Review of L. D. Fernald's *Walking Tour of Walden Two: A Student's Guidebook*

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Dodge Fernald's *Walking Tour of Walden Two: A Student's Guidebook* (hereafter, the *Guide*) celebrates the 40th anniversary of Skinner's (1948) utopian novel. As a plot summary and set of exercises, the *Guide* is a useful instructional resource for those who teach *Walden Two*. Whether it should be required of students who read Skinner's book, however, is not so easily discerned. I offer this review so that readers may decide.

The *Guide* is divided into two main sections of five units each—"The Tours" and "The Talks"—preceded by a brief forward by Skinner and a preface by Fernald. Skinner describes his book and how he came to write it, as well as the advantages he foresaw for such a community (see also Skinner, 1976/1948, pp. v-xvi, 1979, pp. 292-293, 295-299; cf. Kumar, 1987). He also raised a commonly misunderstood point: *Walden Two* is not the Truth about what a behavior-analytic utopia *must* look like. It is about what one community might look like under certain conditions, at a certain point in its evolution. In Skinner's words:

Whatever the danger in design, the greatest danger is in doing nothing. Walden Two is a sample of one kind of thing that might be done, and it will be no great loss if its principle effect is to suggest other ways. (p. ix)

In his own prefatory comments, Fernald describes the *Guide* and how it might be used. He also provides a hint about his own orientation toward Skinner's book:

These materials might have been prepared by T. E. Fraser or any other member of Walden Two, eager to describe the community to other interested persons. But instead it was the author's privilege and pleasure to earn his labor credits in this way. (p. xi)

"The Tours" and "The Talks," keyed to successive chapters in *Walden Two*, are the heart of the *Guide*. "The Tours" describe the form and function of the Walden Two community, with units on Breaking Away (main characters and the community), Design of Things (physical environment), Working, Playing (work and play in the modern world), Raising Children (enhancing their fullest potential), and Marriage and the Family (the family in modern society).

"The Talks," in turn, engage the conceptual material, with units on the Good Life (how to define and achieve it), Politics and Propaganda (empirically based vs. coerced change), Beyond Heroes (fascism, democracy, and history), the Question of Freedom (free will, reinforcement, and punishment), and Unfinished Business (science and human behavior).

Each unit begins with a brief description of its purpose, followed by seven to nine pages to content and exercises: (a) summary—a two-to-four page overview of material in *Walden Two*; (b) key concepts—an exercise in defining key concepts (e.g., preventative medicine, social conscience); (c) illustrations—an exercise in providing examples of the key concepts; (d) study questions—an exercise covering the content and implications of *Walden Two*, ranging from the specific

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(e.g., who, what, when, where, why, and how), to the general (e.g., the meaning of this or that), to the open-ended (e.g., what do you think?); and (e) values clarification—an exercise asking readers to rate or categorize (e.g., agree-disagree with) statements from *Walden Two* (e.g., on child-rearing) and to prepare arguments pro and con.

Fernald also offers three review exercises along the way. The first asks readers to examine Augustine Castle's values and how those values are challenged (Units 1–5). The second asks readers to describe points of disagreement between Frazier and Castle (Units 6–9). The third asks readers to match a list of the units to a list of statements about *Walden Two*.

Still additional material is provided at the back of the *Guide*: (a) a five-page appendix of 15 people (from Lieutenant "Rodge" Rogers to the telegraphic clerk), 29 places (from the main buildings to The Throne), and 26 events (from Wednesday morning to Thursday noon, a week), all listed in sequence of appearance or occurrence; (b) a five-page glossary of the key concepts; (c) a three-page annotated bibliography on the utopian works cited in *Walden Two*; and (d) a two-page index to *Walden Two* for the over 150 concepts, terms, and names in the *Guide* (see also, Knapp, 1975).

As for the *Guide's* formal features, it is oversized and easy on the eye; it has perforated pages so that assignments can be submitted separately; and it has occasional illustrations.

What more might one want? That depends on one's purposes, but more context and content might help. That is, the *Guide* might be more useful if it contacted related literatures on utopian and behavior-analytic practices, as well as on controversies and misunderstandings about Skinner's book. As for the utopian literature, the *Guide's* annotated bibliography is useful, but should perhaps be integrated into the individual units. Inclusion of material on "intentional communities" (see Fellowship for Intentional Community, 1990; Oved, 1988), especially behavior-analytic communities (see, e.g., Horcones, 1982, 1984), might

give the *Guide* (and *Walden Two*) a greater sense of currency (and urgency).

As for the behavior-analytic literature, Fernald includes Skinner's (1985) "News from Nowhere" in his bibliography, but might also have included (and integrated) still other of Skinner's writings (e.g., Skinner, 1953, pp. 426–436, 1971, 1978), as well as material on the implications of *Walden Two* for cultural design and survival (e.g., Glenn, 1986; Segal, 1987). Readers might also benefit from contacting the pertinent anthropological literature, especially Harris' (1980) cultural materialism (e.g., Glenn, 1988; Lloyd, 1985; Malagodi, 1986; Malagodi & Jackson, 1989; Vargas, 1985).

As for controversies and misunderstandings, some discussion of the critical commentaries of Krutch (1954) and Rogers (1961), as well as of the reviews of *Walden Two* (e.g., Dinsmoor, 1991; see Knapp, 1974; Ramsey, 1979/1980; Roemer, 1983), might provide a broader perspective on utopian visions—scientific or not—in the culture of the United States.¹ Perhaps the next edition of the *Guide* will be more inclusive.

In sum, Fernald's *Guide* is a good review of *Walden Two* and should be on the bookshelves of those who teach Skinner's book. If used along with *Walden Two*, though, Skinner's book might be assigned as more than supplementary course reading—its usual role. Between

¹ A telling example of misrepresentations regarding the supposed relationship between Skinner's *Walden Two* and George Orwell's (1949) *Nineteen Eighty-four* comes from the Cliffs Notes series volume on Skinner's book (see Todd, Atwater, Johnson, Larsen, & Morris, 1984). McGowan and Roberts (1979) tell the reader:

The books that Skinner (or some character in *Walden Two*) most often refers to are Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, and George Orwell's 1984. Terms such as Doublespeak, BIG BROTHER, and phrases such as "Oh, brave new world" are frequently mentioned in conversations at Walden Two. (p. 50)

Not only does this reinforce misunderstanding, but it is counterfactual. *Walden Two* was published in 1948, *Nineteen Eighty-four* was published in 1949. No one in *Walden Two* could have referred to Orwell's book. It was not in print.

them, the *Guide* and *Walden Two* could be an entire course, especially if supplemented with the literatures mentioned above. But this is for readers to decide.

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