arrangements and ideological constraints are collectively and self-consciously broken down, providing an opportunity to understand, study and participate in history. A new historical subjectivity develops. By *practicing methodology*, social therapy patients/clients are doing the very ordinary and human, but very rare in the postmodern world, activity of creating their lives.

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