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#### Footnotes

1 In another study dealing with military families, this time in the Strategic Air Command (SAC) wing of the U.S. Air Force, Ruth Lindquist (1952) is more forthright in emphasizing the strains placed on families by the frequent absences of husbands. Factors endangering the permanence of marriage included the fear of extramarital philandering by one or both partners; the SAC work situation fostering matriarchal families; and the excessive reliance of the SAC wife on her parental family for emotional support and protective functions.

2 Three separate studies of army, air force and marine corps recruits have found no statistically significant increase in authoritarian traits over the period of basic training; see Christie (1952), Franch and Ernest (1955), and Firestone (1959). Whether "authoritarian personalities" seek out a military career in the first place is a relevant question to ask however.

3 Aspects of mateship in the Australian Army are discussed by Ross (1973). The issue of masculine identity in the armed forces is considered by Elkin (1946); also Moskoi (1970: 154-55)

4 Recommendations in the 1975 Senate Committee Report (titled *The Australian Army*) for a greater concentration of army establishments along the eastern seaboard would also appear to offer prospects for fewer household shifts with each new posting and hence less family disruption. It would also minimise experiencing the pervasive military atmosphere of those army camps more remote from major civilian population concentrations.

# CHILDREN'S

## An

As a contribution to the International Year of the Child, an International Colloquium in School Psychology adopted a Declaration of the Psychological Rights of the Child in July, 1979. Here is the declaration:

#### **A Child has a Right to Love and Freedom from Fear:**

- ... to love, affection and understanding
- ... to freedom from fear of psychological and physical harm or abuse
- ... to protection and advocacy.

#### **Personal, Spiritual and Social Development:**

- ... to personal identity and independence and the freedom to express these
- ... to opportunities for spiritual and moral development
- ... to satisfying interpersonal relationships and responsible group membership.

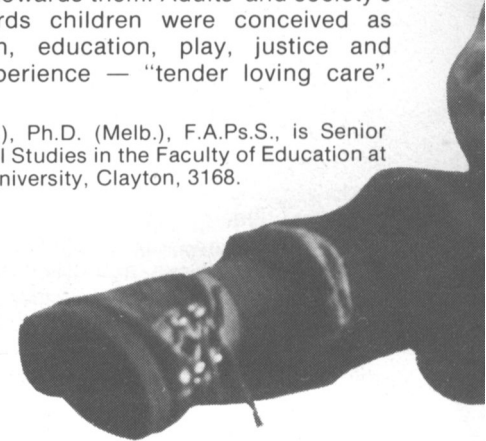
#### **Education and Play**

- ... to formal and informal education and any necessary special resources
- ... to full opportunity for play, recreation and fantasy
- ... to optimum physical and psychological development and encouragement towards this.

This Declaration derived from a draft statement of children's psychological rights which the International School Psychology Committee drew up in 1978 and from the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child, published in 1959. If such declarations are to have any thrust, the people who work with children need to be aware of them, to endorse their principles, and to be prepared to implement what they recommend, in policies and in practice.

Takanashi (1978) pointed out that the action concerning children's rights reflects changing conceptions of childhood. She repeated views expressed by previous writers (historians, social analysts, reformers) that it is only in the past century that childhood has been widely recognised as a period of life worth studying in its own right, and that children's vulnerability has been interpreted in terms of social obligations and individual adult responsibilities towards them. Adults' and society's responsibilities towards children were conceived as encompassing health, education, play, justice and positive affective experience — "tender loving care".

\*Mary Nixon, M.A. (Syd.), Ph.D. (Melb.), F.A.Ps.S., is Senior Lecturer in Psychological Studies in the Faculty of Education at Monash University, Clayton, 3168.



# PSYCHOLOGICAL RIGHTS

## Empirical Study

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**MARY NIXON**

Mary Nixon\*  
Monash University

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182 young people, aged from 10 years upwards, ranked the principles in a Declaration of the Psychological Rights of the Child in order of importance for them and for their schools. Rank ordering of the principles for age/class groups was then derived. Since children expect schools to endorse a different ordering from their own, the Declaration can provide hints about areas of conflict and agreement between schools and children. People who work with children may find the Declaration helpful in clarifying children's needs.

Shouldering these responsibilities has been linked to other social movements: for instance compulsory education. If children were required by law to attend school for so many hours a day between certain specified ages they were effectively prevented from entering the fulltime workforce, their opportunities to roam the streets unsupervised were restricted, they could be

systematically trained in useful skills for later employment, in constructive leisure pursuits and health-inducing games and exercise, their health could be monitored and their living conditions reviewed. Thus, through one set of requirements — to attend school — it might appear that exploitation of child labour could be controlled, juvenile delinquency reduced if not eliminated, the demands of industry for relatively skilled labour met, general levels of community health raised, and quality of life improved in terms of dwellings, spare time activities and social interaction. Against this had to be set (i) loss of family income because children were not working; as compensation, child endowment and family benefits were needed; (ii) changing notions of education — emphasis on useful skills in a universal system of education can be very limiting and unsatisfying; (iii) heavy investment in professional training to service the program: teachers, health workers, psychologists and social workers were needed; (iv) interference in family life and community activities in order to monitor children's welfare; this can be interpreted as, and indeed can be, unwarranted, intrusive and damaging to established relationships and satisfactory routines. Change, engineered change, must be justified.

This last point provides a focus for this paper, and the writer's object is to relate psychological work with children which necessarily requires intervention, to those psychological rights of children which are endorsed by psychologists and by children. As Takanashi showed, conceptions of childhood change over time. It seems that, in addition, people with different backgrounds and orientations hold different conceptions of children. Where these differing conceptions imply different rights and obligations, areas of conflict over how children should be treated may be identified.

The Colloquium which adopted the Declaration in 1979 did so with the intention that the rights should be cross-culturally and internationally valid.

A study using the 1978 draft statement of rights (Nixon, 1980) showed quite high agreement about the relative importance of the rights between psychology students, parents, and children, although some psychologically significant discrepancies appeared between children and adults, and psychology students expected schools to disagree with them about the relative importance of the draft rights. Although the 1979 Declaration of the Psychological Rights of the Child agrees fairly well with the 1978 draft statement, it is formulated quite differently, omits two of the draft principles and includes one new one. It may be noted that one draft principle omitted from the Declaration was the right to make age-appropriate decisions. Children, but not adults, had given some support to this right in the 1979 study; the adults at the International Colloquium decided to omit it. While



children cannot be expected to take full responsibility for deciding their rights and obligations it seems rather ironic that a principle which children supported (26% of them ranked it first, second or third), and which makes good developmental sense, should be omitted.

The aims of the present study were

(i) to examine developmental trends from late primary school to young adulthood in relative support for the principles (Rights) of the Declaration;

(ii) to examine relationships between the young people's views about the relative importance of the Rights and those that they attributed to schools;

(iii) to examine relationships between age groups in the relative importance of the Rights that they espouse and that they attribute to schools.

**METHODS**

Subjects were 182 young people:

(57 Grade 6 children: 27 boys, 30 girls; modal age 11 years; 41 Form 2 children: 12 boys, 29 girls, modal age 13 years; 43 Form 4 children: 16 boys, 27 girls; modal age 15 years; 41 Diploma in Education students: 17 males, 24 females; mean age 23 years, SD=4; range 20-39 years).

Table 1 shows distributions of ages.

**TABLE 1  
AGE DISTRIBUTION OF SUBJECTS**

Age in years	Grade 6	Form 2	Form 4	Dip.Ed.
30, 30+				
29	3			
28	0			
27	2			
26	1			
25	1			
24	2			
23	9			
22	3			
21	9			
20	9			
19				
18				
17				
16			5	
15			30	
14		1	8	
13		30		
12	7	10		
12	7	10		
11	38			
10	12			
N	57	41	43	41

The principles of the Declaration of Children's Psychological Rights were listed in alphabetical order, and four people drafted short explanatory statements for each one. Six lecturers in psychology judged the explanatory statements for adequacy, which were then revised in the light of their comments. The form used in the study is shown below:

School                      Children's Rights                      Self

**THE RIGHT TO FORMAL AND INFORMAL EDUCATION AND ANY NECESSARY SPECIAL RESOURCES.**

(To be able to learn, both in school and out of school, and to get special help when you need it.)

**THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM FROM FEAR OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL HARM OR ABUSE.**

(Not to be afraid that people will hurt you or make you feel that you are a bad person.)

**THE RIGHTS TO FULL OPPORTUNITY FOR PLAY, RECREATION AND FANTASY.**

(To be able to play, join in sports, and make believe.)

**THE RIGHT TO LOVE, AFFECTION AND UNDERSTANDING**

(To be loved, listened to, and understood.)

**THE RIGHT TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPIRITUAL AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT.**

(To have the chance to learn what is right and wrong, and to become a good person.)

**THE RIGHT TO OPTIMUM PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENCOURAGEMENT TOWARDS THIS.**

(To be encouraged to grow up strong and healthy in mind and body.)

**THE RIGHT TO PERSONAL IDENTITY AND INDEPENDENCE AND THE FREEDOM TO EXPRESS THESE.**

(To be yourself, to be respected by others, to know that you can make up your own mind and say what you think is right.)

**THE RIGHT TO PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY.**

(To have people who will look after you and speak up for you.)

**THE RIGHT TO SATISFYING INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPONSIBLE GROUP MEMBERSHIP.**

(To have good friends who care about you and to be a good friend to others.)

Each subject received a test paper of this form; he ranked the Rights (from 1 to 9), first according to the importance he attached to each, second, according to the importance he believed each one had in the school where he was, or most recently had been, a pupil. The investigator added explanations when questions arose. This procedure was carried out in classrooms.

### RESULTS

In order to examine developmental trends in relative support for the Rights, ranks 1, 2 and 3 for "Self" were tallied for each Right, separately for each group of subjects. The number of times each Right was ranked in the first three was then computed as a percentage of the number of times all Rights were ranked in the first three for that group of subjects. Ranks were derived from tallies. These results are shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2  
PSYCHOLOGICAL RIGHTS RANKED HIGHLY  
(1, 2 or 3) FOR "SELF" BY FOUR AGE GROUPS**

	Grade 6	Form 2	Form 4	Dip. Ed.				
	% Derived	% Derived	% Derived	% Derived				
<b>Right to:</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>				
<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Choice</b>				
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>				
A. Formal and informal education ...	18.7	1	12.2	4.5	10.9	4.5	9.8	4
B. Freedom from fear ...	9.4	6	8.9	6	10.9	4.5	17.9	3
C. Full opportunity for play ...	7.6	7	4.9	8	4.7	7	1.6	8.5
D. Love, affection and understanding	13.5	3	15.5	3	22.5	1	24.4	1
E. Opportunities for spiritual and moral development	12.3	4	12.2	4.5	10.1	6	8.1	6
F. Optimum physical and psychological development ...	5.3	9	7.3	7	2.3	9	8.9	5
G. Personal identity ...	11.7	5	16.3	2	21.7	2	22.8	2
H. Protection and advocacy ...	5.8	8	4.1	9	3.1	8	1.6	8.5
I. Satisfying interpersonal relationships ...	15.8	2	18.7	1	14.0	3	4.9	7

Developmental trends could also occur in attributing relative support for the Rights to schools. Ranks 1, 2 and 3 for "School" were tallied for each Right, separately for each group of subjects, percentages computed and ranks derived. These results are shown in Table 3.

**TABLE 3  
PSYCHOLOGICAL RIGHTS RANKED HIGHLY  
(1, 2 or 3) FOR "SCHOOL" BY FOUR AGE GROUPS**

	Grade 6	Form 2	Form 4	Dip. Ed.				
	% Derived	% Derived	% Derived	% Derived				
<b>Right to:</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>				
<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Choice</b>				
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Choice</b>	<b>Rank</b>				
A. Formal and informal education	28.1	1	28.5	1	31.0	1	23.6	1
B. Freedom from fear ...	11.7	3	10.6	4	7.7	5	13.0	4
C. Full opportunity for play ...	10.5	4	7.3	6	7.0	6	14.6	3
D. Love, affection and understanding	4.1	8	3.3	8	1.6	9	4.9	9
E. Opportunities for spiritual and moral development	18.1	2	20.3	2	20.2	2	15.5	2
F. Optimum physical and psychological development ...	7.6	7	7.3	6	9.3	4	10.6	5
G. Personal identity ...	9.4	5	13.0	3	14.7	3	6.5	6
H. Protection and advocacy	2.3	9	2.4	9	3.9	8	5.7	7.5
I. Satisfying interpersonal relationships ...	8.2	6	7.3	6	4.7	7	5.7	7.5



In order to examine relationships between the young people's own views about the relative importance of the Rights and those that they attributed to their schools, Spearman rank difference correlation coefficients were computed between ranks for "Self" and "School" for each subject. Frequency distributions of the rhos for each group of subjects, with means and standard deviations, are shown in Table 4.

**TABLE 4**  
**DISTRIBUTIONS OF SPEARMAN RANK DIFFERENCE**  
**CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN**  
**INDIVIDUAL RANKINGS FOR "SELF" AND "SCHOOL"**

Rho	Grade 6	Form 2	Form 4	Dip.Ed
+ .9 - 1.0	1	1	0	1
+ .7 - .8	5	2	2	5
+ .5 - .6	13	5	4	2
+ .3 - .4	11	8	5	2
+ .1 - .2	9	11	3	7
-.09 - + .09	7	3	7	8
-.1 - .2	8	3	10	7
-.3 - .4	1	6	2	3
-.5 - .6	1	1	4	4
-.7 - .8	1	1	6	2
-.9 - 1.0	0	0	0	0
N	57	41	43	41
Mean	+ .24	+ .15	-.07	+ .05
SD	.33	.37	.42	.43

(Rho = .68; N = 9; p < .05)

Relationships among age groups were examined further by taking the derived ranks for each group, first for "Self" and then for "School", and computing Spearman rank difference correlation coefficients between each pair of subject groups. The resulting rhos are shown in Table 5.

**TABLE 5**  
**SPEARMAN RANK DIFFERENCE CORRELATION**  
**COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN DERIVED RANKS**

Correlations between ranks for "Self"			
	Form 2	Form 4	Dip.Ed
Grade 6	+ .76*	+ .73*	+ .35
Form 2		+ .85*	+ .53
Form 4			+ .69*

\*p < .05

Correlations between ranks for "School"			
	Form 2	Form 4	Dip.Ed
Grade 6	+ .92*	+ .80*	+ .90*
Form 2		+ .93*	+ .80*
Form 4			+ .83*

\*p < .05

## DISCUSSION

If developmental trends occur, they should appear in Tables 2 and 3 in the form of systematic change in derived ranks across age groups for a given Right. Few such changes appeared, save for some tendency to rank, for "Self", *freedom from fear of harm* more highly with increasing age and, to rank *satisfying interpersonal relationships* somewhat less highly with increasing age. For "School", consistency across ages was more notable than change; for instance, all four groups ranked *education* first and *opportunities for spiritual and moral development* second. For "Self", four Rights appeared to be more important to the oldest group than to the youngest; these were *optimum physical and psychological development*, *freedom from fear . . .*, *personal identity . . .*, and *love, affection and understanding*. Three Rights appeared to be somewhat more important to the youngest group than to the oldest: *satisfying inter-personal relationships*, *opportunities for spiritual and moral development*, and *education*.

The correlation coefficients showing relationships between subjects' views about the relative importance of the Rights and those that they attributed to schools (Table 4) showed wide dispersion. A rather small minority in each age group showed good agreement between the two sets of ranks, i.e., on the whole, these young people perceived their schools as holding beliefs about the relative importance of the Rights which were discrepant from their own. The mean rho values are very low and are statistically not significant, but the data are psychologically significant — they strongly suggest that children from as early as Grade 6 expected conflict between themselves and their schools concerning their rights. Diploma of Education students shared this view.

The four groups agreed well on the derived ranks for "School", and only slightly less well for "Self". The rho values in Table 5 which do not reach an acceptable level of significance are those for "Self" between groups rather different in age: Grade 6 and Form 2 with Dip.Ed.

Children strongly supported five Rights; at least 30% of the children in Grade 6, Form 2 and Form 4 ranked these Rights first, second or third:

- ... love, affection and understanding (mean = 51%)
- ... personal identity and independence and the freedom to express these (mean = 50%)
- ... satisfying interpersonal relationships and responsible group membership (mean = 48%)
- ... formal and informal education and any necessary special resources (mean = 42%)
- ... opportunities for spiritual and moral development (mean = 35%)

For people who work with children these results lead to a number of considerations. Children explicitly endorsed their rights to positive support, but appeared to be much less concerned about their need for protection from harm. Adults may be inclined to believe that by protecting children from harm they are providing positive support, but children may not interpret adult behaviour in that way. The Dip.Ed. students ranked the right to *freedom from fear of harm* higher than the children did; so did parents and psychology students in the previous study (Nixon, 1980). This may reflect adult realism, but adults need to recognise children's additional requirements for positive emotional support.

Any conclusions from these results must be tentative. The samples are small, and do not represent any defined groups. While trends in the data are quite clear, biasing factors are unknown. The Declaration itself poses problems:

- (i) the Rights vary in specificity, and one might argue that a given Right implies all the others;
- (ii) certain developmentally important matters are omitted, for example, the right to make age-appropriate decisions, which appeared in the original draft;
- (iii) while the Declaration was intended to be internationally valid, no criteria for assessing its validity have been put forward.

The work reported here provides a method for investigating beliefs about children's psychological rights, and such investigations may help people who work with children to examine their own beliefs and to increase their sensitivity to children's needs. ●

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