

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

Pocket-money: Economics at the Freie Schule Frankfurt

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*“Them that’s got shall have
Them that’s not shall lose
So the Bible said and it still is news
Mama may have, Papa may have
But God bless the child that’s got his
own
That’s got his own*

*Yes, the strong gets more
While the weak ones fade
Empty pockets don’t ever make the
grade
Mama may have, Papa may have
But God bless the child that’s got his
own
That’s got his own*

*Money, you’ve got lots of friends
Crowding round the door
When you’re gone, spending ends
They don’t come no more
Rich relations give
Crust of bread and such
You can help yourself
But don’t take too much
Mama may have, Papa may have
But God bless the child that’s got his
own
That’s got his own*

*Mama may have, Papa may have
But God bless the child that’s got his
own
That’s got his own
He just worry ‘bout nothin’
Cause he’s got his own
Yes he’s got his own”*

Billie Holiday

This essay is about the use of pocket money as a pedagogical instrument at the Freie Schule Frankfurt where from the age of three on pupils are paid €1 pocket money every day by their parents. An overview of the current practice of economics education in German primary schools and youth work is presented. Presumptions concerning children as consumers are critically examined. Common practices in relation to pocket money are looked at and a briefing on the current state of research is included. Interviews with children and observations at the Freie Schule Frankfurt provide the background to present consumer behaviour and conflict culture as areas of educational concern. The concepts of *mathetics* and *self-regulation* as guiding principles at the

Freie Schule Frankfurt are introduced. Questions are posed regarding taboos and children's freedom, and also whether money in the hands of children constitutes a dangerous substance. As outlook the idea of a guaranteed income in the form of (pocket)money for all children is briefly touched upon, and the question is brought up what essentially does it mean to be a child? Eventually a vision of the Free School as a possible space of heterotopia¹ is sketched.

Children and money: economics education

At first sight the topic of children having free access to money seems a taboo. In contrast to interdiction the taboo is implicit, it is characterized not by prohibitive speech but rather by silence. In many western societies the financial standing of people is a taboo area. Accordingly in schools the question of dealing with money was not a topic for a long time either. As can be seen in a growing body of literature, research and didactical material, the need for an economics education is meanwhile recognized in families, in youth work and in schools. It is increasingly common to make money and children's spending a topic in primary schools already. Central in this regard is normally the theoretical or project-based symbolic dealing with money, consumption and economic cycles. Didactical material is specially designed for this purpose.

However it seems that economics education in primary schools is not yet a matter of course. Jürgen Lackmann, PH Weingarten, feels it necessary to explicitly point out the need for economics education (Lackmann, 2014). He also sees a lack of

research on economic consciousness of children. It is possible that this lack of research is one of the reasons for the "deficit" image of the child as it appears in the majority of guidebooks and teaching materials. Furthermore a large proportion of the literature seems to be written from an adult perspective alone, and based on adults' presumptions concerning the topic, e.g., money appears originally as a means that is used by children to compensate for social-emotional shortcomings and deficiencies.

Dangerous money

An example is the "Schülerheft" by Birgit Weber, published by the Deutscher Sparkassenverlag Stuttgart (German Credit Union Publishers). Here the exposure, respecting access to the economic sphere is pedagogically sanctioned. Children are asked to acquire a "finance pass." They do so by answering questions and solving problems in the booklet.

The first chapter deals with the topic of needs and advertising. The aim is obviously to educate children critically about advertising. The implicit presumption is that children are not in a position to develop an acceptable way of dealing with money based on their own experiences. The very first task in the booklet already constructs the problematic as one in which an unhappy child is seduced by advertising. The immediate connection of emotional resentment and advertising at such a prominent place appears to be suggestive.

Surely it is clear that children and adults *also* satisfy compensatory needs via their spending habits. However, as introduction into the topic the example seems lopsided and dishonest. Reasons for,

and style of consumption of adults are not questioned, despite them being the first model for children to learn from. It is solely the child who appears to be in danger.

The tasks and displays in the booklet intend to ignite empathy in pupils with children in situations deemed to be difficult. The message is that what is needed is for the child to cheer up or to get socially integrated, and that those are achieved better without, or instead of spending money (Weber, 2007, p. 5 ff.). The booklet, explicitly meant to address economics education, focuses strongly on the pedagogical instruction to abstain from spending. It does not provide encouragement for children to make their own experiences with money.

In the booklet the flow of money and the need for families to manage their budget are explained. Part of the “finance pass” is e.g., a documentation of monthly income and expenses of the children. Then they are asked to develop suggestions on how to manage their budget better.

This a priori in the text implies already that the income/expenses documentation will produce a problematic result. It is based on the assumption that children per se are not in a position to manage their money well (or well enough), hence they need to think about improvements. Furthermore it is not defined what this “good management” actually consists of. And, the children are told to visit a bank and talk to the staff. Surely this sounds like promotion of the publishers to win new and future customers.

A frequently used rationale that is used to underpin the call for a certain type of economics education is the prevention of debt for young people. In the social-

pedagogical literature one can find a couple of thoughts how to protect children from the pressure to buy expensive brand clothes when they enter into their teenage years (Feil, 2003, p. 104). Financial services providers appear in the finance pass for primary school as patrons, publishers and experts; and quite similarly in the documentation and project evaluation of the programme “Kinder und ihr Umgang mit Geld und Konsum” of the Stiftung Kinderland Baden-Württemberg (Pfitzenmaier, 2009).

The role of providers of financial services and insurance companies in the context of debt accumulation is not questioned critically in this literature. Money as a commodity in the hands of children is of interest for the financial services providers as much as it is for the producers of brand clothes. At the end of the day they are all striving for profit; but this is not made a topic. Quite the opposite, in three of the projects of the Stiftung Kinderland the help of financial services providers and the insurance sector is taught to be a foundation for a safe dealing with money (Pfitzenmaier, 2009, p. 28). In his greeting in the editorial of the documentation Willi Stächele, Minister of Finance of Baden-Württemberg, uses exactly this argument to justify the state’s funding for the projects. Young people are considered to be customers, hence the risk supposedly increases for them to misjudge their financial matters and get into debt early. Hence it is deemed to be important “that children learn to deal with money reasonably.” Children are supposed to learn about the risks so as to avoid falling into a debt trap, and to “develop a healthy customer behaviour in everyday life” (Stächele, in: Pfitzenmaier, 2009, p. 6).

It is not enough then to inform children about the technicalities of financial dealings like opening or monitoring an account. This in itself would definitely be commendable. The teaching aim is yet also to “learn how to manage money diligently” (Stächle, in: Pfitzenmaier, 2009, p. 7); and how to do that is explained by the president of the credit union association Baden-Württemberg, Peter Schneider:

Every year on International Savings Day we see the children proudly carrying their piggybanks normally to the next credit union. By supporting the motivation to build up savings parents and credit unions lay the foundation for the proper dealing with money, and also for a meaningful consumer life.

And further:

The ever increasing complexity of financial products and a permanently changing legal framework make the dealings with money into a type of science in itself. Thus the teaching of financial competency is already integrated in the educational curricula of the state of Baden-Württemberg... For the last 30 years the credit unions have supported the economics education of young people under the umbrella of the credit union school services. (Schneider, in: Pfitzenmaier, 2009, p. 8)²

Obviously over the last 30 years the credit unions have not prevented young people to fall into debt. What these quotes show,

however, is that not only mobile phone producers and the candy industry compete for the money of children. The financial services providers are a prominent part of it in conjunction with politicians.

The documentation also allows us to identify the attitude, aims and interests of adults. All modules are designed as model projects for schools and institutions of youth work. What they all have in common is that neither the motivation of children to participate in the projects nor their experiences are described from the children’s perspective. The children have no voice. The projects are developed by adults and presented to children; at least one was revised on basis of interest and lack thereof on the side of children (Pfitzenmaier, 2009, p. 49).

The questionable image of children

As we see an effort is made to bring children in touch with the *topic* of money—rather than money itself—intensively monitored by adults. In this regard children are obviously not asked what they actually want to learn. Furthermore adults and institutions with an interest themselves in children’s money exert influence over the presentation of the topic.

There are distinct premises on which this presentation is based. The language that is used to convey the messages and also to legitimize the pedagogical efforts relies on terms like: responsible, good, better, healthy, reasonable, proper, careful, meaningful and appropriate. These are the qualities that children’s dealings with money and their consumer behaviour are supposed to have, or to acquire. The image of children that resonates from such nomenclature is that of persons who, if left

without (this) education will deal with money and consumption badly, unhealthily, unreasonably, wrongly, carelessly, mindlessly and inappropriately.

It is most likely no accident that similar attributions are also used in everyday parlance to describe children's being and behaviour. Children are thus not seen as competent. There is a clear tendency to see their dealing with money as a danger or as harmful. Money does not appear to be a taboo any more. It is rather like a dangerous substance rooted in the adult world. For children to get in contact with it then requires adult guidance and special teaching programmes.

It is striking that from the outset children are assumed to be unable to develop a mindful way of dealing with money without explicit adult guidance, or without making serious mistakes. Yet what exactly constitutes a mistake is left open. The Deutsche Jugendinstitut for instance writes about pocketmoney and economics education:

To have pocketmoney at their free disposal is an important element for children to experience autonomy during childhood, youth and adolescence. Parents should accept seemingly haphazard expenses of their children. The child will learn from mistakes, and manage her or his expenses against the background of parental (economics) education. (Langmeyer & Winklhofer, 2014, p. 59)

And even more explicit the manual "So erziehen Sie Ihre Kinder im Umgang mit Geld" (Kettl-Römer, 2010) assumes that

children will make painful experiences when they use their pocketmoney, and that they will (should) learn from them. The author at first requests that parents should talk with their children about money openly. Kettl-Römer sees access to pocketmoney and the need for children to get along with it as a building block for a successful economics education. She resides firmly in the canon sketched above when she says: "To deal with money properly is a skill that each child has to learn at first" (Kettl-Römer, 2010, p. 29). What the term "proper" stands for remains open here, too. It can be reasonably assumed that it depicts a "proper" defined by adults. Children enjoy little trust, the author of the manual starts from the premise that they will display improper conduct in dealing with money. As a way to substantiate this, the author puts words into the mouth of children.

The primary school child disposes of her or his money as it pleases, and learns: 'If I spend the money today for sweets and eat them all in one go, I will feel sick today and for the rest of the week I have neither money nor sweets.' (Kettl-Römer, 2010, p. 19)

The author does not state a source that would support the idea that children who receive pocketmoney a) dispose of it as it pleases, b) spend it all at once, c) exclusively for sweets, which they d) eat all in one go, so that e) they feel sick. And even if there were such experiences for children it still remains open under what conditions they are generated.

Of course children will, as all people, make mistakes when they buy things and

spend their money. Apart from the stomach the teeth appear to be also at risk by the consumption of sweets. But the attributions seem cynical, particularly if the restricted financial means of children are taken into account. There is little to say against having a party when there is eventually another payday.

Kettl-Römer suggests that children should be involved in deciding which of the old toys are to go to second-hand market, and what they should cost. They should also be told what income was generated from this for the family budget. The idea does not come up that children might organise second-hand stalls on their own and undertake all necessary steps that lead to earning money through their sales themselves, that they might indeed hold on to their income and have it at their free disposal.

The attitudes on the side of pedagogues, and authors of manuals are only sketched exemplarily here, a comprehensive description would extend beyond the space available.

This monologue of reason over unreason (Foucault)³ provides the background for a different attitude towards the topic of money and children as it is found at the Freie Schule Frankfurt.

In spite of the differences in relation to the presumption of children's behaviour without adult guidance to be a priori wrong and self-harming, there is one point that the authors referred to make, and that can be accepted. This is that children *learn* to deal with money. On the one hand for learning in this area (as in others, too) it is typical that children take adults as role models. My experience is that this learning from adults, copying their behaviour, is much more influential than learning with

adults. On the other hand it is important what exactly is afforded space in the children's everyday experiences. Hartmut von Hentig⁴ wrote in his expert statement on the Freie Schule Frankfurt in its early days: "Learning happens constantly, and what is learned comprises of what is important in our culture if this is 'embryonically' (J. Dewey) present in the school" (von Hentig, 1985, p. 86). The following section is about the embryonic appearance of children's own money, based on the example of pocket-money.

Origins of pocket-money

Children deal with money in concrete terms when they use their pocket-money. Providing children with pocket-money is supposed to have developed as a common practice since the 1960s. In the context of educational reform efforts at this time children's independence was taken into view (Langmeyer & Winklhofer, 2014, p. 8). However, Marei Hartlaub, one of the founders of the Freie Schule Frankfurt and up to the present an active member of the association that owns the school, has different memories:

As far as I know children got pocket-money long before that time already. For instance, I got pocket-money in the years after the war, but I had to account for every penny spent and the parents controlled and criticized if the amount for sweets in the records exceeded the amount for erasers. That led to adjustments of reality. (Hartlaub, 2015)

The Freie Schule Frankfurt in the Vogelweidstrasse was part of the

educational reform movement. Its predecessor was the *Kinderschule*, founded in 1967 by Monika Seifert. The school is owned by the *Verein für Angewandte Sozialpädagogik*. In December 2013 the school opened a branch in Ronneburgstrasse, Frankfurt. The following material relates to the children in this second branch.

From the age of three all pupils at the *Freie Schule Frankfurt* receive €1 every day as pocket-money. There is no age related scale. Everyone gets the same amount. Parents give this money to the children as part of the concept of the school, otherwise there are no costs for teaching aids at the school.⁵

Marei Hartlaub describes the origins of pocket-money at the school:

The discussion about pocket-money had already started at the *Kinderschule*, before the Free School started. It was triggered by constant requests of children to get money so that they could buy something at the small corner shop nearby. These were small things: sweets, pencils, temporary wet-and-press-on tattoos, etc. What they wanted was not that adults would buy something for them, or give them a present. They wanted to do it themselves, decide themselves. That brought up the idea of daily pocket-money. The adults had no intention to copy the common practice whereby parents would check on the children's spending every week or once a month and possibly curtail the amount paid. At the end of the day, it was all about self-regulation, not

heteronomy. I remember that approximately in 1968 the pocket-money rule was agreed, after lengthy debates with parents, but finally without too much conflict. The daily rate (first 50 Pfennig, later 1 DM) was decided at that time, too. Particularly for the three year old children it was not a matter of 'planning,' their interest was here and now. (...) The introduction of pocket-money was indirectly triggered by the children, but it was agreed upon by the adults as a consequent step against the background of self-regulation. (Hartlaub, 2015)

The concept of the *Freie Schule Frankfurt* defines this practice as one of the freedoms that children at the school enjoy, the freedom "to have a fixed 'income'," inter alia as a means to experience independence and autonomy (Hartlaub, 2004, p. 33). At the branch *Ronneburgstrasse* it is common practice that children regularly go to shops near-by. Younger children are accompanied by a teacher. Trips to department stores, toyshops, D.I.Y. stores or a shop selling fabrics are also organized. Children from the age of five to six onwards explore the environment in the neighbourhood of the school, in pairs and without adult guidance. Visiting the local supermarket is one of a couple of experiential areas in public spaces. The children know their way already from earlier field trips together with the group.

The practice at the *Freie Schule Frankfurt* is not common in Germany. Pocket-money is usually part of family affairs. I have not found any reference that

indicates that another school would require a pocket-money contribution from parents. Pocket-money is not normally seen as teaching material or an educational device. This area of children's experience is not normally part of school life.

To understand the context a bit better it seems opportune to include a briefing on the common practice in relation to pocket-money as it is prevalent in Germany. The Deutsche Jugendinstitut notes that there is limited research on pocket-money, and where it exists it is mainly done by market researchers. The necessity for pocket-money, however, is unanimously supported in the literature, and most parents do provide pocket-money. The basis of the research is surveys with children and their parents. For children under the age of six it is exclusively their parents who are included in surveys (Langmeyer & Winklhofer, 2014, p. 13).

Pocket-money: What, why, for whom?

On the basis of popular guidebooks and recommendations on pocket-money Christine Feil identifies the following characteristics:

Pocket-money is not a salary nor is it a remuneration for help with petty work. Instead it is a claim for a part of the family budget.

Pocket-money is not paid as alms. The parents hand it out on a regular basis to the child.

Pocket-money is not a tool for applying sanctions, it can be reliably calculated and planned with.

Pocket-money is not money for saving, it is money for the pocket of the child. Pocket-money is

personal money. Its use is beyond parental control. (Feil, 2003, p. 32)

In reality however, pocket-money is not always given to children without conditions attached. The study Kids-Verbraucheranalyse 2014 found that 84% of six to 13 year old children could freely decide on the use of their pocket-money (<http://www.ehapa.de/allgemein/kidsverbraucheranalyse-2014>).

There are no legal regulations stipulating that parents have to hand out pocket-money, or how much. If they do any contract that a child enters into without parental consent counts as validly established as long as the child acquire the goods or services in questions by using the financial means that she or he received for use at her or his own disposal (BGB § p. 110).

Feil recounts the guidebooks and summarizes that pocket-money is necessary for children to learn to budget and get by with their money. Whoever does not learn this as a child is supposed to find it hard later. Children are meant to develop independence and responsibility. Others get pocket-money, too, and children want to be "in." For Feil that does not mean, that everyone has to get the same amount of pocket-money. Furthermore for parents and children the topic of pocket-money offers an opportunity to speak about economic activity, budgeting and planning. Children who are competent with money would later be confident in their dealings with banks. They experience the value of money through the limits of the amount of pocket-money and of goods of everyday use. Mistakes in spending their pocket-money allow them to learn to avoid similar

experiences in the future (Feil, 2003, p. 35). Besides further pedagogical-didactical expectations there is here also the aspect of joyful independence at least indicated.

In Germany the age at which children start getting pocket-money from their parents is at approximately five to six. Lackmann recommends the last year of kindergarten (age five) or the beginning of school attendance (age six) as the start for receiving it (2014, p. 51). Kettl-Römer writes: “Three year old children have an interest in money ... Children in kindergarten however don't have a true notion of the value of money yet” (2010, p. 33). The interviews that will be referred to later will show that this is not correct. If children in kindergarten are assumed to have no notion of the value of money, this may be because they are not allowed access to concrete money, and they are not allowed to make purchases independently; rather they are offered to *play* shop.

The concept of value in itself is misleading. Children experience that it is useful for them to have concrete money in their hands. At what age children develop an abstract concept of value is a different question. Notions of value that resemble those of adults are not prevalent amongst children aged seven or 12 either.

There is a common assumption in the literature that pocket-money should be scaled according to age. Older children should receive higher amounts, the frequency should change from daily to weekly and monthly. German youth welfare services recommend a pocket-money of €0.50–1.50 per week for children aged four to five, then it should be increased in a sliding scale to €3 per week until the children are nine, and children between 10 and 15 should receive

a monthly amount of €12–30, again on a sliding scale (Lackmann, 2014, p. 52). According to the Kids-Verbraucheranalyse 2014, 53% of the families with children under the age of six in Germany provide pocket-money to them, on average € 12.82 per month. The six to 13 year old children receive on average €27.50 per month (<http://www.ehapa.de/allgemein/kidsverbraucheranalyse-2014>).

It is not researched what the children may *have to buy* from their pocket money. Guidebooks and online manuals in most cases suggest a break-up of pocket-money in three parts. This concept is not developed by children, it rather is determined by adults. “One third is for spending, one third is for saving and the last third is for donations.” According to the US financial adviser Brent Kessel by following this concept, children learn the triad of consumption, precaution and social responsibility (Feil, 2003, p. 45). Many banks support the project “School Piggy Bank.” It promotes a similar idea: “Every child receives an individual piggy-bank, and every class in school a collective one, too. They are transparent with four compartments, one each for: saving, spending, investing, donating” (www.schulschwein.de). And the commercial enterprise *bricklebrit Eltern Kinder Geld* goes even a step further by offering children transparent jars at the price of €5 per set, stickers inclusive: “for now,” “for later,” “for you.”

For now: chewing-gum, school party, cinema; everything that children need occasionally. For later: Lego-airport, playmobil-zoo, a new skateboard; everything that is not affordable at an instant. For

you: homeless, animal sanctuary, granny's birthday; everything that children do to make others happy.
(www.bricklebrit.net)

From taboo to transparency, or more accurately, to an increased control over the children's money-economy; in concrete terms: control over the substance of money that is allocated to children. Here even Foucault's confession as a disciplinary technique is dispensable. Children are still suspected to have something to hide, but methodically it is already made impossible to hide anything.

Pocket-money at the Freie Schule Frankfurt

The experiences at the Freie Schule Frankfurt allow some insight into the children's perceptions. Children are well able to make their own meaningful experiences with money, and without explicit guidance. These experiences expand well over the attributions sketched above. They do so on their own initiative if only they are afforded the opportunity.

Money has an important role in society. As long as this is the case pocket-money allows children social participation. This does not mean that children should have to use money in the same manner as adults. Children use their money in their own ways and, like everyone, have certain experiences by doing so.

For this essay I interviewed children who attend the Freie Schule Frankfurt (Ronneburgstrasse). The branch opened in December 2013, it will cater for children from the age of one to thirteen. At present there are three groups: ages one to three; ages three to five; and ages five to seven. Older children are not yet present at this

branch of the school. The school will grow over the next few years and organically the age of children in the school will increase.

Children receive pocket-money as described when they start attending the middle group (ages three to five). The questions in the interviews are guided by the interest in the children's self-perception.

Interviews on pocket-money at the Freie Schule Frankfurt

Teacher: How old are you?

N (boy): Five.

J (girl)...(shows three fingers.)

Teacher: How much pocketmoney do you get per day?

J ... (shows one finger.)

N: One Euro. Sometimes I get an advance. Do you know what an advance is? An advance is, that, sometimes you get five Euro, or two Euro or sooo much money. Then you can do it that way, that you don't get money on other days.

J: Tomorrow I get a lot of money and yesterday I get only a little bit of money.

Teacher: How do you like it?

N: That is good.

J: Beauuuutiful!

Teacher: And what do you do with your pocketmoney?

N: Then we buy something and then we save some. And then, this is how we do it, that we buy and then we save and sometimes we get an advance and so we keep on doing it. And then we buy.

S and V (girls): I am six. I get a Euro.

S: Sometimes I get 50 Cent because I have spent 50 Cent on another day already.

V: Sometimes I get a Euro, sometimes I get two Euro because I have saved money. Sometimes I don't get a Euro because I had two Euro yesterday already.

Teacher: How come?

S: I need to make choices. Mostly I say yes. My mother calculates that.

C (boy): I am six. Yesterday for instance I have bought a lipstick at the kiosk.

Teacher: What is a lipstick?

C: With a lipstick you can paint your lips. But my lipstick is for eating. Sometimes I have three Euro, but mostly I have one Euro.

R (boy): I am five. I get one Euro. But sometimes I get nothing. Sometimes I get nothing.

Teacher: When do you get nothing?

R: Well, when they forget it.

Teacher: What do you buy with your pocketmoney?

S: When I have only little money, I buy sweets or Fanta. But when I have a lot of money I buy this, what you can see here. (she shows three bags of crisps and three pretzels)

Teacher: Do you buy food because you like it or because you do not like the meals in the school?

V: The food in school is mostly good, but when it does not taste good then I take some money and buy something to eat.

S: I buy sweets, Fanta, crisps. Sometimes I buy pizza. Mostly food. Sometimes we pool and buy pizza

which we share then. But we share often. I don't share with all children. Some children don't share with me.

D (girl): [I am] six. One Euro like everyone. Mostly I save two Euro and then I buy pizza or crisps. I am not interested in Gummi Bears. But I am very much interested in the chocolate that I find in the shelf beside the Gummi Bears. I am most interested in the white chocolate. Once I had a lot of money and could buy more than I wanted. Thus I had three Euro today. I made it four Euro because I got another Euro today. Today I bought two pizzas because they cost two Euro a piece. I like most of all the swapping of sweets with the other children. I get only one Euro and when we swap I have a sweets salad. What I like most, I run ...

Teacher (interrupts): Is this about pocket-money?

D: I talk about the way to the supermarket! I run across the street. After I've had a look that it is safe. Then I run until I can't anymore. I look whether the traffic light is red or green. When it is green, I cross the street and run the last piece of the way up to the door of the supermarket.

G (boy): I am three. I get pocketmoney at home to go shopping. I want to buy food for myself. I tell my mama. That is very important. That I get money when I go shopping with my mama. I like to have money also for school. I went

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shopping only once with E (a teacher).

Q (girl): I am seven years old. This year I will be eight and next year I will be nine. I get two Euro per day. Not every day. Only on special days.

Teacher: Who decides that?

Q: That depends. If I didn't get pocketmoney on another day. I can save money or I don't save. On special occasions I get money. Sometimes I get pocketmoney twice a day.

Teacher: Do you know why?

Q: I don't know it. I always buy different things.

H (boy): [I am] five-and-a-half. I won't tell you. I get one Euro. But I buy always different things. But I have saved 15 Euro.

Teacher: How old are you?

O (girl) ... (shows two hands with five fingers.)

Teacher: How much pocketmoney do you get?

O ... (shows one hand with five fingers.): So. Every day. I buy sweets.

U (boy, six years): I make a new bag⁶ for myself, it will be stolen otherwise. I don't have a purse any more.

L (girl, seven years): Me, too.

Teacher: How much pocket money do you get?

U: Every day one Euro. When I save two days I get two Euro. When I save four days I get four Euro, when I save five days, I get five Euro and

when I save a hundred days I get one hundred Euro. I find this goooood!

Teacher: What do you do with it?

U: I buy things for me.

Teacher: What things?

L: Games and sweets.

Teacher: Where?

U: At Penny and elsewhere. Sometimes I buy magazines.

L: I go to Penny shopping always with the school and to the kiosk.

Teacher: What?

L: Sweets, cake, candies.

The children's answers allow an insight into the wide area of experiences which they have, the advantages which they see in having pocketmoney and the conflicts they deal with. They explore public space and find orientation. They run through town and go through traffic safely. They are motivated to learn about numbers, albeit that not all are competent yet. They want to be able to read the labels. They count and calculate. They experience time and the unreliability of the future at the same time: It is open what will happen to their idea that one will get a lot of money tomorrow because yesterday one got only little if the adults forget to pay. They have tactile experiences. They learn to know the coins and their differences in appearance and value. They experience lack and abundance. Many of them can and want to say clearly what they buy. They pool and share with other children. They negotiate friendships.

The interviews show that apparently the parents in agreement with the children save money, i.e., they hold back one day to pay another day.

Something that the children did not talk about, but is evident in everyday

practice is that children frequently lose their money in the school building, or they forget it. It is simply out of sight, out of mind, other things are more important for the time being. Sometimes it is vehemently searched for later. The owner finds it again, or it is found by others. Sometimes it is brought back, or it is spent by others. Often children put it into the kitty for lost and forgotten pocket-money. This has filled up significantly already. The children decided to buy something for the school from this fund at some stage. Recently they started to provide some funds from this source for children who lost their money.

Dealing with money thus happens quite freely and in many different ways, sometimes important, sometimes indifferent, quite similar to dealing with other teaching materials or games. The concept of the Freie Schule Frankfurt obviously meets with the children's practice in stating that this guaranteed "income" accounts for great independence and that it allows to develop a feeling for money and numbers. "The children learn how much they can buy for a certain amount of money, and they learn to budget. They can satisfy their needs which makes them independent. The children decide how to make use of their pocketmoney" (Hartlaub, 2004, p. 33). Money here is not introduced to children in the first instance as a *topic*, but rather as *material* in their immediate physical experiential space. It is an object in the world that surrounds the children. Whether money can have a similar meaning for children as it has for adults, can be left undecided.

Collecting money, donating and tricking people

"Sufficient availability of pocketmoney makes possible for children the sharing, lending, making presents, saving, buying friends, blackmailing and being blackmailed, and the losing of money" (Hartlaub, 2004, p. 33). The children are concerned with the sufficient supply of money. Their practices transcend beyond the concept of the school. This can be seen in a situation that happened prior to the interviews.

Some of the older children asked if they could build a stall in front of the school for selling things, mostly old toys. They frequently build up these stalls and sometimes they explicitly make things for the purpose of selling them. In a Free School, too, it makes sense that teachers from time to time have a look to see what the children do with their freedom. (Not only) in this case going to see what they did was caused by genuine interest, not by the interpretation of pedagogical duty to watch over the children's actions. They sold things, begged passers-by for money and explained to me (their teacher) what they did without being asked. Amongst other things they told me:

I collect money for a cat.

We donate money for our school.

I trick the people: I collect for poor children in Africa, but I buy an aquarium for myself.

I have saved six Euro today for Lego. The people give between twenty Cent and two Euro.

I don't join in.

Can I sing for money?

Teacher: Yes.

I want to save for Lego and my

target is 50 Euro.

I save for a toy for my dog. My dog has destroyed her toy today and I want to buy a new one.

We collect for our school. But we buy things for ourselves.

We have donated a lot. See here!

Teacher: What does that mean: donate?

We donate for sweets (*laughs*) I have donated already. We donate for our school. For us donating means that we save money. At the moment we save for sweets. It is generally the case that one buys sweets if a Euro is reached.

I save for a pretzel.

We donate for our school and for the poor children in Frankfurt. See, most people give something. If we get a lot, we give F some of it. (*F is the child who does not "join in."*)

The school's birthday comes soon. The school has opened up recently. See, I get money, without giving change back. This is different to the supermarket.

These short statements shed a light on the children's understanding of earning money. What the written reproduction can not convey is the passion and enthusiasm in their speaking. Once they have found out that they can get money and use it to fulfil their wishes and needs, children expand their repertoire and they are quite creative in doing so.

It is possible to sell something, or to dance for money. Money can be collected, saved or spent. What the latter means and who is profiting thereby is open to interpretation.

It is possible to have people on, to cheat, to convince, to beg or to win customers, too. The children's use of concepts appears open to misunderstandings and discrepancies between the personal definition and that of a potential majority. Money can be saved and then used for oneself, it can be given to a friend as a present, it can be spent to buy a toy for a dog—respectively: one can *plan* to do all this.

It is obvious that the children's practice is very close to that of adults. At the same time there is a difference. The momentary act, even if it is connected to a plan, does not constitute an obligation to also put this plan into practice later. The planning is not morally binding. Moments later a different act can be much more attractive and the money is forgotten at once.

In contrast to adults many children speak (at least in conversation with the author of this essay) quite openly and uninhibitedly about money. Gaining access to money and its use for them is normally neither dangerous nor a secret, but rather part of their sensual experiences in the world. For most of them the topic is not (yet) significantly affected by shame. The children's statements indicate self-worth and confidence. Some of them seem to have more insight into their possibilities and their budgets than many an adult.

When children get pocketmoney first, they mostly head off to buy the sweets that others have, too, and which they could only get as a present up to that point. When they see then that they can buy this one, but also something different altogether, they tend to follow their taste and try out. Thus they attain a large selection of sweets which then they share.

The purchase of expensive brand

clothing appears in the literature as a danger for children. So far the children at the Ronneburgstrasse don't buy a lot of clothes with their pocketmoney. Maybe the adult problem with brand clothing would not be one either if children were allowed to buy their clothes themselves and if they could also make experiences in sharing clothes, or to sew them for themselves as it is possible even for three year old children at the Freie Schule Frankfurt. As with money in general children should also be able to make their own and uncensored experiences in the "dangerous" area of buying clothes.

And children seek for creative solutions to expand the limits of their budget, as in the case of the wish for an aquarium. Hence they develop ideas how to tap into other sources of income. Of course children get money also independently of the pocket-money, e.g., as presents from parents or relatives. In the context of economics education and the economic situation of children, this area is relevant also. It would be interesting to find out what strategies children and parents develop in their negotiations about the amount of extra money for the children and its use. The question arises, what children are willing to do in the social sphere of their family in comparison to begging on the streets, so as to get access to money. However, in the context of my essay this complex cannot be followed up. Instead the children's sphere of power within the school context shall be looked at.

Self-regulation

The practice of pocket-money at the Freie Schule Frankfurt and the learning experiences connected to it are anchored in

the concepts of self-regulation and mathematics.

The concept of self-regulation was introduced to the Freie Schule Frankfurt and also to the discussion of educational reforms during the 1960s by Monika Seifert. Oskar Negt and many others made use of it. The concept originates in the writings of Wilhelm Reich (...) and it was introduced by A.S. Neill into the practice of Summerhill School where it is applied successfully since. (...) Self-regulation takes place within the competencies of each individual. It does not need to be established or learned. (Hartlaub, 2004, p. 18 ff.)

The basic premise from which the concept starts is the assumption that all human beings are in principle able to know what makes sense for them at a given time. At the Freie Schule Frankfurt teachers assume that children know themselves when they are hungry, thirsty, when they are tired, what they are curious about, what they want to learn. Self-regulation thus encompasses the physical and the mental dimension alike. However: "Self-regulation is not restricted to inner processes only. In the social and political sphere it particularly shapes the quality of communication and generates spirited group processes" (Hartlaub, 2004, p. 23). In this sense human beings are in a constant resonance with their environment. Michael Gerlinger formulates this understanding of self-regulation in his complex concept of a resonant self (Gerlinger, 2005).

The task of teachers is to empathically accompany the children and make offers in accordance with their verbally and nonverbally expressed wishes and needs. This applies obviously to one year old children already. Children rely on adult support to make it possible for them to satisfy their needs and fulfil their wishes. This is part of the concept of self-regulation. Children demand support, and they offer it, too. Of course there are objects and experiential spaces that should not be open for children to access without limits. The definition of these, and to what extent children can e.g., decide on their own consumption of sweets is an element of constant negotiation within the group of adults.⁷

A nonbiased approach is helpful in this regard. For instance, a children's book in the school suggests an answer to the question why children appear to be so addicted to sugar. In *Alles lecker!* it reads: "Children grow. They have a high demand for energy. It is the highest for the smallest children" (Kuhl & Maxeiner, 2012). Hence a two year old child dreams of a tower of ice cream, a fourteen year old only of a scoop.

For children pocket-money is a door opener to the world of adults. This is what is of interest for children. The separation of worlds, here adults, there children, as it is prevalent from the adult perspective appears in a different light from the children's viewpoint. In their games they imagine as unseparated those spheres to which they don't have access yet. These games are quite real for children as can be seen when they engage in role-play. Children at our school rarely engage in role-play with money. Real contact with money supersedes them.

A friend of mine pointed out that the plea for the concept of pocket-money at the Freie Schule Frankfurt could be regarded as liberal. Where then is the critique of the harmfulness—not of sugar, but—of capitalism, the complete penetration of all relationships by the principle of commodification?

Indeed, this question was already posed when the school was first established:

In those debates the allegation of "training for, and conforming with capitalism" played a role but it was soon regarded as negligible. At the time the common counter-argument [was] that for fighting against capitalism it is necessary to know its rules. (Hartlaub, 2015)

Experience at the Free School shows that it is often not necessary nor useful to try to familiarize children with as yet unknown situations by warning them of potential dangers. A child has bought a magazine for €3 so that she could avail of the little gadget, a little plastic crossbow, that comes with the magazine. After the second time using it the toy breaks. The child boils with rage. The teachers suggest to go to the woodwork room and build a crossbow. There is no need for any further warning. Even worse, a prior warning based on adults' fears can enhance children's fears instead of encouraging them to try things out themselves. Maybe the child could try to repair the crossbow or use the remains in otherwise meaningful ways. At any rate it is useful to talk with children about their feeling, thoughts, experiences and fears.

This seems so self-evident in light of

our own need for exchange, communication and talk with others. The basic requirement is trust in the child and an attitude of acceptance and understanding of a child's situation.

Just as some children have the experience of being blackmailed by adults it also happens that children blackmail each other. Here, too, the school's concept is in accord with the reality of children's activities. Older children sometimes lurk about for younger or weaker children and try to take their pocket-money. The children call this "snatching"; it is done by physical force, blackmailing or cajoling. One could say in their own ways they do similar things as the adults who, as shown above, compete for children's money in a bid to "snatch" it.

Courting for friendship is a central topic in the school. Money, toys, favours are means to be used. Occasionally children try to use physical force and start a fight to gain friendship or the obedience of others. The task of the teachers then is to protect weaker children and show that there are other ways to deal with each other.

At the Freie Schule Frankfurt children and adults can call for a group assembly. This is a forum for bringing up issues of concern and for negotiating interests. Surely the adult idea of democracy is alien to children. The group assembly is much more a direct field for negotiation that allows expression of emotions and reporting of experiences, good or bad. Participation in the assembly is voluntary. The processes of negotiation about acceptable standards in the school take place in parts in this forum. "Self-regulation means negotiation" (Hartlaub, 2004, p. 25).

When children in the group assembly bring up that they want the snatching of pocket-money to stop, or that they don't want to be hit or blackmailed by others, this has effects in the group. The children do not care a lot about the motivation of others. They want to express their own issue, or sometimes simply say nothing. They want to solve their conflicts or want to avoid them. The solutions which they find if adults refrain from interfering are often quite surprising. It is frequently enough to be able to display one's anger and talk about injustices suffered. Often the children have no interest in identifying a perpetrator or a sanction like for instance an explicit compensation. Often children who are not involved in a given conflict share some of their own belongings with others who have been robbed and this already solves the conflict.

There is normally not a set end-point for the group assembly. Just like the money collection described earlier it merely dissolves when there is nobody interested in it any more.

Mathetics

Mathetics is the science of learning, in contrast to didactics as the science of teaching. Mathetics starts from the position of the learner, the child. It integrates manifold forms of learning, with or without teachers. The term was coined by Johann Amos Comenius (1592–1670). Hartmut von Hentig redefined it:

Mathetics cannot simply mean "*laissez-aller*." It requires a structured experiential space. The teacher's task shifts towards providing the "material" (...) On the other hand the teacher will still

show, explain, correct, advise and pass on information. When doing so, however, it is free of the intention to bring the child onto a certain pathway of learning that is supposed to be the proper one. It would be just as well if it was understood that there is little difference between a good didactician and a good mathematician *in their practice*, but it is quite big *in their intention* and thus *in the long-term effects*. (von Hentig 1985, p. 85)

Mathematics in pedagogy is free of prescribed teaching content and targets. This is mirrored in the concept of pocket-money, the negotiations of sugar consumption and the largely free and self-regulated conflict culture. Central is the perspective of the children, and their emotion, motivation and volition.

Of major concern for mathematics is the establishment of a symmetric relationship at eye-level between learner and teacher. Grading is abandoned because it relies on comparison of performances of learners against standardized results, which does not make sense here. Unresolved problems of the everyday life of children that interfere with their potential learning are taken seriously and attended to first (von Hentig, 1985, p. 82). This requires intense work on relationships. Teachers are requested to give attention to each child and tailor their offers to their individual situation. Where children need support in their self-regulated learning efforts it is always available (Hartlaub, 2004, p. 35). Accordingly there is no check on achieving particular learning targets.

“Mathematics implies the ‘constructivist’

concept of learning which is understood as an active, autopoietic process in which individuals ‘construct’ their own ‘realities’” (de.wikipedia.org). Economics education enters into the life of children at the Freie Schule Frankfurt as a field of experience, not as a subject. It includes the cultural techniques reading, writing, arithmetic (Hartlaub, 2004, p. 35).

Restriction in talking freely about money

Obviously children attending a school with a mathetic concept can also have difficult learning experiences. Not all children are happy to share their thoughts. The teacher’s relationship to each child is different, and of course the children like teachers differently.

Some children experience intense conflicts with their parents over the issue of pocket-money. They bring these conflicts with them to school. Some talk about them, others act them out. For some children it is obvious that they feel parental pressure in relation to pocket-money. It happens that pocket-money is made conditional on good behaviour of the children. Children report about varying frequency and occasions of payment of pocket-money. Some children say they don’t get pocket-money if they wish to buy something that the parents don’t agree to. This then is one of the reasons for them to snatch money from other children.

Pocket-money is meant to be a pedagogical instrument and in the context of the children’s right to learn it is of similar status as a pencil, a field trip or the use of the gym. Nevertheless it happens at the Freie Schule Frankfurt, too, that parents functionalize pocket-money for their own educational targets. Underlying

there may be a lack of trust in the child or the school's concept. This then requires efforts at persuasion. Otherwise the result on the side of the child can be anxiety, ambivalence, insecurity, loss of trust and repressed anger. Based on other experiences with parents, pedagogues and other adults children are obviously well aware of the fact that their own wishes and rights are often put up for questioning. Hence none of the begging and dancing children told the passers-by the truth about the aim of their money collection. This was a matter not of shame, but of wisdom; and yet they were compelled to tell a lie.

Thus the children hit exactly the right spot in telling the adults something they would approve of: the collection is not for themselves, it is for poor children somewhere else. This connection of altruism and kind-heartedness was widely accepted by the passers-by. Here the children assumingly share an experience with beggars who don't ask for money for a beer either, but rather for food, or also not for themselves but for their children. One passer-by approached the teacher and commended the children's cooperativeness.

The suggestions that money is (or was) a taboo topic for children, or also as put forward here that it is understood to be a dangerous substance, can be developed further now. It appears as a taboo for children to use money to fulfil their own wishes without censorship. Thus the taboo seems to be more the children's autonomy and freedom from adult's wishes and requirements. The possibility of such autonomy and freedom, however, is linked to the possession of money that is not under adult control. By means of this dangerous substance: private money free

of adult control, children now achieve this dangerous and tabooed freedom. And surely, the children strive to achieve this freedom, but at the same time the implicit secrecy that comes with the taboo renders it dangerous, if not impossible, to even talk about their desire. Accordingly the freedom needs to be covered with a shell of innocence.

This thesis is not only supported by the reports of the begging children at the Freie Schule Frankfurt, or the above mentioned recollections of Marei Hartlaub. It can also be deduced from literature. According to a study of the Institut für Jugendforschung 56% of the children between six and 14 save money without a distinct purpose. Feil and others ascribe this to a collector's passion on the side of the children (Feil, 2003, p. 60). Compared with the practice at the Freie Schule Frankfurt this is surprising. Here it is obvious that children under the age of six have already clear ideas what they want to buy or save money for. Whether they will implement them or even hold on to them by tomorrow is a different question. Some children are collectors, of money, too, but not randomly. The objects that children possess or acquire are meaningful to them.

At the Freie Schule Frankfurt access to and the meaning of shopping and saving are part of the daily experiential space of children that is not or only marginally censored. Is it possible that the 56% of children in the study lack sufficient non-restrictive independent experiences? As shown, if children fear that their motives are not respected they don't tell the truth, just like the begging children.

It can be assumed that 56% of the children in the study *stated* that they saved money for no particular purpose. That may

have prevented further questioning from the adult's side.

Maybe children's freedom appears doubtful not only because they might use it mischievously, but rather because it cannot be said clearly what the purpose of this freedom should be at all. The point can hardly be for children to apply adult systems as early as possible, and fail in doing so—also in terms of use of money.

It may be so difficult for adults to see children in their freedom to be children without being infantilized because it is essentially unclear what it means to be a child. The taboo is thus even more on the side of the adults' thinking and speaking about the essence childhood.

Dealing with situations and substances

The taboo of children's freedom appears to be a sibling of the adult anxiety for the well-being of children. Not only money counts as a dangerous substance; take sugar for example. It is dangerous from the outset, but it is prohibited more so than made taboo. It is irrelevant at the moment whether the worry is founded or not.

It may even be that the adults' criticism of children's consumption habits is simply based on envy: Why should they have the freedom to do something that we could not do?

What is important, however, is the question how children can develop a meaningful practice in contact with potentially or partly dangerous substances, and this can in fact be nearly everything. At the Freie Schule Frankfurt it is assumed that this is achieved best by way of preferably uncensored experimental learning accompanied by adults, but not based on prescribed regulations, adult warnings or frequent prohibitions.

If teachers want to competently fulfil their task in this they need to take on the children's perspective, and understand it. This can lead to being touched at one's own "essential child" and thus see children as different but not as the entirely other. Such an attitude and the insights gained from it lead to more fun and less stress on the side of pedagogues. It is a challenge; and that it can be difficult to maintain at all times can be seen even in the interviews that were conducted for this essay. Nevertheless it is the aim.

In contrast then there seems to be a majority in society who still tend to find that children acquire competency first and foremost by way of restrictions. That is wrong. In general there is little trust from adults in children's ability to deal with potential risks in everyday life on the basis of their own experience. This lack of trust may be caused by the concept of learning that these adults have.

Adults' own bad experiences may also play a role.

The adults at the Freie Schule Frankfurt reflect upon potential sugar addiction or the joy of eating junk-food. Sugar and junk-food are in parts desired, though they appear to be of less value and their consumption is a matter of doubt. Hence the wish may appear to protect at least the children from the worthless goods. Of course this ambivalence on the side of adults informs the interactions with children. There are a lot of contradictions that a person can carry with them, e.g., the wish for cheap goods: in price, but not in quality. Then, only fair-trade eco-products are purchased, but at the same time there is suspicion about fair-trade, too, because it may have an influence on the ecological conditions of production but not on the

overall chances of full social participation of the actual producers.

Some adults at the Freie Schule Frankfurt prefer only vegetarian or vegan food, whereas others eat also meat. Ethical concepts and concepts of a healthy life affect the consumer habits in quite contradictory manner. Children find their way through this puzzling arrangement.

Last year many children bought Coca-Cola. This was the taboo product with the highest thrill factor. Since then pure coke has become rather uninteresting, but the children have started to appropriate it in their own ways. They planted coke-rocket and made coke-tea.

The children like to play with taste, produce and manipulate it. Surely sugar, honey, juice and water are added to the tea. Children wanted to reproduce the colour of coke. They experimented with water, pigments, different liquids and all sorts of objects. Brown-black has come out of fashion by now, neon-blue or toxic green are more exciting. The children found out that their concoction smelled delightful, and the more if it was kept in the dark for a longer period. The results of the experiments were filled into small jars and the children discussed whether it would be possible to sell them in the supermarket. Some of the mixtures made it onto the stall in front of the school, the others are left on some shelves out of sight.

What these examples show is that the children's interest in a given object of consumption and experimentation stretches quite far. The one-way road of adult perception: Coke-Caffein-Sugar-Danger, is too narrow for children's curiosity, their delight in discovery, their treasury of ideas, and their freedom.

Outlook

I share the children's view that all children should have (daily) pocket-money. Maybe this is a reason also why the children so readily spoke about their practice in the interviews.

As long as money is in use all children should also have money for their private use. This approach extends the understanding of pocketmoney as a pedagogical instrument. It explicitly refers back to general children's rights in the sense of human rights. The structural disadvantage in society and huge dependency of children is also caused by their economic poverty. Normally children are without financial means. Even in the concept of the Freie Schule Frankfurt (2004) the term "income" is written with inverted commas. Children's economic situation is directly dependent on their parents throughout. In strongly affirmative manner this shows up in the guidebooks where it is assumed that children's economy should be subject to the family's economy (Kettl-Römer, 2010, p. 19). In this context the question arises whether (pocket)money has to be paid necessarily by parents. For many families to afford €30 per month for pocket-money for a child is a financial burden, also at the Freie Schule Frankfurt. Some children share the view of their parents that 50 Cents per day is enough. Others have already suggested a daily amount of €2.

It is not necessary to explain to children their economic independence. They are interested in expanding it. That however does not mean that children with their money have to cover adult expenses and thus be introduced to the apparently unavoidable catalogue of regulations of adulthood.

Children's freedom does not mean the right or constraint to become an adult earlier. Similarly wrong would be the projection that children should remain longer "infantile," that is buy sweets even more addictively, out of control, left on their own.

Of interest is rather the immediate dealing with money free of taboos, not only as a means of exchange but also as concrete material. There seems to be little difference indeed between building a tower of small change that goes lost afterwards, or instead losing the extensive Kapla blocks that were bought with the money beforehand. The fetish character of money in the hands of children seems to be less pronounced. This exactly may be the provocation.

At the same time it seems as provocative to allow children in all their immediacy access to the abstract and fetishized value of money in which all possible things are contained, expressed and that can be converted into all possible things including those that adults would not want to see in children's hands.

These thoughts reach beyond the school. They are anchored not only in a wish to find out how we might understand childhood, and what else but liberalism children's freedom could be in a system that is not free itself. They are not only triggered by the comments of a friend who is concerned with the question of overthrowing capitalism. They are also based on visions and experiences of a situational transcendence of dominant socialization.

The founder of the Freie Schule Frankfurt, Monika Seifert, understood the establishment of anti-authoritarian kindergarten to be elements in a strategy of

counter-organisation. They were seen as the nucleus for a revolutionary movement within the existing society (Seifert, 1969). In the political context of the time she formulated an optimistic "concrete vision" and projected that "People who are educated through freedom will no longer feel a need to destroy the riches they produce instead of enjoying it" (Seifert, 1969, p. 43).

Today it seems clearer that this assumption does not sufficiently take into account effects of education and socialization. Children are not a better race per se and should not be expected to become it either. Kinderlaeden and Free Schools don't operate in a space parallel to the rest of society.

This is obvious already if compulsory schooling as put into law in Germany is considered. Children at the Freie Schule Frankfurt are just as obliged by law to attend school as any other child in Germany. While the children attend school parents are able to go to work. And due to the children attending school it is possible for teachers to earn a living. These are not arrangements amongst equal partners.

Nevertheless it should be the aim to make possible the experience of a socialization different to the hegemonic model, not only for the children but for everyone involved. This can also happen within the school. To make it happen it is necessary for children to get a clear picture of how things work without shame. They need to be able to start to run and take part *in their own ways*. Obviously this is not possible without an idea of how to get the bob into the pocket. And in spontaneous heterotopias it is possible, too, that Coca-Cola changes into a flavoursome, neon-blue or toxic green substance.

Notes

1: “There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias.” (Foucault, 1984 [1967], *Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias*. source: <http://foucault.info/documents/heterotopia/foucault.heterotopia.en.html>)

“Children know these counter-spaces very well, these localized utopias.” Foucault mentions the garden, the attic and the tipi in the attic as such spaces but then also (...) “this is—on a Thursday afternoon—the parental double bed. On this bed you discover the ocean because you can swim between the covers. But the bed is also the sky because you can jump on the springs. It is the forest because you can hide in it. It is the night because you become a ghost under the sheets.” And he speaks of the lust, because one will be punished on the parents’ return. (Michel Foucault: “Les heterotopies”, in: *Die Heterotopien/Der utopische Körper*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2005, p. 40. quoted here from:

Tobias Unterhuber, *Heterotopia & Play: A Rapprochement between Foucault and Huizinga*, 22/ 01/ 2014, from: www.firstpersonscholar.com/heterotopia-play)

2. All quotes in the text are translated from the German originals.

3: Thomas Coelen: “A traditional understanding assumes that growing children and adolescents are brought from immaturity to maturity by means of education. Particularly in his writings on medicine and psychiatry Foucault unravels the monologue of reason over unreason that is connected to this assumption. For educational science the challenge posed by these early writings is to answer how far they perpetuate a monologue of the reasonable adult over the “not yet as reasonable children” in the tradition of enlightenment. (Coelen, 2006, p. 253)

4: In the context of systematic child abuse cases at the Odenwaldschule, Hartmut von Hentig was confronted with harsh criticism. His close friend Gerold Becker, former Head of the Odenwaldschule is seen as the main perpetrator. Statements of von Hentig in this context are protective of Becker. However, von Hentig’s theoretical contribution in the context of the founding of the Freie Schule Frankfurt shall not be concealed here.

5: Parents pay a fee to the school. The overall amount is just under €300 monthly at present. This is made up of three parts. €60–90 as the actual school fees, €55 money for food and the rest for the cost for the day-care (which a family would have to pay to other institutions if the child was

attending e.g., after-school care. Families on low income can avail themselves of a grant from the local authorities.

6: The children sew together simple handbags and shoulder bags in different sizes.

7: The group of adults here refers to the staff and the parents/guardians of the children. They have a common forum in the shape of a fortnightly evening plenum of two hours. In addition there are also separate meetings of the status groups of staff and parents.

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