

The critical leadership decision for near future imperatives in education is whether the analyses and strategies for educational problem solving will be cosmetic or fundamental. A close review of the history of changes and foci in United States education over the past several decades will reveal a high degree of fickleness and infatuation with a steady procession of superficial fads. These fads are seldom if ever evaluated by a professional's "bottom-line," which is *demonstrable and positive student growth*. In fact, prime criteria for fad detection in education for educational innovations are program descriptions that highlight a *process* such as "performance-based education," or program descriptions that highlight a *goal* such as "Right-to-Read" and "Career Education." Clearly, in neither of these cases are there articulated pedagogical *outcomes*. I do not mean to imply here that these programs have no merit. On the contrary, they are always developed as a response to real needs.

However, I do mean to suggest that the history of attention to a parade of these and other cosmetically described priority programs has kept educational leadership, in general, from the work that we should be able to do best. That work is to provide for clients and for professionals alike a clearly articulated description of what professionals can accomplish on a clearly articulated delineation of the choices that can be made. This fundamental evaluation must be directed toward the link between educational programs and *evidence for outcomes* attributable to those programs. Above all, the selected outcomes should reflect priorities appropriate to the unique human problems of our time.

It goes without saying that Americans must read, count, work, and so forth. It also goes without saying that programs that purport to prepare students in these and other areas must show positive results. However, the development of literacy,

computation work skills, and other such general goals, hardly states the complete educational task for a nation of free people. Much more than these basic things are required for all students. Our programs may be considered cosmetic or superficial if they are limited either to the fad in education or to educational programs that are designed simply to provide skilled workers for a labor force. Our programs will be fundamental if they are extended to provide for demonstrable student growth in basic areas, and if they provide for the human demand for expression, creativity, recognition, interaction, affiliation, and so forth.

In Facing Real Life

Edward T. Hall in his book, *Beyond Culture* (1977), has coined the term "extension transference," which will be helpful in this discussion. Hall suggests that man advances and builds his institutions through the following process:

I would suggest . . . that once man began evolving his extensions, particularly language, tools, and institutions, he got caught in the web of what I term extension transference and was both alienated from himself and incapable of controlling the monsters he created. In this sense he advanced at the expense of that part of himself that he had extended, and as a consequence has ended up by repressing his nature in its many forms. Man's goal from here on should be to rediscover that self.

. . . Extension transference (ET) is the term which I have given to this common intellectual maneuver in which the extension is confused with or takes the place of the process extended. . . . Mistaking the symbol for the thing symbolized while endowing the symbol with properties it does not possess.

In case this sounds too theoretical, Hall calls to our attention a condition that I have also found to be too common. The danger, he says, is that with extension transference, real-life problems are dismissed, and philosophical and theoretical systems are treated as real. Hall continues:

I see this every day in my students. It has been my experience that after students have spent sixteen or more years in our education system they have been so brainwashed that it is impossible to get them to go out and observe and simply report back what they heard, what they felt, or what went on before their eyes. Most of them are helpless in the face of real life, because they have to know beforehand what they are going to discover and have a theory or a hypothesis to test. Why? Because that is the way they have been taught.

In addition to this concept of extension transference, I would like to add another term, "conceptual incarceration." By this I mean the use of language, especially professional language, in such a way that a person becomes imprisoned in a particular construct, even when there are no data to show that the construct is a good match with an empirical reality. For example, "race" is such a construct. This is a term widely used by professional educators that is supposed to represent biological categories. Yet, there are no scientific or commonly accepted biological criteria for membership in "racial" groups. "Race" may have a social or political meaning, but, it has no scientific meaning. "Intelligence" is another such construct. It is defined solely by the very tests that are designed to prove that it exists. Yet, no two authors of these tests define intelligence in the same way! No mental processes are observed directly, they are only inferred. Conceptual incarceration occurs when these and other fabricated educational categories *must* be used (unconsciously) even in the absence of a reality base. The idea becomes a prison for thought. I believe that it is the combination of these two conditions of human thinking that causes much of our professional efforts to be closer to cosmetology than to pedagogy. I believe that extension transference and conceptual incarceration are endemic among us and are major blocks to pedagogical progress.

In addition to the professional conceptual problem, which may only be a symptom of the next problem, is that of *the absence of a clearly*

established valid knowledge base for professional practice. The simple truth is that we are still developing the "how to" in teaching. We do not yet have common agreement on the "how." It will come, but we do not have it yet. At present, we would be hard pressed to identify the professional practices that distinguish the trained teacher from the untrained where the training could be shown to produce an educator who was consistently better at contributing to pupil growth than one without training.

Leadership Has Lost Initiative

Because of *extension transference*, *conceptual incarceration*, and an *embryonic knowledge base*, educational leadership has been vulnerable and has lost the initiative to many sectors of the public that we serve. Legislators, school boards, community groups, students, and the person on the street all feel free not only to pick the *goals* for education (as is their right and responsibility), but to prescribe the *means* as well (which should be beyond their capability if teaching is a professional activity). And yet, the professional has two responsibilities. One is to provide the professional service to our clients of articulating clearly the nature of the choices that clients can make from among the services that we can provide. The other is to offer only a demonstrably *valid* high quality professional practice.

I would like to illustrate the former by citing a few examples of educational goals that seem to me to be particularly appropriate as near future imperatives. I think that it will be seen that the rhetoric of the 1970s and the typical descriptions of contemporary pedagogy are far from addressing what B. O. Smith and others have called "teaching for the real world." In this real world, we cannot confuse our growing knowledge about and awareness of human behavioral stages or dynamics as, in themselves, goals for education. For example, knowing that children develop the

concept of "object permanence" at a certain age or stage does not make object permanence a goal of education. It may be a *means* to education or useful in education. Also in this real world of the 1970s and 1980s, we have the special task of designing an educational process that will counter an ongoing trend toward mechanization and alienation of learners from themselves and others. We must rehumanize the process of education in order to liberate the human spirit. In the real world, neither an education for process in the abstract nor of content in the concrete is a suitable total goal. More than ever before, our students must also have a *point of view*, a *frame of reference*, and a *commitment*, or we will have served them poorly. The language of contemporary pedagogy does not emphasize these latter points. "Competency-based education," "behavior modification," "criterion-referenced" assessment, and many other practices have suggested little about how learners are to develop a point of view, a frame of reference, or a commitment. Consider the following examples or questions:

1. *Communication*: Is the goal of teaching to have the student learn the rules of communication or to develop something to say and a desire to hear?

2. *Computation*: Is the goal of teaching to have the student learn the mechanics of computation or to use numbers in order to develop a sense of harmony and rhythm, and to use numerical functions as an analogue for the human experience?

3. *Literature*: Is the goal of teaching to have the student go through a laborious and uninspired mastery of ethnocentric "classical literature" or to develop an intuitive grasp of literary forms as dynamic panhuman vehicles for communication? Is the goal to understand the variability among the world's peoples in their construction of culturally embedded communication systems?

4. *Music*: Is the goal of teaching to have the

student engage in a plodding practice of musical scales and the mechanical assembly of these into a "performance," or is the goal to have the student develop a recognition of the essentially musical nature of humankind who are hungry for expression and participation?

5. *Social Studies*: Is the goal of teaching to have students participate in the stilted and stultifying study of paper diagrams of the political process, or is it to have students discover the permeating influence of politics as it saturates all social acts?

6. *Current Events*: Is the goal of teaching to have students participate in the passive observation of human conflict or to develop the capacity to take a courageous position? Is it to have students study people and the world as objects of curiosity, objects for manipulation and control, or to have students feel one's own integral unity with all people in the world and with the world itself?

Is the Student a Spare Part?

I feel a continuing drift in our educational practice. That drift is toward the view of the student as a spare part in the great machine, a part to be shaped into a standard form for maximum utility—for someone else other than the student. Especially at what we call the middle and lower "levels of student achievement" or "ability," we find more and more educators who have conceived of limited, mechanical goals for students. However, even at the "higher" levels of student achievement and ability, we fall short in challenging the human potential of our students. Unless we come to experience the student as an active learner, one who is an explorer, an expressor, a planner, even a teacher, we will continue to injure and cripple the spirits of millions of our children.

Energy, ecology, rapid data processing, population, mass production, international conflict are major problems that will be with us always. The

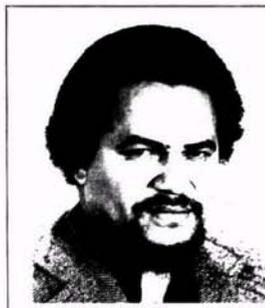
future will bring still others. But they are not the near future imperatives in *education*. With or without any or all of these problems, the problem of speaking to the human spirit, to the soul, to the creative human mind, to the *internal agenda* of those whom we serve is *the* near future imperative. We cannot afford to be diverted by every new agenda which appears on the horizon.

We can generate new names for new fads. We can bury our thinking in the new names. But if we do, we would then be better off to be honest and to describe ourselves as cosmetologists rather than educators. We cannot wait, even for the near future, to make a better definition of the education agenda. The near future is already past. A valid practice can come only when we face fundamental problems squarely. The initiative is ours to seize.

I believe that several implications may be drawn here for the work of curriculum developers. First, I believe that a particular kind of systematic attention and evaluation must be given to existing and proposed curricula. We must determine if the focus is more on fitting the student into the current fads or to the "needs of the society" or to providing as well for the *human* "needs of the student." Further we need some form of professional accountability to ensure that our proposals for curriculum are not simply conjured up out of thin air. We must have some level of confidence that proposed innovations will accom-

plish stated goals. This increased evaluative rigor does not mean simple minded mathematical or statistical tightness. It does mean that well founded professional judgments based upon *observations of professional practice over time*, are our responsibility to ourselves and to our clients. Finally, I believe that the near future imperatives can be understood and met only if we have a professional language which fits the real world. Our use of our professional language must not facilitate the development of a dream world (extension transference) nor must it produce encapsulated thinkers (conceptual incarceration).

Educational leadership in this decade can and must come of age. Client confidence in us, professional self concept, needs of a democratic nation, and the humanization of our hypertechnologized society demand that coming of age as the overall near future imperative. [E]



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