Issues pertaining to the publication of the 1977 books

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In 1970, an unpublished manuscript by Dr. Dąbrowski was printed by the University of Alberta. This manuscript then evolved into two volumes, printed by the University of Alberta in 1972 and 1974. Eventually, these latter two manuscripts were used to generate galley proofs of a book, to be presented in two volumes. In 1977, as these galley proofs were being reviewed by Piechowski, he made substantial changes before submitting them to the publisher. Dąbrowski was in Poland and, as I understand it, based upon a telephone call with Piechowski, Dąbrowski did not approve of the changes. The books were published with the changes. Dąbrowski eschewed the book and, at his request, the unedited manuscripts were posthumously published in 1996. This page elaborates the issues related to the conceptual differences (titles and text) and other issues (authorship and preface) involved.

I recognize and appreciate the contributions that Dr. Piechowski has made to Dr. Dąbrowski's work. However, where these two authors differ in their interpretation of issues, it is important to differentiate their approaches, especially for those who are involved in detailed study of Dąbrowski's theory. Dr. Piechowski has reviewed this information and I have incorporated several changes suggested by Dr. Piechowski.

PDF Support File:

Sequence of manuscripts.

Synopsis:

Piechowski revised the galley proofs of the 1977 books as they went to press, making several fundamental changes in the manuscripts.

- The titles and subtitles were changed. The original manuscript titles were not used, instead: "theory of levels of emotional development" was the title and, in a subtitle, self-actualization was described as the goal of development.

- Piechowski inserted a case study of Saint-Exupéry equating self-actualization with Dąbrowski's levels (chapter 8 of Volume 2). This material was in press at the time and was subsequently published (Piechowski, 1978).

- The preface inserted in the 1977 books was written by Dąbrowski endorsing a journal article of Piechowski's and was previously published in that context (Piechowski, 1975). It was not intended to endorse the content of these books.

- The representation of authorship was changed.

- Dąbrowski rejected these changes, would not acknowledge the books, and called for the republication of the original manuscripts. This was not accomplished until 1996.

The nature of level I and II:

- As can be seen on pages 18 to 26 of volume 1, the description offered of level I and II reflected Dąbrowski's original approach. Piechowski subsequently presented a different interpretation after his move into the gifted area.

Level I: Primary Integration:

At least two forms of primary integration can be distinguished, an extreme one and a less extreme one. Previously this distinction has not been made explicit but it is present in an earlier description of forms of primary integration (Dąbrowski, 1967). We shall start with a discussion of the extreme form.

Primary integration has been usually defined as "an integration of mental functions, subordinated to primitive drives" (Dąbrowski etal., 1970, p. 176, Dąbrowski, 1972, p. 156). No inner psychic milieu and no developmental dynamisms are associated with this structure. The individual has no capacity for processing experience of any psychic depth, nor for developmental transformation: his behavior is automatic, impulsive, or coldly calculated. He recognizes only his self-serving goals. His intelligence serves him as an instrument to satisfy his basic goals without controlling or transforming basic drives.

... In primary integration, the elementary social responsiveness that makes people desire to cooperate and be helpful is lacking, as are the elementary forms of individual responsiveness and empathy. The level I individual has no consideration for others.
At level I, the individual does not reflect on his experience or his behavior. He does not evaluate it in terms of responsibility, and, consequently, he is not able to judge in moral or emotional terms the consequences of his behavior for himself and for others. Indeed, others are treated merely as objects or as means to ends. Aside from that they are given little consideration. Thus, there is no inner conflict for the level I person.

This extreme description of the level I person has been modeled after the successful psychopath. But there also exist unsuccessful psychopaths, as attested by most of the psychopaths studied by Cleckley, who do not appear to enjoy their antics and the havoc they create. The successful psychopath, the model for the extreme form of the level I person, gets ahead in life through ruthless competition, intent on winning and advancing himself at any cost.

The milder form of primary integration applies to "normals" rather than successful psychopaths or near-psychopaths. These individuals have a narrow scope of interest, limited horizons in thinking, aspirations, and affect, but they are not totally without feeling. While they may acquire skills of various kinds, develop their abilities, become competent within the prescribed demands of the job market, have achievements that are visible and readily rewarded, there is no actual development in the basic underlying structure of their personality. Such "normals" follow a stereotyped path of development with regard to social advancement. The course of their lives is generally predictable. When because of a loss of job, or other misfortune, the continuity of progress is broken for such a person, then, seeing no alternatives, he may suffer nervous breakdown or commit suicide.

The hold of primary structure is strong and transitions from level I to II are rare and difficult, possible only if there are present some nuclei of instability, some cognitive complexity and some emotional responsiveness.

It is likely that Kohlberg's good boy- good girl and law-and-order orientations (stages 3 and 4) also represent milder forms of primary integration, for in both theories these individuals follow externally established rules.

The characteristics of authoritarian personality (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford, 1950) seem to correspond closely to primary integration as well as to the lower stages in Kohlberg's and Loewinger's approach (Schmidt, 1977).

Thus we see that forms of personality structure governed by stereotypes and social prescriptions have cropped up in several quite independent approaches as a recognizable phenomenom.

**Level II: Unilevel Disintegration**

There are two ways in which Dąbrowski (1967) applies the term unilevel disintegration. The first usage denotes a temporary departure from primary integration, a short-term breakdown of its rigid, tight cohesion; in this sense, unilevel disintegration is equivalent to a period of disequilibrium, often followed by reintegration, the reestablishment of the original primary structure. Such periods of disintegrations may occur, for example, during adolescence, menopause, illness, retirement, or they may take place in response to circumstances that force a sudden change of perspective with regard to one's position in life.

The second usage refers to a formation of personality with built-in imbalances of physiological and psychological systems, autonomic liabilities, polarizations, a structure made up a varied, uneven parts that do not match, do not fit together, and do not work together. Consequently the structure is somewhat loose, comes apart under the impact of stress and emotional tension, and is not equipped with resources for retooling and reconstruction of a more coordinated whole. The schizothymic and the cyclic types are among representative examples of such unevenly constituted forms (Dąbrowski, 1967, p. 68). The schizothymic shows difficulty in establishing contact, appears to lack warmth, withdraws easily, likes to stay alone, tends to be precise, excessively critical, hypersensitive, often suspicious, seemingly disillusioned with humanity and unwilling to get much involved with people. But underneath, rather than a rigid primary-like structure, there is hurt and emotional vulnerability. While the schizothymic appears low in affect, the cyclothymic has too much of it, expressed in cycles of heightened excitability followed by depression that may occur in rapid alternation. Related to the cyclothymic type is a disposition toward the intense experiencing, simultaneously or almost simultaneously, of mixed feelings, such as joy and sorrow, enthusiasm and discouragement, exultation and feelings of doom. Dąbrowski makes much of this trait of mixed feelings and sees in it an important sign of potential for multilevel development (Dąbrowski, 1967, pp. 120-122).

Insight into oneself and self-awareness are weak in unilevel disintegration as is the capacity for inner psychic transformation of conflicts, difficulties, experienced tensions. Rather than being transformed, tensions must be released or converted. They may be transposed to the body, giving rise to psychosomatic disorders. They may be externalized as projections, distortions of reality, or hallucinations. They may be quelled with alcohol, drugs, or suicide. Guilt feelings are passive and come from lack of acceptance, lack of approval, lack of love in childhood. Since that conscious moral responsibility that is characteristic of the higher levels is missing, the guilt characteristic of this level is debilitating and does not have the power to open a passage from unilevel to multilevel processes (Ogburn, 1976). It is a "no exit" condition.

The degree of instability varies in level II, and as a result this level has the most multiform structure of all the levels. It encompasses total mental fragmentation as in psychosis and drug-induced states, a middle range of more stereotyped forms of behavior—inferiority toward others, dependency, need to conform, seeking approval and admiration—and at the other extreme partially integrated forms that convey certain degree of stability, even maturity (here Loewinger's Conscientious-Conformist is a possible counterpart).
The first manuscript for the books was reproduced and bound in one volume by the University of Alberta (Dąbrowski, 1970).

In 1972, Volume 2 was expanded and reproduced and bound as a manuscript by the University of Alberta. (Dąbrowski and Piechowski, 1972).

In 1974, Volume 1 was expanded and reproduced and bound as a manuscript by the University of Alberta. (Dąbrowski, 1974).

The 1972 and 1974 manuscripts were edited by Piechowski while Dąbrowski was in Poland and submitted to Dabor Publishers to produce the 1977 books.

2). Differences:

A). Titles:

The following chart shows key differences between the original manuscript titles and the titles as published.

- Volume 1 of the 1977 books:
  - Dąbrowski's original title: Multilevelness of emotional and instinctive functions. Part 1: Theory and description of levels of behavior.
  - Piechowski's revision: Theory of levels of emotional development: Multilevelness and positive disintegration

- Volume 2 of the 1977 books:
  - Dąbrowski's original title: Multilevelness of emotional and instinctive functions. Part 2: Types and Levels of Development.
  - Piechowski's revision: Theory of levels of emotional development: From primary integration to self-actualization.

A glance at the references will show that the 1972 and 1974 manuscript titles were changed for the 1977 books as shown above:

These changes had two major effects:

One: The phrase "Dąbrowski's Theory of Emotional Development" was subsequently popularized by Dr. Piechowski in his works and lectures. This was rejected by Dr. Dąbrowski as he felt the title change narrowed the scope of his theory and altered its focus away from positive disintegration and from personality development.

The result of these changes has been ongoing confusion about what Dąbrowski's theory is called: Some authors have subsequently referred to "Dąbrowski's Theory of Emotional Development" as the title of the theory, for example, Silverman (1993a, 1993b). Some authors now use both titles, for example, Piirto (1997, p. 7) says "the Dąbrowski Theory of Positive Disintegration (as it is called in Canada, or of Emotional Development, as it is called in the United States)."

Two: the revised subtitle of volume 2 implies that the goal of development is self-actualization. Dąbrowski was very opposed to equating self-actualization with his higher levels and thus he strongly rejected this subtitle.

B). Authorship:

Following APA citation guidelines.

- The 1974 manuscript (Volume 1), was printed as a work by Dąbrowski (no other authors appear on the manuscript).
  - Volume 1 of the 1977 book was published as Dąbrowski with Piechowski. Piechowski was added as the author of chapters 1, 2, 3, 5 and as the primary author of chapter 6.

- The 1972 manuscript (Volume 2), was printed as coauthored by Dąbrowski & Piechowski (with the assistance of Dexter Amend and Marlene King).
  - Volume 2 of the 1977 book was published as coauthored by Dąbrowski & Piechowski (with the assistance of Dexter Amend and Marlene King).
Subsequently, both volumes have often been incorrectly referenced collectively as Dąbrowski & Piechowski, 1977.

C). Major alterations in text:

Piechowski inserted a case study of Saint-Exupéry as chapter 8 of Volume 2. This material equated Dąbrowski's levels with self-actualization. This material was in press at the time and was subsequently published (Piechowski, 1978). Dąbrowski made it very clear that he rejected equating Maslow's theory of self-actualization with his own.

- There are a number of other minor differences in the text. In my opinion, a direct comparison best serves the interested reader.

D). Preface:

The preface of the 1977 books was originally written by Dąbrowski endorsing a journal article of Piechowski's and was previously published in that context (Piechowski, 1975). It therefore does not endorse the 1977 books.

E). Data:

It should be noted for research purposes the data presented in the original manuscripts is more comprehensive but that the data presented in the 1977 works is more accurate (several mistakes in calculation were corrected but several data points are omitted). This information came from Dr. Piechowski.

3). Dąbrowski's reaction to the changes:

- Dąbrowski would not acknowledge the 1977 books after they were published and asked several people (including me) to help in republishing the original manuscripts.

- As per Dr. Dąbrowski's wishes, a reprinting of the original titles and text of the 1972 / 1974 manuscripts was done in 1996, in Poland, by Mrs. Dąbrowski (Dąbrowski, 1996).

- The 1996 reprinting bound both volumes into one book (now listed as part 1 and part 2). Dąbrowski was listed as author of parts 1 and 2. Piechowski was listed as an "assistant" on part 2 (along with Dexter Amend and Marlene King).

- An errata from the publisher has been circulated to correct the citation of part 2 to reflect the 1972 manuscript (indicating Piechowski as the co-author of part 2).

Dr. Piechowski has indicated that he believes that the authorship citations of the 1974 manuscript and of the 1996 book (part 1) are inaccurate and that the correct citation of his role appears in the 1977 book (Volume 1).

References:


