

A Modest Proposal

... for the improvement of education.¹

THE reader will recognize the source of the title of this article: "A Modest Proposal." Swift's modest proposal was, to say the least, basic. His genius as a satirist lay in the simplicity of his statement of the moral consequences of the English policy of his day. I chose his title because I wanted to remind myself of two things: that it might be possible to state the problems before us as educators simply, and that I should not attempt to be a latter-day Swift, for to do so would leave me helplessly assuming that counter-invective is debate.

What I require of myself is that I get my temper back under control. Swift helps me to remember what a really great rage would be like—but he had a great rage over a great wrong. For me—for us—to respond in towering anger to those who abuse us would be to lose the perspective our responsibilities require: it would be to indulge in mere pettiness. If there are any "self-appointed experts" in education, we are they. We have actively sought educational leadership; it was not thrust upon us. No great wrong has been done us. We are merely taking the con-

sequences of the positions we occupy and our beliefs as we have expressed them. If there is irrationality in some of what passes for "educational interpretation," we should not be surprised. We are not always completely rational, either—since we, too, are human beings.

As practicing educators, we know some things about the great national demand for excellence in our schools that we must declare candidly, for we are the national organization most directly responsible for excellence in the curriculum, both excellence in being and excellence that is to come. No other nation has asked excellence save for the few. *We* must have excellence for the many.

In a sense, we must make bricks without straw: a large group we are, of altogether too human human beings—often tired, often defensive when criticized, limited by less-than-glorious educations ourselves, subject to the usual way that things go in a world in which one's best ideas often go awry or unnoticed. Yet *we* are the people who are charged with making something better than the world has ever seen—a nation full of schools that are excellent. The nation says we must do it. We respond. "We can, but you have to learn to listen

¹ Based on Dr. Foshay's presidential address, delivered March 12, 1961, in Chicago, Illinois, at the annual conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA.

to us, just as we have to learn to understand what you are saying."

Learning to listen to someone else was never easy; for two large groups to learn to listen to each other, as groups, is even more difficult. What is required of us is that we learn to listen to the doubt behind the questions that are showered upon us, and that we learn to speak in a way that makes our values, as well as our practical proposals, clear.

What we have to get used to is that our best efforts in the past are taken for granted, now that the nation demands of us an average public school as good as our present best. In a word, we have to get used to the era we live in. The battles of the 'Thirties were not won, nor were the issues clearly resolved; but it would be a grotesque anachronism for us to man those battlements as if the times had not changed. The times have changed as profoundly as they could have. We grew up with an 18th century nursery rhyme about the cow jumping over the moon, into a time when she just might do it, with the help of a little rocketry.

We have, I repeat, to respond to the doubt behind the question. To respond to an anxious public with, "You never had it so good, educationally," is no response at all. The question is not, "Did we ever have it so good?" The question is not, really, "Are the schools any good?" In fact, there is scarcely any question at all. What exists is a demand—that we make the schools "excellent," and a doubt—that we in education take intellectual excellence seriously. You say, "How can people have such a doubt? What do they think we've been doing?" The point is, the doubt exists. Acting offended—even though this is justified—won't make the doubt go away. Let's look at what we *have* been doing.

We, in the schools, have caused the entire population to live at a higher level culturally than is true of any similar population in the world. If you doubt this, look at the level and distribution of our mass publications. With all their faults, and they are many and grievous, our daily newspapers, taken as a whole, are the least sensational and the most informative in the world, and more people read them. As Jacques Barzun said in 1954 (sometimes I wish he would remember that he had said it), "Well, we asked for this: we in the West wanted to emancipate mankind and we have nearly done it. Nobody should be surprised if it does not speak, write, and act like Lord Chesterfield. Let us rather stay calm and keep on working."

Child and Society

We have paid close attention to the field of child development, and in the last two generations, have developed nothing less than a humane school, to replace the school that used to lose a good half of its students before the eighth grade. We revised the teaching of reading in the primary grades over the country as a whole during the 'Twenties. We successfully experimented with the development of social responsibility in school, and the development of the school as a socially responsible institution, in the 'Thirties. That is part of what we have done, and we have a right to feel proud of it. However, we have no right to rest on our oars, or to go on living off the fat of the ideas developed by educational leaders of a generation ago.

When I first began to study curriculum development, I was taught to believe that the curriculum arose from two fields; the nature of the growing child, and the nature of society. These

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two fields, I learned, had been essentially ignored during an earlier era. Ignoring the nature of the child had led to centuries of Gradgrinds and Ichabod Cranes, who thought that all you had to know to be a teacher was a little subject matter and a lot of discipline. We say to the public: the Gradgrinds are always with us. Attack the schools indiscriminately, and they will turn on you. They will show you what "tough" really means. To be like them is to be narrow-minded, like Sir Thomas Overbury's Pedant: "He treads in a rule, and one hand scans and the other holds his scepter. He does not think a thought, that the nominative case governs not the verb; and he never had meaning in his life, for he traveled only for words. His ambition is criticism, and his example Tully. He values phrases, and elects them by the sound, and the eight parts of speech are his servants. To be brief, he is a heteroclite, for he wants the plural number, having only the single quality of words."

My task as a teacher was, of course, to teach the subjects to which I was assigned. However, my more basic task was to help the child before me to grow up in such a way as to be culturally knowledgeable, socially effective and responsible. Later, as a curriculum developer, my task was to help teachers to understand the fact that emotional and social inadequacies often fatally detract from the possibility of learning academic subject matter. With respect to the latter, especially in the field of teacher education, I learned that we relied on the academic departments of a college or

a university to educate future teachers in these fields; our task was to equip them with knowledge of the child and of society, and with ways of teaching that would take advantage of these two fields of knowledge, so that the learning effectiveness of students would be increased.

These things are profoundly true. A teacher who does not understand how a child grows into adolescence, and how an adolescent grows into adult life, is seriously handicapped. A teacher who does not understand the obvious fact that education is a moral affair, and that a skill has to be learned in a way that makes it likely that a person will use it for moral ends in a good and democratic society, is not discharging his responsibility. To overlook this latter point would be to act as if the cataclysmic events of the past 30 years had not happened. To overlook it would be to betray—I do not exaggerate—the men who defended us during World War II and Korea. Surely, it means something that during the 'Forties we were at war with two of the most literate nations in the world—nations in which the institution of the public schools had been perverted to social purposes at war with our own; nations in which (if one is to believe what their nationals will tell you now, and I believe it) the subject matter of the schools was thought to be intended solely for private purposes, to carry no public obligation beyond simply obeying the law, and to have no public meaning.

Armed with some knowledge of child development, and some knowledge of society, I entered upon a career in education convinced that I was different from my pedagogical forebears, that my era was one full of freshness and vigor. And I, along with you, did my bit to

bring about the ideal of a mass education dedicated to self-fulfillment within a framework of social awareness and responsibility.

Flawed Theory

I have to say that the theory on which I was behaving now seems to me to have been true, but inadequate. Hindsight says that it was flawed from the beginning by a failure to acknowledge a third element necessary for the making of intelligent curriculum decisions.

I learned that curriculum decisions should be based on a knowledge of the child and of society. Included in the term, "society," was the culture society represents. What was left out of this theory was the nature of organized knowledge. As professional educators, we have taken organized knowledge—the disciplines out of which man's knowledge is made—for granted. In teacher education, we left formal knowledge to the "academic departments," and did little further about it ourselves. What we did, instead, was to try to make a curriculum out of two fields neither of which takes formal knowledge into account. When you come right to it, what is it that people in child development had to say to us about the curriculum? What they had to say can be summed up as a serious warning: "Do not violate the necessities for a child's development, for if you do you will mar him in ways you wot not of, and interfere with the possibility that he will learn academic subject matter well." These warnings are real, and they must be attended to. But I call to your attention the fact that they do not tell us what to do—only what not to do. The same thing is *not* true of the knowledge about society that has been gathered.

During the 'Thirties, when much of what we know now about the curriculum was first put into practical form, social needs were on everybody's mind. That was a decade of social upheaval; the need for better housing, better health, a more humane economy, a more civilized attitude toward crime—these and other similar problems were on everybody's mind and in the daily press. If one were to build a curriculum out of child development and society, what would the curriculum consist of? It would be a curriculum about society, in which children's needs were not violated. And that is precisely the curriculum we tried to put into effect. Naturally, social utility became the major criterion we applied—social utility, that is to say, in a fairly narrow sense: the kind of social utility that would help us to solve the problems that were upon us at that time. These problems are still upon us. We are still not housed as well as we should be—if you don't believe me, let me take you on a tour of New York City. Juvenile crime, especially, appears to have increased greatly during these recent years of affluence. To these we have added yet another societal problem of great magnitude—the need for a feeling of national military security.

However, there are realities in the fields of knowledge that historically we have overlooked, in taking knowledge for granted. Chemistry, as a discipline, exists apart from our attempts to understand it. It knows no national boundaries; it has a long history. As a field of knowledge, it will survive us, no matter what the future holds, short of universal disaster. The same thing can be said for the other major fields of man's knowledge: mathematics, philosophy, literature, history, economics, etc.

So I come to my modest proposal. It is simply this: that we educators take directly into account the nature of the organized bodies of knowledge, in addition to the nature of the growing child and the nature of our society, as we try to make curriculum decisions.

Curriculum theorizing in the future will have to take the nature of the various fields of knowledge, and the nature of knowledge generally, directly into account. Future graduate programs in education will have to deal with these matters with at least as much correspondence with the scholars and the scholarship involved as we have known with the scholars and the scholarship in the behavioral sciences. I do not propose that we become "subject-centered," either in a new or an old sense. What I propose is that we examine the subject matter we teach with the same rigor, and with the same kinds of help, that we have used in examining the child and society.

This will be difficult to do, but there is room for optimism about it. My optimism is based on the fact that the nature—the basic nature—of the conception of academic subject matter is being reconceived. The Physical Sciences Study Commission has approached physics in a basically new way. Professor Karplus of the University of California, with the help of some members of ASCD, has extended this basically new way into the elementary grades, thus creating for us a portion of a new vision of elementary school science. Somewhat similar efforts have been made in mathematics at Illinois and Yale, in England, and in France—I refer to the Dienes and the Cousinière approaches. Arno Bellack, former Executive Secretary of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, is working with a national

committee in economics, again in the same direction. Every one of these projects is imperfect. The MIT physics program has had difficulty consistently with the fact that some otherwise able students cannot handle it for reasons so far not well understood. The mathematics programs too often amount to a mere refurbishing of the subject—a mere updating of it—without sufficient attention to its reconception. The economics program is in a very early stage, though it looks promising.

The Method of Discovery

The generalization that fits all of these programs and others has been attempted by Professor Jerome Bruner in his book of last fall, *The Process of Education*. He speaks, for example, of the arithmetic project at the University of Illinois which has:

. . . emphasized the importance of discovery as an aid to teaching. They have been active in devising methods which permit a student to discover for himself the generalization that lies behind a particular mathematical operation, and they contrast this approach with the "method of assertion and proof" in which the generalization is first stated by the teacher and the class asked to proceed to the proof. It has also been pointed out by the Illinois group that the method of discovery would be too time-consuming for presenting all of what a student must cover in mathematics. The proper balance between the two is anything but plain. . . .²

Why do I set such high store by these efforts? It is not because they have been brought to fruition, for they have not. It is not because they have been so heavily publicized, for those who pub-

² Jerome Bruner. *The Process of Education*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960. p. 21.

licize them are looking for panaceas. It is because they are consistent with what has been discovered about the way children learn to think; it is because they are consistent with what teachers have discovered and rediscovered: learning "comes alive" for children when they discover their own generalizations. It is consistent with the New Education, as the movement is called in France, where for nearly 10 years the "method of rediscovery" has been under development in fields like history and physics. It is basically consistent with the theory that has governed education since 1930.

What can be discovered through the method of discovery? Two things: one can discover the discipline one is studying; one can discover one's self as a learner. This itself was the discovery of the project method as described in part by Ellsworth Collings and William Heard Kilpatrick, 40 years ago. Applied to the discovery of the disciplines through which man's knowledge is made, this brings to a new fruition the promise that Dewey held out to us 50 years ago when he began talking to us about the method of intelligence.

What can be discovered, I say, is the discipline itself. I should like to expand on this point, for it is the direct study of the disciplines that offers us a new approach to the development of subject matter.

A discipline is a way of making knowledge. A discipline may be characterized by the phenomena it purports to deal with, its domain; by the rules it uses for asserting generalizations as truth; and by its history. Chemistry deals with chemical phenomena, according to the rules of science applicable to chemistry; both the rules and the domain of the field are in some degree a product of the history of the field. Literature deals with

literary phenomena, and literary analysis has its own set of rules and its own history. The same may be said for biology, mathematics, geography, any organized discipline at all. But the physicists, especially, have been telling us that it is possible for children and youth to come to an understanding of physics directly. This approach to a discipline directly, not indirectly, is, I say, the chief meaning of the subject matter projects now being developed with such vigor.

This idea—that the disciplines may be approached directly—has very great power. It contrasts sharply with the subject-centered approach that we have known. It is not a new subject-centeredness; to call it subject-centered is to misname it. It is centered upon an attempt to teach children to grasp the intellectual means through which knowledge is discovered, in the hope that they may thus become active, not passive, learners. The disciplines themselves, understood as ways of making knowledge, not merely as knowledge ready-made, offer suggestions about how they may themselves be learned. The approach to learning through discovery of the disciplines is radically different both from the subject-centered approach of the past, and from the project-centered approach of more recent times.

Let us consider an illustration of how the approach works, in the field of history. It is eleven o'clock in the morning. The date is March 13, 1961, and the teacher has proceeded in American History to the immediate post-Civil War period. I want to suggest what he would do. He would begin—if he had not already done so—by remembering what history is. History is a disciplined way of confronting the past. It deals with periods, within a chronology. It seeks consistencies within these periods, and

generalizations about them. The historian constantly deals with ambiguities—with the haunting knowledge that the events he studies can never be known directly—only the records that happen to remain of these events. The historian feels his responsibility to deal with the record accurately, fully, and in a way that honestly reflects the point of view he has chosen to adopt. He knows his discipline as being in part an art, in part a science; he acknowledges that aesthetic judgment plays a significant part in his decisions as historian. History, he knows, does not exist apart from the historian's interpretation of it.

Our teacher, I say, remembers these things. Now, what does he do about the post-Civil War period? If he wishes to pursue the ideal of intellectual excellence that is represented by an attempt to study the disciplines directly, he carries the children to a confrontation of the historian's problem. He asks of the children, that is, in the Progressive tradition, that they be producers of knowledge, not mere passive consumers of it. He raises with them the question, therefore, "What kinds of events after Lincoln would be most worth knowing?" (Does this seem too advanced? You should see how children handle it!) "Now," he goes on, "how can we discover what these events were?" (We can read, ask, search, tell one another.) "What do historians say they were?" (Not one historian—several, for not all historians choose to deal with the same events, and the sooner we understand this, the more liberated we are from a naive view of our past and of the historian's place in understanding it.) "What are the principal ways the period has been interpreted by the historians?" "Do you, as a student, think of other ways?" "What information do you think the historians

might include that they appear to have omitted?" "Why do you suppose they omitted this information? Because they couldn't find it? Because it didn't fit with their interpretation?"

This is how a teacher might conceive of his work in teaching history, if he meant to pursue the idea that the discipline of history might be confronted directly.

The Outline Approach

Contrast this with another approach—the dominant one. I refer to the outline approach. This requires that the teacher have in mind a specific number of facts and interpretations he wants to put over. To do this, he may well use a class discussion—but it will be intended to elicit the correct interpretation, and can only follow a presentation of some kind—or a series of presentations: the assigned reading of a well organized text, or a lecture, perhaps on TV. In any case, the outline approach is a flat betrayal of the discipline of history, as the historians see that discipline. The fact that this is the way it is usually done, and that the materials and tests we now use depend upon it, contributes nothing whatever to its validity.

Ah, you state, we are already doing what you say. Well, maybe. Let us agree that you have to look a long way to find it. Let us agree, further, that we are not testing for it, either in our standardized tests or in our college entrance examinations. The fact is that a student has a better chance of getting into college now on the basis of sheer rote memory than he has of getting in on the basis of an understanding of how an historian makes history, the way a physicist makes physics, the way a poet makes poetry. We have never successfully won the

battle of facts versus understanding, primarily because we never really confronted the question of what we mean by understanding in a field like history, or mathematics, or chemistry, or literature. The facts are winning, because you can still win the academic game through memorizing, and it is a lot easier than thinking. In spite of all the work that Ralph Tyler and the others did during the late Thirties in the Progressive Education Association, the idea that thinking can be taught and learned has never really taken root until, perhaps, now.

I think that the chances that it will take root now are greatly increased because, with help, we have managed to think of a place for the roots to go down. The place is into the disciplines of the major fields of knowledge themselves.

I think I am not laboring the obvious in stating these things. Nor do I think it will be easy for us to win the battle for understanding, even though it will be fought on these new grounds. Our whole pedagogical history is against this kind of thing. We seem heavily committed to the externals—to formalism. We pedagogues have brought up a whole population that does not know the difference between grammar and composition, because we taught the one in the name of the other. Similarly, we have taught prosody in the name of poetry, thus killing poetry in our culture. We have taught places in the name of geography, thus almost losing this vitally important and interesting field to our schools. We have taught facts and canned interpretations in the name of history, thus betraying a basic discipline. We have taught computation in the name of mathematics, and facts and principles in the name of laboratory sciences. It will not do. It would not do in 1900, when Dewey and the others rebelled against it. It was

not good enough in the Thirties, when I joined many of the persons who read this article in rebelling against the "subject-centered" curriculum. It certainly will not do now.

Our history is against it. Yet there is more than our history against it. There is our tendency in education to want to classify people into sheep and goats—to want to grade them, like eggs, or peas, or lumber. This is not limited to teachers, unfortunately. There are whole groups of people in our society who, for reasons that are essentially ugly, wish to see people classified and their potentialities limited. The fact that this kind of thing is urged in the name of the early identification of talent does not make it legitimate. The fact that studies of school organization are confused with curriculum improvement merely aggravates matters. The early identification of talent, which certainly is necessary, is not a matter of finding out who are the sheep and who are the goats in our society. This tendency to sort people out, instead of helping them toward individual fulfillment, is the ugly underside of the present drive toward excellence-through-college-entrance. It accounts for the sad truth that John Gardner mentions in his new book, *Excellence*, ". . . that for many of us the learning process comes to an end very early indeed. And others learn the wrong things."³ What we require is a version of education, and a view of our society, that foster perpetual self-discovery and self-fulfillment. Our tendency to use the schools as a giant screening device is precisely contradictory to this idea.

In order that we do this, it seems clear that we must give renewed attention to three things:

³ John W. Gardner. *Excellence*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961. p. 139.

1. A contemporary view of the subject matter of the curriculum

2. A view of our proper role as educators vis-à-vis knowledge, the child, and society

3. A view of the goals of education that is consistent both with what is possible in the schools, and what is possible for growing children, and with what is required by our society.

I have, so far, been talking about the importance of teaching the disciplines directly—a contemporary view of subject matter. I have asserted that a view of the disciplines through which men make knowledge that is consonant with the view held by the producing scholars in these disciplines is suggestive to us of how the disciplines may themselves be learned. My illustrations, so far, have all had to do with the academic disciplines. There is more.

It seems to me that we would do well to consider that behind every subject matter we teach in school a discipline lies, or should lie. It is the discipline behind the subject matter that contains whatever life is there. I think that we should look toward the development of a whole series of new subjects, with old names: history, geography, mathematics, the sciences. But let me consider some other fields which we also teach. What, one might say, is to be said of the crafts we teach, like those in the shops and business courses? I should like to see the proposition examined carefully that behind each of these crafts, occupying the same place with respect to it that a discipline occupies with respect to an academic subject, there is a technology, and that we should cause the students learning the craft to study the technology directly. Behind automobile repairing is the technology of the automobile itself,

which could be studied. Behind the typewriter is the technology of typing and of other communication devices. Behind the woodshop is the technology and the art of woodworking. There is a very considerable lore and literature in each of these fields, and the industrial arts concept goes in this direction.

In the degree that we take the fundamentals of woodworking to be the care of the tools and the performance of a few simple operations, we have overlooked the technology, the rich old technology, and the art, of woodworking. In the degree that we overlook the technology and the art of metal work, we contribute to the present shocking lack of pride and creativity in the metal shop that foremen consistently complain of. I do not ask that every mechanic become a master machinist. But the slovenly workmanship that is so frequently the object of complaint—the tendency to compare American and European craftsmen with respect to their pride of workmanship—may be at least in part a product of a too narrow version of what is “fundamental” to good workmanship as taught in our school shops and other technical classes. The idea seems to me to be at least worth examining. If plumbing is not a discipline, and philosophy is, it does not follow that the plumber should have no knowledge of the technology behind his immediate work. As John Gardner points out, a society which settles for mediocrity in both philosophy and plumbing develops neither theories nor pipes that will hold water.

It seems to me to be helpful to make a distinction between a discipline and a subject matter which suggests the proper roles as between an educationist and a scholar. I have called here for an attempt to teach the disciplines. Experience during the past few years has redemon-

strated the difficulty of doing this. What is required is that the disciplines as known by producing scholars be translated into viable experiences in school. This translation we may call a school subject. If we make this distinction, certain clarifications become possible. For example, it is possible to look at the materials and curriculum guides in geography and ask whether they, as proposed school subjects, faithfully reflect the discipline of geography as viewed by the geographers. As it happens, they do not, any more than the school textbooks in history (no matter how authoritative) faithfully reflect the discipline of history as modern historians interpret their discipline.

Translating the Disciplines

When we view subject matter and disciplines in this fashion, our role as educators becomes clearer. Our task is to translate the disciplines into viable subject matter. In the course of doing this, we have precisely the task of bringing to bear on the disciplines as the scholars tell us of them, the knowledge we have of the practical necessities of child development, the nature of society and of the school's place in it, and learning theory as it continues to grow. We have neither the skill nor the responsibility, as educationists, to remake the academic disciplines or the basic technologies. Our task is to demand of the people whose business it is to make these disciplines and technologies, that they speak to us in a way that we can understand concerning their fields, so that our translations may be both effective and true to the original. It does little good to ask a mathematician, or an historian, or a designing engineer what should be taught in the first grade, what in the fifth, or

what in the tenth. These people often think they know the answers to these questions, but the fact is they ordinarily do not understand what the questions themselves entail. We need to learn how to ask them to tell us what kinds of generalizations are appropriate to the disciplines they know well, and what is required if these generalizations are to be discovered by students.

When we ask questions in this fashion, the historian will say that, first, the generalization he seeks is the definition and explication of a period in history. He may go on to point out that some periods are far more complicated than others to understand, and that we should know this when we try to decide what periods in history shall be studied at what time. He, the historian, can indicate to us what he means by "complicated." It is in the terms of the demands of his discipline that we should devise school subject matter through which the discipline can be discovered. A considerable stride in this direction has been made in France, where a magnificent album, "Documents of the History of France," has been prepared by the Ministry. The album is put in the hands of the student in the lycée, who is directed to do no less than to re-discover French history from the primary sources on which it is based. These sources have been selected by historians, to be sure. But they constitute a universe of material so vast that the student must make many selections within it if he is to attempt historical generalizations. By comparison with what we do now, even in our most traditional and subject-centered classes, this is a vastly more demanding approach to history. However, if such experimentation as has been undertaken in other fields has any transfer value to this field, we can be confident

that many of our students can learn to undertake it.

As educationists, too, we have another kind of responsibility. We have to see to it (and we in ASCD have a special responsibility in this regard) that the curriculum taken as a whole is consistent with the goals that the school exists to achieve. So far, in the course of the great public discussion of education, it has not yet become clear what a whole curriculum would be like if we saw it as a whole, nor—for that matter—what the education of all the people would be like if we intended to educate all of them. The fact that they are all in school is obviously considered by some individuals to be unfortunate, though, thank heaven, this is a very small number of persons, and likely to grow smaller. Of course this approach does not solve everything. Indeed, it reposes some old curriculum questions.

Given this new and more vital approach to intellectuality in school subjects, how are we to view the need that children have when they leave school to deal with the practical problems of the world in a way that is better because they have been in school? Or are we to say that the school has no responsibility for equipping people to deal with the practical problems of life? The assumption the academics make is generally that if one knows the principal fields of knowledge in depth—and this is what I am proposing that we teach—one can use such knowledge to grasp practical problems in depth. This claim is very plausible, but largely unexamined.

The fact is that many a sophisticated scientist is a very naive citizen when he tries to deal with public matters, and the reverse is also true. Consider how dangerous it was when Winston Churchill demonstrated in his directive authorizing

the development of the atomic bomb in England that he did not deeply understand how big a million is. As Bronowsky, the British scientist who reported this fact, pointed out, the only thing that saved England from Churchill's ignorance was her democratic government. There was nothing to save Germany from Hitler's similar ignorance. We have to have it both ways. We have to have people who are deeply knowledgeable, in a disciplined fashion, in the principal fields of knowledge, and who at the same time are capable both of understanding and participating intelligently in public decisions, and living adequate personal lives.

It is up to us in ASCD to rethink this problem and to conceptualize how it may be solved. As educators, we are receiving no help with it at present, though John Gardner's new book exhorts us to attend to it. It is our duty to do so, if we are satisfactorily to discharge the tasks of educational leadership that these times demand of us. A balance in the curriculum clearly must be maintained between what is rigorous and deep, and what is immediate and practical. We are called upon, both by the times we live in and by these new possibilities, to strike a new balance.

In doing so, we would be foolhardy indeed to follow that line of public argument which would cause us to act as if we knew nothing of child development and had no knowledge of how the school affects the society around it. If we follow our noses, and simply react to the pressures being put upon us, we will betray a whole generation of children by implying to them that a pedant is a whole man, or that only the intellectual aspect of man is worth official attention. In pursuing high intellectual goals, it is not

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Atlanta Public Schools. *Home Economics Curriculum Bulletin for Community High Schools*. Part I. Atlanta, Georgia: the Schools, 1960. 132 p.

This is the first of two parts which together make up a complete program of offerings in home economics in the public school. Part I outlines clearly three courses of two semesters each, for grades 8-11, in introductory and intermediate home economics. Part II includes advanced courses in foods and clothing, and also courses in home planning and family living: the latter for juniors and seniors and with no prerequisite.

The bulletin represents several years of work by home economics teachers and two city-wide committees, plus the concerted effort of an in-service education class. Suggested units are presented for each course, but the selecting, sequential arrangement and details of planning are

left to the teacher. The overarching goal of the program is "Building Strength in Home and Family Living." The courses are presented in terms of units, with goals, understandings, learning experiences and teaching resources included for each one. Very extensive listings of books, bulletins, pamphlets, films and filmstrips are to be found at the end of the guide. The material for each grade is presented on a different color paper which adds interest to the format.

Note. The column editor received assistance in evaluating some of the bulletins: from Eldona Evertts in elementary language arts, Jane A. Hazelrigg in elementary music, and Lucile Spencer in home economics—all of Indiana University.

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A Modest Proposal

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necessary for a moment that we overlook the fact that man, in addition to being an intellectual creature, is also an emotional, a social, an aesthetic, a biological, a creative, and a spiritual creature.

It is necessary for us to acknowledge that many of our most illustrious and humane figures are deeply learned in their disciplines, and derive their humanity and liberalism from their knowledge. These things are not in conflict with one another—not at all. However, we are tempted by the power struggle in the world and by the uncertainty of the future to act as if we believe that they were. One of the questions we have to learn to ask of the scholars is exactly in what way each of their disciplines con-

tributes to the wholeness of a whole man. For if we educate less than the whole man—if we mean to bring about a school which deals with less than the whole man, and implies a partial or distorted version of what it means to be a human being, we will have betrayed not only our heritage but the future of the children we teach.

Our task in ASCD, therefore, is greatly complicated by the opportunities and perils of our times. We have to come to a deeper knowledge of the child we teach and the man we hope he will become than we have ever known, in order that we may properly take into account the nature of organized knowledge in the service of the society we would have. It is in the unity of these three—the child, the society, and organized knowledge—that future excellence in the schools will be found.

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