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HOW WILL THEY UNDERSTAND?

THREE weeks ago we considered the observations of an educator in medicine who said that the human qualities valuable in treating and caring for others were being neglected in the choice of students for medical schools. He discussed the problem at some length, speaking of the difficulties involved in identifying the desired qualities in students. "How," he asked, "does one quantify the qualities of compassion, integrity, stability?" He meant that in order to locate such qualities in prospective students, it is necessary to "measure" them. Since, he said, there is no "track record" to go by at the beginning of a career, these sensitivities may be elusive.

He went on to stress the importance of these qualities in doctors, as balance and leaven for "technology-oriented" instruction, offering various suggestions, but we kept wondering where we had seen similar material. This couldn't be the first time such observations had been made. There was of course the Maslow paper, which we quoted, but other researchers, it seemed, should have noticed that medical students were being chosen "by scales that were weighted excessively toward non-humanistic attitudes." Distinguished general critiques have not been lacking since Alexis Carrel published *Man the Unknown* back in 1935, but what about the persons directly responsible for medical education—other men like the one quoted three weeks ago?

Well, there *have* been reports of similar discoveries by men in medical education, and we happened on one quoted in MANAS for Feb. 22, 1967. In the *Los Angeles Times* of Sept. 18, 1966, Richard Reynolds summarized the findings of a team of medical researchers at the University of Utah, then branched out to cover a report on scholars in New York. The issue was grades in comparison to the quality of professional practice after graduation. Mr. Reynolds wrote:

> *There is almost no relation between the grades a student gets in medical school and his competence and success in medical practice.*
>
> In other words, poor medical students—that is, poor grade-getters—may in some instances become good doctors while some who get high grades in school may become poor doctors.
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> This astounded the leader of the research team, Dr. Philip B. Price. He called it a "shocking finding to a medical educator like myself who has spent his professional life selecting applicants for admission to medical school." And he added that it caused him to question the adequacy of grades not only in selecting those who should be admitted, but also in measuring a student's progress.
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> Just as amazed as Dr. Price was the leader of another research team in New York, Dr. Eli Ginzberg, whose group made a somewhat similar survey. That team took as subjects 342 graduate students in various fields who had won fellowships to Columbia University between 1944 and 1950. Ginzberg and his associates set out to learn how successful these 342 persons had become 15 years after they completed their fellowships. The discovery that shocked them was this:
>
> Those who had graduated from college with honors, who had won scholastic medals, who had been elected to Phi Beta Kappa, were more likely to be in the lower professional performance levels than in the top levels!
>
> Why should this be?

The conclusions in this report remain fuzzy, of course, because we are not told what "success" means; and there is still the probable importance of testing the technical knowledge of those who will practice medicine, or engineering, or any profession to which the lives of others are variously entrusted. But even with these questions raised, this research nonetheless confirms what individual observers have often said. For example, years ago Charles Jung, in *Modern Man in Search of a Soul,* pointed out that persons of great intellectual facility who go into

medicine may become good specialists, but they make poor *nurses.* He meant that the sympathy and concern needed for dealing with sick human beings seem to be absent in such people. They are very bright, they get good marks, but they seldom become *healers.*

It seems a pity that "discoveries" like these—to the effect that skill in the manipulation of symbols, the intellectual's show-case brilliance, is comparatively unimportant, or even an obstacle, in work involving human relations—now have no more important use than as an argument for "pass/fail" marking. What such findings ought to lead to is serious inquiry into *why* we go on trying to measure the incommensurable; and why, when this becomes plainly impossible, we drop the subtle excellences of human beings from our values as undefinable and therefore "unreal."

Why don't the medical schools *hear* the counsel of a man like Jung? Why should Dr. Price have been "astounded" and Dr. Ginzberg "amazed" by finding out what should have been known all along? The criteria and tests they have been relying on do measure *something,* and that something is not without value, but it doesn't correspond to the human needs doctors are supposed to serve. In both health and disease, life is filled with incommensurable subtleties—man is *not* a machine—and those who are candidates for the serving professions, when chosen by merely counting techniques, are going to be badly selected, almost deliberately so. There is no way around this.

Schools have submitted to the competitive mania. They are determined to show "results," to stand out as eminent. You've got to measure to prove eminence in a society that values only the measurable, the countable. So *everybody* measures, and the effects are distributed throughout our society in all its multiplying confusions. Medical educators become able to see the relation between cause and effect only because they are looking at a single profession and can isolate the effects of its educational methods.

We said that thoughtful men have known these things all along, and they have—they do. F. R. Leavis wrote in *Education and the University:*

> "Nothing," says Dr. Meiklejohn, "is more revealing of the purpose underlying a course of study than the nature of the examination given at its close."
>
> Judged in this light, the underlying purpose of the English Tripos is to produce journalists. Not that the reading for it doesn't give intelligent men opportunities for educating themselves. But distinction of intelligence, though manifested in a special aptitude for the field of study will not bring a man a distinguished place on the class-list unless he also has a journalistic ability—a gift of getting promptly off the mark several times in the course of three hours, and a fluency responsive to the dock. Such facility is not the profit towards which a serious critical training—a serious education of any kind—tends, and the intelligent and the sensitive, having become more and more aware of the difficulty of thinking anything with precision and delicacy and of writing anything that they can allow to stand have commonly formed habits that handicap them badly in the examination -room.

Obviously, even the institutions of higher education cannot escape from the prevailing opinions concerning what is valuable and good to pursue, and they submit, even to the adoption of practices which inhibit the best development of students or the best selection of candidates for the professions such as medicine. Leavis is a distinguished English educator and literary critic, but he can't change the examination system; all he can do is tell how it works. An American college teacher, Kenton Craven, has another way of dealing with the problem of grades. He tells his students:

> "Grades are important to you, the student, because the world says they are, and in worldly matters the world is the best judge. They are important because every man wants guides to judge himself by. And they'are important because the voluntary relationship between student and teacher, engaged in a meaningful pursuit of knowledge, ought to result in some quantitative conclusion—how did we do? Bureaucracy has determined that I mark you as a letter, or level. In this course I will do everything possible to avoid that banality and that system of inhumanly mute symbols. Ultimately I must give you

> the mark; but I hope that within the context of the course our mutual dialogue on your progress may bestow more meaning on that symbol for us, at least, and in the process, perhaps aid you in raising your mark. . . ." (New *Directions in Teaching*, September, 1967.)

The more you read of the work of good teachers, the more you discover that they feel about the same way in relation to the pressures imposed by the bureaucracy, which reflects and organizes the vulgar notions of "reality" current in the world. They all seem to realize that what is worth knowing cannot really be measured, and it may even be impossible to teach, but there is nothing for the teacher to do except to try.

Wendell Berry, poet, farmer, and teacher, speaks clearly of these things in a brief essay in *Writers as Teachers/Teachers as Writers* (Holt paperback, edited by Jonathan Baumbach), a fine book by a collection of poets who teach. Kenneth Keniston, you will remember, defined youth as the period, regardless of age, during which people on the way to maturity have not yet made up their minds what they will do with their lives—how they will "relate" to society. They are, you could say, still molten with possibility, not yet poured in a mold. That is about what Wendell Berry says about the students who attend his class in writing at the University of Kentucky. The coming together of student and teacher, he says, "is essentially a confrontation between experience and possibility."

> It is exciting and often deeply moving to work and think and speak in the atmosphere of possibility that surrounds students. But in this there is also an irreducible bewilderment, for though one presumably has some measure of control over facts, and even over one's own possibilities, I think that one must be extremely hesitant and uneasy in dealing with possibilities that belong to other people. I would rather enlarge a student's sense of possibility than "direct" it. But this is personal, at least in its effect on the student, and insofar as it is personal it is problematic; there are no systems for it. Experience speaking to possibility has also the obligation to pass on some sense of what may be expected, a sense of the practicable, and at the same time to avoid condescension and discouragement. This is what I think of as the moral predicament of the teacher, and as it can have only particular solutions in the lives of particular students it remains a predicament, always as liable to failure as to success.

We need to think about this for a bit. Moral predicaments are intolerable to both politics and its bureaucratic implementers. Nobody can win an election by remaining in a moral predicament. The teacher has a role precisely opposite to the career of the man who seeks power. They operate at different levels of being, with different universes of discourse. Politicians and bureaucrats *always* institutionalize moral issues and apply manipulative solutions. Some far-reaching and persisting moral offenses, such as large-scale racial injustice, will have manifest consequences at the practical level, where manipulation or finite, measurable action through power has a direct and noticeable effect, but this action, while obviously desirable or necessary, is *not* the same as a solution for the moral problem, which involves changes of heart and mind in many people, followed by consequent voluntary actions consistent with the new attitudes. The distinction is well suggested by Lillian Smith in her introduction to Jim Peck's book, *Freedom Ride*. Speaking for the Black people, she said:

> We are men; and as men we must declare our right to move freely in our search for meaning; we have a God-given right to be and to become. Sitting at lunch counters, riding the buses are symbolic rights. They are small, but we need to claim them not because they are enough or because we really need them, but because an unclaimed human right bars a man in his search for significance.

Gandhi wanted the British to quit India for the same reasons. But he knew and declared that the Indian people would have to make or realize a free condition for themselves. Freedom isn't "given" by anyone to anybody. The political symbols and forms are useful and necessary, especially for people who mistake them for the reality, since they can't really grow up to recognize the true reality without having the forms and symbols first; but these, as Lillian Smith

suggests, are only tokens of a subjective achievement and a condition which is beyond finite measure.

Turning the problem around, one thinks of the president of a large eastern university who, after submitting to a succession of demands by the large contingent of black students on the campus—including soul-food in the cafeteria, and a black cook to prepare it—said, "I wonder why it is that every time I agree to something they ask for, they just get mad at me!" The point is that these concessions were not what the black students really wanted, but only "tokens." Not getting the real thing, which only a regenerated society can provide, the black students demanded the tokens, but they weren't really good enough and couldn't be. Getting only symbolic substitutes for the real thing is bound to make people mad, and will continue to make them mad until everyone has a better understanding of these things.

This is only one small instance of the confusion of values and motives that comes from a materialization of the meaning of life and the quantification of goals; and who, after all, is free of this *fundamental* delusion of the times? A couple of years ago, a Boeing executive confided in Bill Moyers some feelings that are no longer uncommon. Moyers reported what he said in *Listening to America:*

> "Where is the country going? Where is each one of us going? I think this is what is bothering the young although I don't think they have the practical experience to know what to do about it. I feel I have betrayed myself. I've done a lot of looking at myself. What in the hell, I've asked myself, have you done with all those things you were thinking about in college? . . .
>
> "I think rushing into that fantastic progress caused more heartache and suffering than it was worth. The people were saying, 'More, more, more, so the airlines said, 'More, more more, and soeing said, 'More, more, more.' We scrounged and grabbed and fought for dominance, and when we got it, we lost it. All this running and shoving to build a structure we don't need. And look at all the people who got hurt. Business has got to change. . . .'

What happened to this man? What made him ask those questions? His daughter had left home. No note, no word. "I've been lying awake nights asking, 'Where did I go wrong?' " She did phone after a few days, from New York, saying she was well and working, but gave no phone number or address. Well, you'd think enough children had left home to make everyone think and ask questions, but the answers lie in code, in that other universe of wonderful, unbuyable, unsellable, and uncountable things.

But this talk, one might say, goes all around the problem, and we need to find out what people ought to *do.* Why is the world's wisdom locked in riddles?

What should we say? Go read Plato's *Republic?* Go home and reflect on the melancholy counsel of Francisco Ferrer, who was shot by a Spanish dictator? Ferrer said that a child's education must begin with his grandmother.

We began by writing what was meant to be introduction to quotation of a poem. Poetry, especially modern poetry, is not an especial enthusiasm of this paper. It seems to communicate too much, or not enough. Yet the *poetic* is immeasurably valuable in human life, and indispensable to the life of the mind. And now and then a poem or a poet comes along who does something with words that you wish didn't have to be classified as "poetry." That may be our trouble. The unclassified things men do seem about the only things worth doing, noticing, listening to, working on. If it can be classified, it has nothing stirring and growing inside, nothing that may change and grow. It isn't alive. It's just some arrangement of matter. Berry says in his article:

> To me the aim of literacy is to have a language capable of telling the truth and of responding freshly to experience. Clichés are literally blinding: if a person is willing to *say* the current clichés about progress, for instance, the chances are great that he

> will *see* nothing else. Instead of an experience he will have a pseudo-experience—the agreed-upon abstraction represented by the cliché—which means that the person and the society are denied the use of his intelligence. He will not know whether he is telling the truth or not, for having accepted the judgments implied in the cliché he is no longer in reach of the evidence.

Here, simply put, are the elementary moralities of the practice of an art, and they help to make the artist an honest man, no pretender, in all things. Thus art is a fine means to understanding human integrity—one of the best. The poem we meant to get to—a poem by Wendell Berry—has incommensurable reaches of meaning which remain enigmatic if you don't follow them as far as you can. It is called "Strangers," and is from Berry's latest book, *The Country of Marriage* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $4.95), which came in months ago but didn't get the attention it deserved. The poem has thirty-two lines, and begins:

> The voices of travelers on the hill road
> at dusk, calling down to me:
> "Where are we? Where
> does this road go?"
> They have followed the ways
> by which the country is forgot.
> For them, places have changed
> into their names, and vanished.
> The names rustle in the foliage
> by the roadside, furtive
> as sparrows. My mind shifts
> for whereabouts. Have I found them
> in a country they have lost?
> Are they lost in a country
> I have found? How can they
> learn where they are from me,
> who have found myself here
> after an expense of history
> and labor six generations long?

There is a little more, but the depth of meaning in "place," and in how places differ from their names changes a call from the road to a cry in the wilderness.

The rest of the poem:

> How will they understand my speech
> that holds this to be its place
> and is conversant with its trees
> and stones. We are lost
> to each other. I think of changes
> that have come without vision
> or skill, a new world made
> by the collision of particles.
> Their blanched faces peer
> from their height, waiting
> an answer I know too well to speak.
> I speak the words they do not know.
> I stand like an Indian
> before the alien ships.

REVIEW
ECONOMICS FOR EVERYBODY

THE American edition of E. F. Schumacher's *Small Is Beautiful*, with introduction by Theodore Roszak, is now available in both hardback and paperback (Harper & Row, 1973, Torchbook $3.75). We have long felt and declared that Schumacher ought to write a basic text on economics for the re-education of this and coming generations, and the present volume, put together from various papers and articles, seems quite successful as an initial achievement in this direction. The book comes out of Dr. Schumacher's life of coping with deep-seated as well as popular misconceptions of economic "science," and is for this reason just right as an instrument for helping his readers to free themselves from delusions of common belief. He deals simply with ostensibly "difficult" matters, showing the folly of allowing economic theory to become separated from the ethical foundations which supply meaning to all the disciplines relating to human undertakings and behavior.

Who is E. F. Schumacher? The question is briefly answered by Mr. Roszak:

> Schumacher has been a Rhodes scholar in economics, an economic advisor to the British Control Commission in postwar Germany, and, for the twenty years prior to 1971, the top economist and head of planning at the British Coal Board. It is a background that might suggest stuffy orthodoxy, but that would be exactly wrong. For there is another side to Schumacher, and it is there we find the vision of economics reflected in these pages. It is an intriguing mix: the presidency of the Soil Association, one of Britain's oldest organic farming associations; the founder and chairman of the Intermediate Technology Development Group, which specializes in tailoring tools, small-scale machines, and methods of production to the needs of developing countries; a sponsor of the Fourth World Movement, a British-based campaign for political decentralization and regionalism; a director of the Scott Bader Company, a pioneering effort at common ownership and workers' control; a close student of Gandhi, nonviolence, and ecology. For more than two decades, Schumacher has been weaving his economics out of this off-beat constellation of interests and commitments and giving his ideas away from the platforms of peace, social justice, do-good, and third world organizations all over Europe.

Perhaps, with some encouragement, he may be led to make a visit or two to the United States!

The book has four parts: The Modern World; Resources; The Third World; and Organization and Ownership. While, as we said, various papers make up the book, their content falls naturally into these categories and there is sufficient sequence to supply all the unity that is required in such a work. The first section provides the moral orientation that Schumacher brings to every aspect of economics. The second explores the fundamental ingredients or factors affecting our economic life. The third is concerned with the problem of how to deal with the large areas of the earth which are as yet, as we say, "undeveloped." The fourth examines issues and possibilities involved in man's relations to industry and economic resources.

Dr. Schumacher begins by denying the familiar claim that, whatever its shortcomings, modern industry has mastered "production." This, he says, is a false claim because it is made while ignoring the fact that present-day methods are devouring the irreplaceable resources of the earth—the true "capital" of industrial enterprise at an unprecedented rate, and regarding the proceeds as "income." It is *not* income, but the exhaustion of capital, and any ordinary bookkeeper ought to know the difference. The resources are not figured as capital for the reason that the accounting system was developed in a day when they were assumed to be inexhaustible. At the same time that we use up non-renewable resources, we erode the substance of our own lives by the fury of the production/consumption process. The chapter has this conclusion:

> I started by saying that one of the most fateful errors of our age is the belief that the problem of production has been solved. This illusion, I suggested, is mainly due to our inability to recognize that the modern industrial system, with all its intellectual sophistication, consumes the very basis on

which it has been erected. To use the language of the economist, it lives on irreplaceable capital which it cheerfully treats as income. . . .

And what is my case? Simply that our most important task is to get off our present collision course. And who is there to tackle such a task? I think every one of us, whether old or young, powerful or powerless, rich or poor, influential or uninfluential. To talk about the future is useful only if it leads to action *now*. And what can we do now, while we are still in the position of "never having had it so good"? To say the least—which is already very much—we must thoroughly understand the problem and begin to see the possibility of evolving a new life-style, with new methods of consumption: a life-style designed for permanence. To give only three preliminary examples: in agriculture and horticulture, we can interest ourselves in the perfection of production methods which are biologically sound, build up soil fertility, and produce health, beauty and permanence. Productivity will then look after itself. In industry, we can interest ourselves in the evolution of small-scale technology, relatively nonviolent technology, "technology with a human face," so that people have a chance to enjoy themselves while they are working, instead of working solely for their pay packet and hoping, usually forlornly, for enjoyment solely during their leisure time. In industry, again—and, surely, industry is the pace-setter of modern life—we can interest ourselves in new forms of partnership between management and men, even forms of common ownership.

Dr. Schumacher moves critically from delusion to delusion. Next he considers the almost universally accepted belief that peace and justice can be obtained by the attainment of a universal prosperity. Time was when many people supposed that this great fulfillment was just around the next technological corner, but we are beginning to know better now, and Schumacher drives home the recent lessons of experience. John Maynard Keynes is the whipping boy of this essay, and there was never a more deserving victim. From his own standpoint of Buddhist and Transcendentalist "plain living and high thinking," the author looks at the counsels of Mr. Keynes:

In 1930, during the world-wide depression, he [Keynes] felt moved to speculate on the "economic possibilities for our grandchildren" and concluded that the day might not be far off when everybody would be rich. We shall then, he said, "once more value ends above means and prefer the good to the use

"But beware!" he continued. "The time for all this is not yet. For at least another hundred years we must pretend to ourselves and to everyone that fair is foul and foul is fair; for foul is useful and fair is not. Avarice and usury and precaution must be our gods for a little longer still. For only they can lead us out of the tunnel of economic necessity into daylight."

This was Keynes' formula for making everyone "rich," or at least sufficiently prosperous to dull the causes of social disorder. Step by step, Schumacher shows that the formula cannot possibly work, for the simple reason that, on more than one practical ground, providing the rest of the world with the same standard of living which the advanced industrial nations now enjoy would demand increased production beyond the wildest dreams. Already shortages and pollution threaten continued production at present levels, while reaching the Keynesian objective would require tripling even these. Schumacher concludes:

Nothing makes economic sense unless its continuance for a long time can be projected without running into absurdities. There can be "growth" towards a limited objective, but there cannot be unlimited, generalized growth. It is more than likely, as Gandhi said, that "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not for every man's greed." Permanence is incompatible with a predatory attitude which rejoices in the fact that "what were luxuries for our fathers have become necessities for us."

The chapter ends with several pages of advocacy and justification of small-scale economic enterprise, as least harmful to the environment, more controllable in its effects, and consistent with the moral vision and wisdom of the teachers of mankind.

The "market," as the source of the laws or rules of "scientific" economics, is shown to be a false guide to human decision since allowing the behavior of the market to define economic value amounts to the institutionalization of individualism and non-responsibility. This isolation of

economics from authentic human values results in a religion of economics with its own code of ethics, indifferent to human good save on the narrow terms of acquisition and profitability. Such a "religion" is prone, as Edward Copleston said 150 years ago, "to usurp the rest." And so it has, since it rules our lives. The remaining chapters of this section are devoted to showing how an economic science may be founded on humanistic premises, drawing on Buddhist and Gandhian conceptions of a useful and fruitful life.

The section on Resources brings into the scope of economic thought the part played by education and understanding, as the greatest resource of all. There are chapters on land use, resources for industry, on the exaggerated claims made for nuclear energy and the menace in its development, and on the resources implicit in the idea that tools are useful only as they amplify human ability, instead of displacing it.

In his discussion of the Third World Dr. Schumacher demonstrates at length the importance of an intermediate technology which fits the needs and capacities of the people. The common sense of what he says should have immediate appeal to all those who are troubled by the spread of industrialized farming methods around the world, destroying local subsistence economies and renewing the patterns of mercantile exploitation through agribusiness management and Green Revolution techniques.

In conclusion, we should like to emphasize the readability of this book. Its readers will soon discover that, so far as economics is concerned, there is no need for the ordinary person to feel that he must leave such matters to the experts. He *can* understand the subject of economics, and he should, since it is a part of everyone's life.

COMMENTARY
SUBTLETY IN TENNESSEE

HEADING its story Evolution: Tennessee Picks a New Fight with Darwin," *Science* for November 16 reports on the new law passed by the Tennessee legislature to replace the anti-evolution statute on which John T. Scopes was convicted in 1925. The new law, called "more subtle" in its opposition to evolution, reads:

> Any biology text used for teaching in the public schools which expresses an opinion of, or relates to a theory about origins or creation of man and his world shall be prohibited from being used as a textbook in such system unless it specifically states that it is a theory as to the origin and creation of man and his world and is not to be represented as scientific fact. Any textbook so used in the public education system which expresses an opinion or relates to a theory or theories shall give in the same text book and under the same subject commensurate attention to, and an equal amount of emphasis on, the origins and creation of man and his world as the same is recorded in other theories including, but not limited to, the Genesis account in the Bible.

Apparently, the Tennessee politicians have been taking instruction from the same religious authorities that have been guiding certain members of the California School Board. The partisan character of the legislation is plain enough, and its pointless and self-defeating confusion of science with myth is bound to be bewildering to both teachers and children, should the law actually be obeyed. Yet the idea that accepted scientific accounts of human origins should be labelled "theory" seems sound enough. They *are* theories, and there have been numerous minority reports by distinguished researchers, both in the last century and this one. For those who suppose that contemporary scientific opinion is entirely a Darwinian consensus, we suggest a reading of *Hallmarks of Mankind* by Frederic Wood Jones, a British paleontologist, who concluded his volume with these words:

> If the Primate forms immediately ancestral to the human stock are ever to be revealed, they will be utterly unlike the slouching, hairy "ape men" of which some have dreamed and of which they have made casts and pictures during their waking hours; and they will be found in strata antedating the heydey of the great apes.

The nature-faking of famous evolutionists is exposed in *Apes, Giants, and Man* by Franz Weidenreich. And Henry Fairfield Osborn, once America's most distinguished an anthropologist, wrote in *Science* years ago (May 20, 1927): "I regard the ape-human theory as totally false and misleading. It should be banished from our speculations and from our literature . . . on purely scientific grounds. . . ."

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
SOME LETTERS

A CORRESPONDENT'S recent jibe at Harvard and, in passing, at John Holt, has elicited some letters which we are glad to print, hoping for a little space at the end to add some comment:

Dear_____:

Your very interesting issue of Oct. 31, 1973 said a couple of things about my "having a job" at Harvard, and I thought I would set the record straight.

In the spring of 1968 the Harvard Graduate School of Education asked me if I would like to teach a one seminar course there in the fall. I said that I would, providing that it be clear that there would be no requirement in the course, including attendance, and that I could give either a Pass to everyone taking the course or an "A" if they preferred letter grades—though I said I would prefer not to give any grades at all. The course was called Student Directed Learning, known after a while to most of the students as T-52, its number in the catalogue. I enjoyed the experience, as did (I think) many of the students. I have not been invited back, but I draw no particular inferences from this.

In the fall of 1972 another leading university asked me if I would teach a seminar, on a subject of my own choosing, in the following spring. I said that I would have to exact even harder conditions, which I understood very well might be impossible, namely, that there would be no grades of any kind, *and no credit.* The institution said that I was right, that it was impossible, and that ended the matter. Would I now, if asked, teach a course at Harvard under the same conditions? I think not; I have too little time and too many other things to do that interest me more. But my mind is not closed on the subject. Lecturing, much of it at different colleges and universities, is a part of my work, which I enjoy, but I don't think I would like the idea of having to give ten lectures in a row.

So much for the "job" at Harvard. I doubt if they were much improved or changed in any way by my brief presence there, and if I went back it would not be in the hopes of improving it but of enjoying myself. Since I don't have enough time in the day to do all the things I already know I enjoy, this doesn't seem very likely.

Good luck to you and the paper. If you think this letter or any part of it may be helpful to someone, feel free to print it.

Boston JOHN HOLT

Dear MANAS:

It is not often that I rise to the defense of my alma mater (especially since its medical school accepted a grant from the tobacco industry to undertake a study of the causes of lung cancer) . And gosh knows, old Harvard has its faults. But your reader's reference to the "arid intellectualism of Harvard" does indeed beg a response.

First, to the extent that Harvard is aridly intellectual, it is no more so than most U.S. institutions of "higher" learning. It just does a better job of it, so stands out as the epitome of the type. The others do not recoil from the Harvard model. They would give an eye tooth to get there, if they could. And they are trying.

Secondly, as anyone who has had much contact with Harvard of late knows, the institution more and more is getting its fingers into what regrettably passes, in the academic community, for the "real world." The law school, the education school, the school of public affairs, and a host of undergraduate activities—to name just a few—are drawing on the world of living affairs as their classrooms. To the extent, in fact, that one worries whether the captivation with the actual is going to smother any yearning for what is beyond the actual.

Thirdly, and most important, to characterize Harvard as "aridly intellectual" is to miss the Harvard that most people who attend the place experience. True, the academic pursuits there are ruled, mainly, by scholar-researchers whose main interest in undergraduates is in the chance that out of their huge lecture-classes may one day emerge a bright young research-assistant. At Harvard, academic subjects are important for themselves and not merely as vehicles for evoking those qualities in young men and women that one could call "culture."

But, happily, that side of Harvard was peripheral to most of us. We attended the lectures—usually—handed in the term papers, took the exams; sometimes we even garnered honors. But our central experience, the one that left its mark on us, was in living for four years in a community of diverse, energetic, talented and even gifted contemporaries. I remember many dinners in my house dining room. One in the company had spent the afternoon teaching in a ghetto school; another had been at football practice; a third had been writing for the student newspaper; a fourth had been working on a term paper. This could not help but to break down the comfortable insularity many of us had taken with us. It awakened us to the breadth of human pursuit. And most important, to the *possibility* of doing it. Because we saw that these people who were writing the plays and leading the political events were just *people* who had set their minds and their talents in those directions.

I know that the constant exposure to such peer models has made me dig harder into myself to drag out whatever talents and energies are sleeping there. And then there was the class report which I received this year on my class's fifth reunion. Reading about classmates who have published books, started innovative projects of one kind or another. And happily, of classmates who have obeyed inner urgings and taken up carpentry and photography.

(Yes, there are the Wall Street lawyers and brokers, too. But then, without a little pepper, what is salt?)

In truth, I do regret the lack of many human models on the *faculty* at Harvard. There were professors I found interesting, and stimulating. But I recall none who in their *being*, in the combination of what they did with what they were, left a model with me. There were none that inwardly resonate, that form a guide and benchmark, for what I am and do now. That must have to do with the way places like Harvard choose the people who teach there.

Still, that side is only half of Harvard. And for the undergraduate, the lesser half. Harvard woke me up to the scope of human endeavor, to the possibility, through peer examples, that extraordinary things could be done. I am not so easily satisfied as a result.

And if it is Harvard's arid intellectualism on which your reader blames what he does not like in Mr. Freire, how does he explain Robert Coles—to name just one?

Your journal is a constant source of refreshment, inspiration, and "tuning in." Keep it up.

Washington, D.C.

JONATHAN A. ROWE

Mr. Rowe's tolerant remarks recall Willie Morris's two-sided reflections, based on his years at the University of Texas, which in some ways parallel what might be said of Harvard, with the qualification that Harvard is not of course a state university. Morris wrote in *North Toward Home:*

> A great irony occasionally besets an American state university, for it allows and at its best encourages one to develop his critical capacities, his imagination, his values; at the same time, in its institutional aspects, a university under pressure can become increasingly wary of the ideals it has helped to spawn. It is too easy, too much a righteous judgment, to call this attitude hypocrisy, for actually

> it is a kind of schizophrenia. This involves more than a gap between preaching and practicing; it involves the splitting of a university's soul. There can be something brutal about a university's teaching its young people to be alive, aware, critical, independent and free, and then, when a threatening turn is taken, to reject by its actual behavior the substance of everything it claims for itself. Then ideals and critical capacities exist in a vacuum. They are sometimes ignored, and in extreme instances victimized. And the greater society suffers as well.

An institution the size of the University of Texas cannot help but be a fairly symmetrical reflection of the larger society, which means that its humanizing and civilizing qualities are, as Morris shows, on a tether—or, to change the image, bound to a Procrustean bed. The inspiration and promise are there, too, in the presence of a few independent minds among teachers and students, but the institutional confinements, being constant, get more notice than anything else. Back in 1956, in a special "Harvard" issue of a remarkable undergraduate magazine called *i.e., The Cambridge Review,* a contributor wrote:

> By constantly forcing the students to prove themselves in competition and by never taking its job as more than mere law enforcement, Harvard neglects its proper aim: to bring out the best in students. Harvard neglects all its real talent. . . . The University constantly rewards mediocrity and forces the talent into hypocrisy, however unconsciously. It goes so far as to call the creative students neurotic. It undercuts them; it does not support them. . . . Original thought here is a myth. The University confuses the excitement of experimental methods applied to real practical behavior with the dead pedantry of applying pseudo-scientific jargon to a medium already once removed from life, as for example when critics pretend that their jargon does scientific justice to the flux of literature.

Hard words, those, but with doubtless enough truth in them to justify the epithet of "arid intellectuality." As for rewarding mediocrity and driving talent into hypocrisy—*Examining in Harvard College,* a collection of essays by faculty members, offers some interesting evidence.

FRONTIERS

"Organic" News from South Carolina

A PAPER like MANAS gets dozens of little mimeographed newsletters and reports in the mail. Most of them are hard on the eyes and some of them are not worth attention, but one that we read carefully, and that gets larger with every issue, is called *Piedmont Organic Gardening Movement*, sent to the members of that rapidly expanding organization from 714 South Line Street, Greer, South Carolina 29651. The October issue (No. 10 of Vol. II) has fourteen pages of good material. Since last week's Frontiers described the difficulties of marketing experienced by an organic grower in California, the general report on expectations of wider distribution of organic produce for the Piedmont area should be of interest.

The organization headquarters in Greer has recently been contacted by distributors and groups wanting to buy large quantities of organically grown foods. The newsletter says: "With a waiting market, anxious to pay you a fair price for a superior product, a certification program that has been well thought-out before being implemented, and a well-organized and active group working in your interests, what are you waiting for?" The Piedmont Movement invites farmers to commit a specified acreage to organics. Among interested purchasers named were the following:

> CLEAR EYE, Rochester, N.Y.—A cooperative natural foods warehouse serving three large and several small food co-ops in Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse. Wants a source of organically grown peanuts to make peanut butter.
>
> THE PEOPLES W AREHOUSE, Bowery, New York, N.Y. Working with NOFA and other groups. Wants to buy direct from the small farmer. Some thirty day-care centers and over a dozen food co-ops joined together to bring good food to New York City.
>
> CERNIGLIA PRODUCE COMPANY, Forest Park, Georgia -The one supplier of organically fresh-grown fruits for the entire Metropolitan Atlanta area. Currently paying freight from Los Angeles wants a local source of certified organically grown and pesticide-free fruits and vegetables, and some dairy products.

A member reports that the demand for organically grown soy beans outstrips by far the supply.

How to make compost is always useful information, needing to be repeated over and over again. This issue gives the simple procedure recommended by an expert at Clemson University in South Carolina. Another feature is recipes supplied on request by members. One for tomato catsup sounds especially appealing, and the formula for making "pumpkin" pie out of soy beans is irresistible. (We remember the sweet potato pies that Southerners used to make that were hard to tell from pumpkin pie, but doing this with soy beans, so nourishing and yet so dull, is something that ought to be tried.)

> Combine the following in a blender: 1½ cup ground cooked soy beans; 1½ cup milk; 16 oz. can evaporated milk. Add to this mixture in a bowl the following ingredients: Three quarters of a cup brown sugar, 1½ tsp cinnamon, 1¼ tsp doves, ½tsp nutmeg, 3 tsp grated lemon rind, 1¼ tsp ginger. Add 2 beaten eggs. Pour into 9-inch unbaked pastry shell. Bake at 400 degrees for 40 minutes.

Another member of the Piedmont group tells about his success with garlic as an organic insecticide. He heard about this use of garlic through work done in England, and made up a batch by putting garlic cloves and water through a blender and boiling the result to distill an oil of garlic, which was recommended. But no distillate resulted, so he put his "soup" in a flask and forgot it. Some months later—

> I became interested in garlic again in September after reading of Mrs. Wayman Dublin's experience in the newsletter. She had made a mixture of minced garlic and onions in hot water letting it sit overnight. This concoction was effective in eliminating their own bean beetle problem by either repelling or killing them. At this point I decided to experiment with the garlic mixture I had. A few ounces of the juice were strained into the sprayer and a quart or so of water was added, making a fairly strong mixture. In the evening, this was sprayed on a heavy infestation of

> bean beetles on some pole lima beans. By the morning there were very few beetles and larva present and a closer inspection of these showed that they were all dead. Thus, the garlic was an effective insecticide even though it had been boiled and subsequently stored for a long period of time and no fresh garlic was added to it. We will try some more simple experiments with it this winter in the green house and some more sophisticated tests next year in the garden.
>
> If garlic does prove to be a useful pesticide, then we will have to determine exactly which insects it does kill and how persistent it is in the environment. It is possible that we will have something similar to rotenone, which is not persistent and is not harmful to mammals and larger animals. In fact research at Henry Doubleday [Research Association in England] has shown only beneficial effect of increased resistance to disease and pests such as fleas and ticks. But if we have something which is harmful to beneficial insects as well as pests, then perhaps we should use it only as a last resort in the garden.

Every issue of this newsletter has a number of such reports of individual experience from members.

The Piedmont Movement is very much opposed to nuclear power and gives considerable space in each issue to information on the hazard to health of fission plants, citing the research of eminent scientists and other reputable sources. In this issue the newsletter tells of a report by the Environmental Protective Agency predicting serious increases in cancer and infant mortality as the result of the emissions from such power plants planned for the future. There is also a report of frightening increases in these ills and in leukemia in the Michigan county where a nuclear-fission power plant has been operating since 1962.

The newsletter calls the spill of 114,000 gallons of radioactive waste from the Hanover, Wash., nuclear plant a "real disaster," amounting to a "Watergate" for the AEC. The Environmental Protection Agency, it is said, will soon insist on one hundredfold reduction in the radiation nuclear plants are permitted to release into the environment.