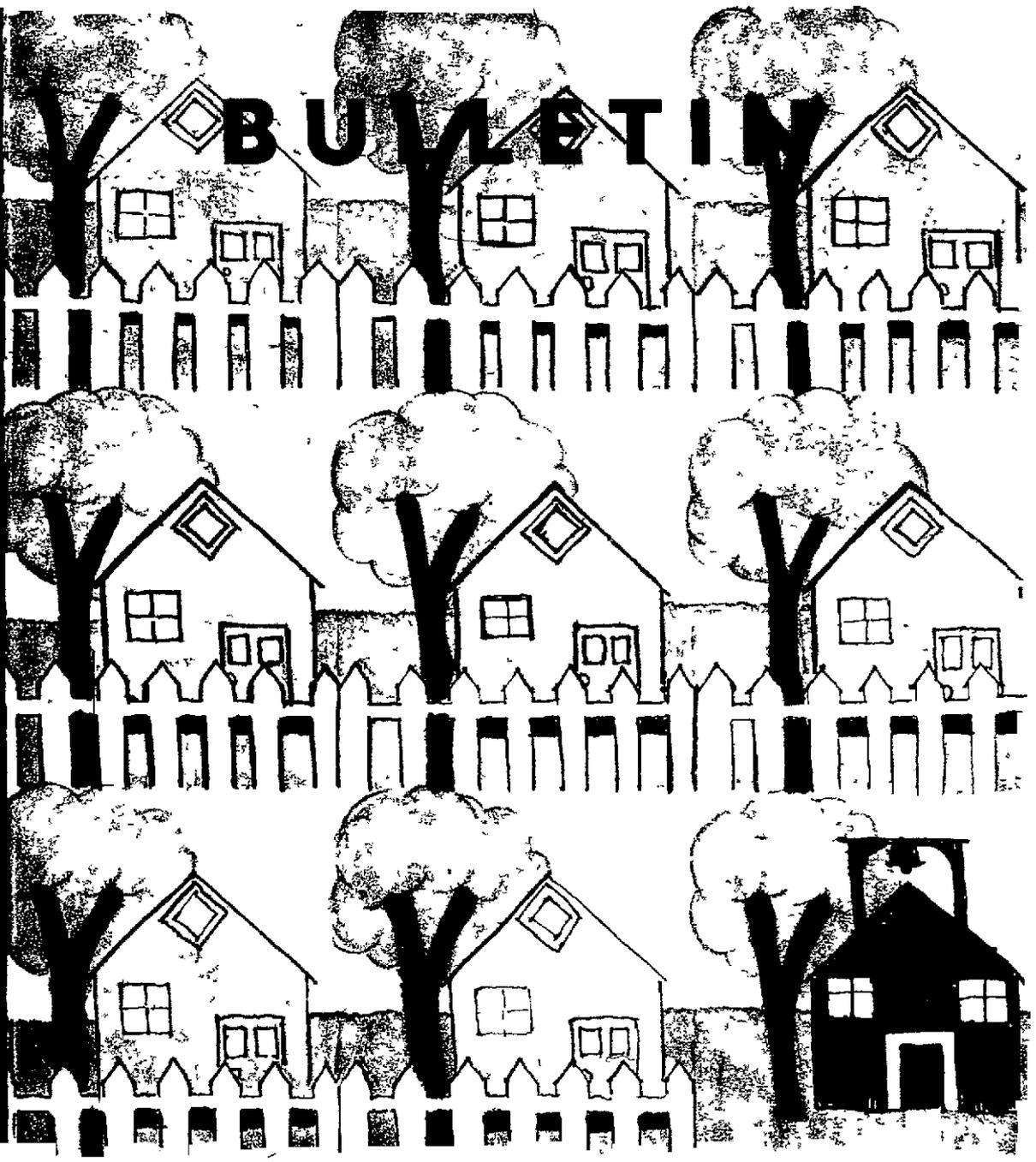


# Y BULLETIN



# BARNARD BULLETIN EDUCATION SUPPLEMENT

Volume I Monday, February 23, 1970 No. 2

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## WOMEN'S RIGHTS



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# IN EDUCATION

by Professor Catherine Stimpson

In 1912 the students of Wellesley College held a referendum. The question was whether women should have the vote or not. A majority of the girls disapproved of equal suffrage. The event dramatizes at least three curious facts about women's education:

- 1) That we must talk about "women's education" rather than "human education" or simply "education";
- 2) That the educators of women, largely men, have failed to radicalize them about the role of women;
- 3) That women themselves tend to go along with a degrading status quo.

Americans, like all people, educate their children about life styles. They refused, however, to educate their women formally in any serious way until the nineteenth century. Their arguments were formidable. Women have inferior minds, they said. Women lack stamina. They will simply faint away over an algebra book. Revived, they will sexually tempt the boys away from their studies and their virtue. Besides, some people even said, through some medical mystery education will even make women literally barren.

These arguments gave way, not to reason, but to economic necessities. During the Civil War, universities admitted women because they needed more tutors and students to keep the classrooms open. The Medical School of Johns Hopkins took in women because it would have lost a \$100,000 gift if it had not. School systems, in order to service a growing country, needed more elementary and high school teachers. Women were a cheap way of filling that demand. In 1866 the average salary for a male teacher was \$49 a month, but for a woman \$23 a month. For a woman to rebel against such discrimination was often destructive. What else was she supposed to do if she either needed or wanted work? She might make hats, work in a textile factory, or hire herself out as a maid, but little else.

Once in college women were encouraged to do "women's work": home economics, health, secretarial courses, education, or, at the most exalted, literature and fine arts. They were also encouraged to do women's work in less

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intellectual ways. Oberlin, which at least had the nerve to admit women as early as 1837, gave them, in addition to their academic chores, the job of washing the men's clothes and waiting on men at meals. The sorriest part of this sorry history was the women's colleges. At one point, in 1870, 58.9% of all the women in college were in women's colleges. (Fifty years later only 18.7% were.) Some educators defied convention. "Only our failures marry," snorted M. Carey Thomas, the second president of Bryn Mawr, the first woman to hold that office. The rest behaved as educators usually do. They only gave a cosmetic face-lifting to existing social structures. In this case the structures made women wives, mothers, loyal helpers, and a surplus labor force. Vassar, for example, refused to give a group permission to organize a women's suffrage meeting. At Barnard today only 22% of the full professors are women.

I am convinced that Barnard supports, rather than puts down, its women faculty members. In general, one of the honorable things that women's colleges have done is to give jobs to women intellectuals. However, women faculty members, who might be promoted, often leave schools, like Barnard, because their husbands take jobs elsewhere. Custom dictates that a woman adjust her career, as well as her name, to that of her husband. If her employment opportunities are limited to either men's colleges or male-centered universities, she is in real trouble. In 1967-1968 Columbia awarded 24% of its doctorates to women. Yet during the next year, only 12% of the assistant professors on the Graduate Faculties, which awards doctorates, were women, and only 2% of the associate and full professors. (Figures from the 1969 Columbia Women's

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Liberation "Report from the Committee on Discrimination against Women Faculty.")

More often patronized than supported, more often given an inferior education than a good one, more often than not told that a good education was only an ornament for them, conditioned from birth to accept all this, it is little wonder that women have failed to use their minds. In 1967 a University of Michigan study concluded that the average college-trained housewife gave only twelve minutes a day more to educational activities than the uneducated housewife. Nor have women grasped the chances others won for them. In 1920 one out of every seven Ph.D. went to a woman, in 1956 one out of every ten. The trend has continued.

The point is not that women are naturally lazy or stupid. The point is that they have been systematically miseducated for centuries. Educating women properly means telling them the truth, not simply about lasers, but about their traditional role. Telling them the truth means rethinking all our notions about our social, political, economic, and psychological institutions. Probably such rethinking means rebellion against them.

I believe in co-education. Segregated education, now an anomaly, ought to be an antique. Having attended a women's college, teaching at one, strengthens my beliefs. Sex segregated education has tended to reinforce sexual stereotypes: for boys that the mind is a male fortress; for girls that their minds are oddly divorced from the real business of their lives. Too many girls in women's colleges act in the classroom as if they were on some temporary duty. Some girls, with whom I sympathize, feel that a women's college offers them the only respite they will ever have from the conformity society imposes upon women. A woman's college has an obligation towards these students: to challenge our notions of conformity.

However, I see no reason for a mindless co-education that puts men and women in the same room, but keeps women in their place. I support women's colleges if they will radically alter themselves in order to alter our whole concept of women and of women's education. A good woman's college, as I define it, will then admit boys on its own terms. When a woman is president of Columbia or California, I will wave banners and relax. Until then, thinking about women's education, from birth on, I will remember what Alfred North Whitehead said in "The Aims of Education":

When one considers in its lengths and in its breadth the importance of this question of the education of a nation's young, the broken lives, the defeated hopes, the national failures which result from the frivolous inertia with which it is treated, it is difficult to restrain within oneself a savage rage. In the condition of modern life, the rule is absolute, the race which does not value trained intelligence is doomed.

## STUDENT FORUM:

# AN EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION

by Michael D. Merrill

Any discussion of educational programs carries with it assumptions about what education is. Some notion of what is meant by education—whether it is expressed implicitly or explicitly—must be contained in any such discussion. The problem of course, is that these notions are almost never spelled out. Instead they are left buried in between the eloquent descriptions of one or another “joyful, free learning experience.” The problem, one might say, is that everyone is doing something about



education, but no one is saying anything about it. Let us try to begin such an examination of education here.

Above all, education is a social process. Education is not a kind of private and holy communion between the individual and the material. To the contrary, the individual in question (or, as the case may be, each of an infinite number of individuals) are all inhabitants of a particular society at a particular time. Each individual is charged with maintaining some position in that society (even the decision not to maintain some position in that society is a social position).

Each individual, then, is characterized by certain needs and interests that are at least partially determined by the social setting in which he, to some extent, decided to be a party and, to some extent, was forced into by birth. And his needs and interests are also society's needs and interests. It is these social needs of the individual that are the primary concern of education.

On the other hand each epoch of human history poses certain concrete problems concerning mankind's relation to nature and the organization of its society. These problems constitute the overriding questions; each of which some men of that epoch will concern themselves with. In so much as these problems are in fact real ones and the solutions to them are clearly called for by the needs and interests of society as a whole, these problems should be the concern of education.

But what's so difficult about all that? Everyone knows that John Dewey said all that 68 years ago, and by this time everyone has followed suit.

Not everyone. The problem is precisely that learning is too often considered purely a private matter. "It's none of your business!" And the questions to be answered in the process of learning are too often academic ones; they are not yet real, in the sense that there is no necessity that they be answered, or they have long since been answered and the real problem is how to realize their solution. In other words, the educational institutions and programs of our society must concern themselves with the whole range of social problems that now beset our society. And we, as members of those in situations and participants in those programs have a social responsibility which we can ignore but never avoid: to come to terms with those problems, root out their causes and make changes.

These two principles form the basis for all the student Forum's work.

IN DEFENSE



## OF THE CLASSICS

by Edith Hamilton

In all the recent proposals for reforming the schools' curricula, the subjects Greek and Latin always seem to be the first marked for elimination. In this address to the members of the Institute for Contemporary Arts Miss Edith Hamilton, author of *The Greek Way*, explains why the classics are so important in education. Miss Hamilton, who died in 1965, delivered this speech in 1960 when she was ninety years old. (The recording of the speech is available in the Barnard library - Edith Hamilton, 'Echoes of Greece,' No. 928. Spoken Arts, Inc.)

What an honor it is for me, a 90 year old woman, to address an Institute of Contemporary Arts. I'm not going along, though, with one modern trend—Making it our aim of education to defeat the Russians.

What I am going to talk about is education. William James said that, at his club at Harvard, if 2 words were spoken, then the other people in the room would direct their attention to the speaker. These 2 words were religion and education. Religion is the Russians'. Education I'll talk about. I, after thinking about education feel that one important side is not emphasized enough—the personal side, the pleasure of being educated as opposed to not being so.

Once I was talking to Professor Guildersleeve. He was old when I saw him and I asked him what



compliment he had received that pleased him the most. He said, "I think it was when one of my students said, 'Professor, you have so much fun with your own mind.'"

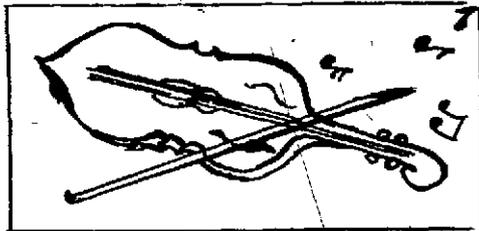
Stevenson said we should be able to go to a country place with a book and not be bored. What is the education that can do this? What's the furniture that can make the only place that belongs to us, the world within?

My only point is that when we are moving the furniture around, we should be careful about throwing any of it away. It might prove irreplaceable. In the past few decades a lot has been thrown away. Greek and Latin have probably left our field of education. For centuries they were foremost. In a few years we lightly toss them aside.

The art and thought of the past was very different than that of today whose artists were trained without benefit of Greek and Latin. Is that better? I don't know. But clear thinking is not precisely what our art and thought stand for.

If we go to exhibitions of modern painting, the thought that first arises is how strange. Picasso paints a profile with 2 eyes and a whole mouth. Dali a piano that has fallen to soft folds.

Long ago when I was in Paris there was an exhibition of cubists, one of the first of a herald. I was curious about this new thing and went. There was a room filled with paintings of various sizes, shapes, and in varying shades of mauve. There was one other person there, a man. I asked him, "Do you find it very beautiful?" He said, "I'm an artist. I came all the way from Brussels to see the show." Suddenly he said, "It's a portrait, I've found a button there and there's a button. Certainly it's a portrait of a man." I left him to his voyage of discovery.



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The literary followers of Cubism were Gertrude Stein and James Joyce. Sometimes when I'm falling asleep, I feel as though a cog slipped somewhere, and there flows through my mind a stream of unconnected words, sometimes without any of it happening on my part,

sometimes in the most absurd sequences I know that's called stream of consciousness but it never occurred to me to get up and write it down for art Gertrude said that's just the way she did it except she could turn the cog off and on When she wanted to say something important like her autobiography or the account of the French soldiers she could write perfectly clear There isn't anything in those two books that resembles in the least "Toasted Suzy is my ice cream" which she told me was the best line she ever wrote Their successor is Dylan Thomas I can't quote him by heart After real effort real effort I've succeeded in getting only one line of his to stick in my mind "Your calm and cuddled your calm and cuddled is a sigh of hairs is a sigh of hairs" I daresay that's enough for my purposes Of course in our nightmare world, artists couldn't go on writing Lemony-snoman verse or Raphael madonnas But to reject them because they are intelligible argues an inability to think—or a disinclination to do so

The Greeks had a passion for thinking They banished the unintelligible by thinking things clear through The Romans did too They were able to put clear thought into a few words and never lose intelligibility

An MIT professor said today Lincoln's Gettysburg Address would sound like this, "8 and 9/10 decades ago, the pioneer workers in this continental area implemented a new group" and he would have ended it with that political supervision of the integrated unit by the integrated unit and for the integrated unit shall not become null and void" Along with the banishment of the classics gobble de gook has come upon us Am I indirectly urging the study of Greek and Latin for the atomic age? Yes I'm doing it directly I believe that Greek and Latin are immensely important today As Cicero said "Whoever doesn't know the past remains a child" But, of course to do that translations biographies can give us what we need But the point is that we need what they can give They were great civilizations and they challenge us And we need the challenge Their view of what life is and what education should be isn't what ours is The Greeks were the most civilized in all the world while all around them were hords of barbarians They succeeded because of their inner spiritual strength, and they succumbed because their inner spiritual strength gave way And when they lost it and past out of the pages of history they left behind a record that all the nations of the world have yet to equal

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# EXPERIMENTS IN EDUCATION:

## EXPERIMENTAL COLLEGE

by Jan Oxenberg

*"How can I show that people are more open and honest with each other here than anywhere else at Columbia that I have ever been? How can I show that people have really tried to discover what they want to do with their lives and are beginning to do something that they personally feel is worthwhile?"—An Experimental College Member*

The Experimental College is a scary, joyous, frustrating, intense experience. On September 15, 1969, some thirty-five very different Barnard and Columbia students moved into the Paris Hotel to create "an alternative within the educational system, a reintegration of living and learning, a community." We started off with credit for one course, Kate Millet (hired as a resource person for EC by Barnard), plus other resource people, a small amount of money, and a whole bunch of ideas. Our dissatisfaction with the traditional systems of Barnard and Columbia are too well known to merit repetition here.

Our primary uniting bond when we met was a common "ideology—" developed over myriad planning sessions last year—which went something like this—"We've all been fragmented, mis-educated, and alienated by our experience at Columbia and in society at large. The EC will be a learning community in which we can break down the barriers between the classroom and our lives, between students and faculty, between disciplines of study, among ourselves, etc. We will aim to become "free-learners"—learning through self-motivation rather than through coercion, creating our own educational structures and experiencing learning as a joyous, intense process. As an experiment, we hoped that by successfully demonstrating progressive educational techniques, we could extend these alternatives to all undergraduates. All this would take place in the context of a community, with people living together in an atmosphere of honesty, openness, and closeness.

Underlying this philosophy is a basic, but rarely discussed, reason for student dissatisfaction with education, especially in the city. Education and life style at Columbia

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*"Prize," from Drawings for Dante's Inferno Courtesy The Metropolitan Museum of Art. John B. Turner Fund*

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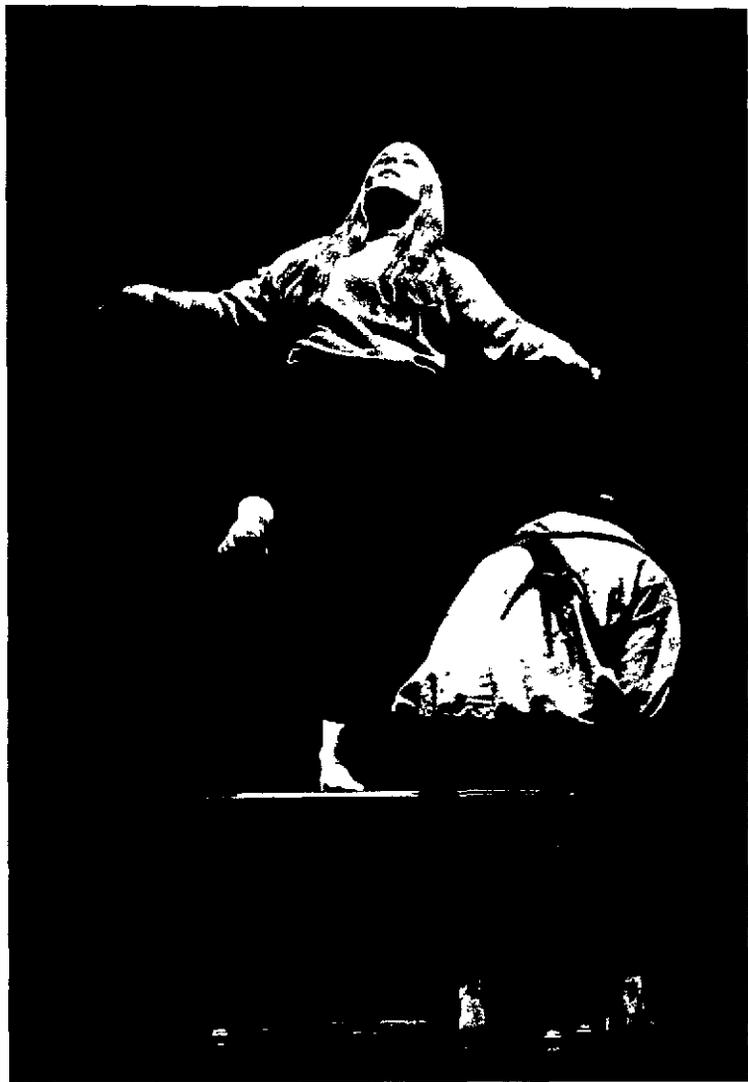
**PARADISE ON EARTH**

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are extremely unsatisfying on a basic "spiritual" (not to connote religious) level. (This problem is tied in with the political situation in the U.S., but that won't be discussed here.) It's very hard to form natural relationships with people, courses emphasize the mechanistic accumulation and (supposed) storage of knowledge with little emphasis on how what we are learning relates to a larger view of man or society or how it relates to the way in which we will live our lives. There is no mechanism to encourage students to consider how the courses they are taking relate to each other. In an existential sense we are dead if we are not constantly creating our own meanings and forms for our life.

The main thrust of the EC is in overcoming this feeling, not through rejecting rational thinking (an easy trap to fall into), but, in part, through trying to find a balance between the cognitive and affective aspects of learning. There is an emphasis in the College on what we call Synthesis (Although Synthesis seminars didn't get off the ground this semester for various reasons) which, in the formal (seminar) sense can be a sort of "intellectual free-association" session in which students discuss the attempt to examine the relationship between these ideas and examine their meaning in larger contexts or the synthesis can be centered around a specific idea, problem, or theme (e.g. next semester we are having one Synthesis seminar on "The Creative Process" and another on "Systems Analysis and Utopian Thought.").

Our main attack however on "spiritual emptiness" involves what is one of the most important aspects of the EC—the idea of community. Again, we are striving to find a balance between the respect for and encouragement of individuality and the responsibilities of the individual to the community. We have made use of the encounter marathon technique to stimulate communication and group feeling. Certainly the atmosphere in the College is not idyllic and we still have a long way to go. However, compared to dormitory life at Columbia and Barnard we



have created paradise on earth. Living with other people in a meaningful way is one of the most important tasks a human being faces. It is also one of the hardest (witness: the American marriage scene). In this first semester, which was spent mostly getting ourselves together, this aspect of the College received a tremendous amount of attention. I hate to sound like a before and after ad, but the simple fact is that, almost without exception, people in the EC are a lot happier or at least more together than they were last year (don't confuse happiness with complacency).

We've learned a lot about living in a community this semester. For example, we learned that, despite our utopian visions, it is unrealistic to expect each of thirty-five people to relate to everyone else in the group equally closely and honestly. Tom Liney, a leader in the educational reform movement, delineates three stages which experimental colleges typically go through. In the first stage, everyone is expected to relate to everyone else. In the second stage people realize that they can't relate to everyone and the reaction is a withdrawal to individualism. In the third stage people begin to relate to each other more realistically and therefore more openly. We seem to be moving from the second stage to the third stage. This is more realistic because the relationships now being formed are based on real knowledge of the other person, whereas in the first stage we weren't relating to people because we knew them particularly, but because it was part of our ideology.

This brings me back to the relationship between our ideology and what actually happened. The biggest discrepancy occurred in our concept of being "free learners." I mentioned above that we were getting credit for one course. We divided this course into three sections—1) The City in History, 2) Radical Action and Education, and 3) Groups and Committees. The topics were deliberately made rather nebulous so that nearly everyone could fit their interests into a group. Kate Millet was the resource person for each section. The classes were, for the most part, a failure, for many different reasons. One major reason was our seemingly blind faith that upon entrance to the EC a mass of creative energy would come bursting forth and everyone would be instantly transformed from a docile Columbia student to a free learner. All we had to do was set up a few sections of our course to accommodate all the energy! We soon found out that this wasn't going to be the case. Our previous educational history, including its reliance on coercion and authority, combined with the severe disadvantage of having to take 3 or 4 regular courses during this crucial first semester, made the transition extremely difficult and towards the end of the semester our formal classes virtually dissipated. We had neglected to provide some structure or technique which would help people move from where they were (which was mostly still a negative reaction against the educational system) to where they

wanted to be (a positive orientation towards learning).

Please don't conclude from the above paragraph that the EC was just a co-ed dorm. Actually, most members of the College went through the most intense learning experience of their lives last semester (although for most people the bulk of this learning wasn't directly related to class discussions on the three topics above. Ironically(?) though, the whole College experience taught people a tremendous amount about education and about groups and communities—and it was the cities group which did the most rigorous class work).

It is virtually impossible to describe in a few sentences what College members (or even just myself) learned this semester. I will discuss several areas in which I think there was valuable learning:

• EDUCATION—this was an issue faced every day by most of the College. Many people asked themselves seriously for the first time questions like: "What is education for?", "What do I want to learn?", "What is the best way for me to learn it?", "How can education on all levels be improved?", "How is education tied in with the social structure?" etc., etc. At meetings we had hours and hours of debates about education and analysis of the system we had set up which usually continued until about 4 A.M. out in the hall. Having read many books on various aspects of education, I can say that while these books provided a good theoretical background, the actual experience of grappling with real educational issues day by day is invaluable and irreplaceable. This is an excellent example of the interplay between analytical and experimental modes of learning. Readings provide a theoretical background, a source of new ideas, and an opportunity to view our experience in a larger context. My experience in the EC gives me a more direct knowledge of the problems and a sound basis for evaluating the contents of the readings.

COMMUNITY—EC members got valuable and far-reaching insights into many of the forces which shape communities. We were able to really examine, often painfully, our own and others feelings and reactions to various types of relationships, to hostility, authority, commitment, sharing, roles, etc. We have learned about how ritual, ideology, elitism and so on function in groups. We learned a tremendous amount about the function of leadership. Originally we were afraid of leadership—afraid that the acceptance or exertion of leadership would lead to an authority-centered, coercive environment. But, as our self-confidence grew we found that leadership and teaching are only coercive if they are forced on the individual or passively accepted by him. We are now at a point where we feel our own internal power strongly enough to be able to accept and seek out leadership and teaching when we need it and, hopefully, to exert our own leadership where we feel competent.

Increased and more comfortable interaction between and among students and faculty has made it easier for us to learn from each other and help each other in both our studies and our personal problems.

The kinds of learning I have described above are in addition to the specialized research and projects which members of the College did in conjunction with the classes.

Next semester we are taking a more individualistic approach with students working on projects of their own choice, individually or in groups. Synthesis groups will be available for the sharing of ideas and creation of a coherent academic life for the College. After a period of struggle, we seem to have emerged stronger and with a more positive direction than ever.

Probably the broadest thing that can be said about the EC is that it has caused among its members a tremendous growth in awareness on many different levels. We are constantly creating and being created by our environment. Changing the way we live and learn is intimately connected with far-reaching changes in society and vice-versa. The language, style, and direction of this whole process of change is itself constantly changing. Thus, the Experimental College can not be statically defined, but must be constantly involved in it's own creation.

# STUDENTS ARE A LOT LIKE PEOPLE

by Noel F. Melmus

I have come to the conclusion that the most needed here-y of our time is the adoption of new forms of instruction which are based on the proposition that students are a lot like people.

This proposition is not merely an attempt to be clever. It is an attempt to be constructively heretical by raising the most pertinent of all questions about our present educational methods. The question is simply this: "Do these methods meet human specifications?" The answer, not quite so simply, is: "No, they do not."

It has become quite clear to me ~~that~~ our educational system is not designed primarily to human specifications, but to the specifications of data. Both specifications are essential but the human ones must come first since it is people who have life to give to data and not vice versa. People are dynamic, data are static.

People grow and develop, data only change. People need to know where and how to find relevant data which will facilitate their growth and development, and data need people to formulate and change it into the increasingly meaningful insights and ideas which make human growth and development possible. Thus, all procedures for the effective union of people and data must specify people as the focal point of the process. Unfortunately, our educational system specifies data as the focal point of the process. And after twelve years, sixteen years, or even more of being standardized to the specifications of data, people begin to forget that they are people. They begin to perceive themselves and others as the products of data, and they manipulate data. And thus our need to be reminded that they are still a lot like people.

## Data Centered Education

It is quite clear why our educational system is data centered. It is a component of a highly mechanized society. Like most systems in this society, our educational system is designed to take in raw materials at one end and turn out a product at the other. Have you ever heard school administrators or teachers talk fondly of one of their institution's illustrious alumni? He's one of our finest products, you are likely to hear them say. American education is geared to turn out products. Its techniques are those of mass production, and can be compared with the assembly line.

Human raw material is brought onto the educational assembly line at the age of six (and before long, perhaps it will be three), and proceeds annually from one station to the next, receiving standardized increments of graduated data input at each station. We identify these stations as "first grade," "second grade," "third grade," etc. The term "grade" describes the level of the data, not the student (except incidentally). At approximately the eighth, twelfth, sixteenth and even

seventeenth, eighteenth or nineteenth stations, certificates of inspections are attached to the human raw material to indicate that the specific data for all preceding stations is properly in place. This certification is called "graduation" but again please note that the data is first graduated **outside** of the student. Data is graduated first, with the human raw material finishing anywhere from second best (grade "A") to also ran (grade "F").

Assembly line procedures are great for converting inanimate raw materials into standardized products but they succeed only because the initial raw material is itself highly standardized. Assembly lines make uniform products only when they are manipulating uniform raw materials. Assembly line procedures are barbaric when applied to people, because human raw material is not uniform. A six year old child is unique in the universe. When he is subjected to the mass production techniques of our educational system and is forced to surrender his uniqueness, he finds himself on a disassembly line. He is literally (in the psychic sense) dismantled. And we, the teachers, are his tormentors.

We torment our students because we are no more prepared to accept differentiated raw material than was Procrustes. Procrustes was one of the more notorious Greek gods, who distinguished himself by forcing all who passed his way to lie on his bed. Some passersby were too long for the bed, and he chopped them down to size. Other passersby were too short and were stretched to fit the bed. All passersby were standardized to fit the specifications of Procrustes' bed.

We educators are the modern version of Procrustes. Some students come to us with knowledge which does not conform to our data, and we promptly cut them down to size. Others come with insufficient background to manipulate our data, so we shove it in all the harder. All who pass through our classes are thus standardized to the specifications of our data. Just as Procrustes could not bear to allow people to make their own accommodation to his bed, so we educators are reluctant to allow students to make their own accommodation to our data. Our choice, arrangement and interpretation of the data is the only one we care to allow.

Three behaviors which all students need to develop are (1) the ability to perceive intellectual relationships, (2) the ability to establish human relationships, and (3) the ability to affirm themselves as competent human beings. There are educational forms conducive to the conditioning of each of these behaviors.

To condition self-affirmation in our students, we must design learning experiences which make them aware of their present potentials for personal competence and success. Such learning experiences are desperately needed in an educational system which tends to make students feel that competence will be theirs only upon some future accomplishment (i.e., graduation). One such learning experience is being designed at Kendall College under the direction of Billy B. Sharp, executive director of the W. Clement and Jesse V. Stone Foundation of

Chicago.) A combination of techniques, known as Achievement Motivation Systems, has been incorporated into what we call the Human Potential Seminar.

The Human Potential Seminar proceeds on the assumption that something is right with the participants, whereas traditional group counseling proceeds on the assumption that something is wrong with the participants. The achievement motivation process consists of individual revelation and group reinforcement of the personal strengths, resources, potentials, values, and success experiences of each seminar participant. The results of this process are increased student motivation and affirmation of self-worth. One measure of the effectiveness of the process: 69 per cent of those students who participated in the seminars last semester raised their academic performance by an average of one grade point.

I became convinced that students are a lot like people before my participation in a Human Potential Seminar. But now, as I conduct these seminars for students I begin to realize the fantastic implications of this heresy. If our nation has come so far with an educational system designed to meet non human specifications, imagine what will happen when the system becomes humanized.

*Excerpts from Students are a Lot Like People. Reprinted by kind permission of Noel F. McInnis. Copies of the complete article are available in the Bulletin Office, 107 McIntosh.*