

in attempting to make them work properly.

Attention to Details

One prime ingredient for success, by any administrator, is total attention to details.

When a person is given an assignment, full and complete directions must be given with it. These directions should be sufficiently adequate to allow any other qualified person to carry out any portion of the assignment even in the absence of the person responsible for completion of the assignment. Sufficient records must be kept to enable any person to obtain a full and complete history of the total work completed at any given future date.

Chain of Authority

The administrator himself is given many assignments. Department heads are responsible to deans, deans to presidents, presidents to boards of trustees or governors, and so on. The administrator must follow the direction and management of his "superiors" just as he expects his staff to follow his. He must remember that they are responsible for his actions. All correspondence must be answered promptly. All forms must be filled in accurately and returned as requested. All procedures and policies must be followed in every respect, and if departures appear necessary, permission from the appropriate authority must first be obtained. With practical ways and means, as well as workable policies and procedures, there should be few departures. All details and procedures, regardless of how minor or unimportant they may appear to any individual, must be completed thoroughly and accurately.

Completing the Job

Whether the administrator wants to complete a given assignment or not, he must always

remember that he is an employee of the institution, and that he must exert every possible effort in applying all his skills and ability towards completion, just as though he were 100 percent enthusiastically in favor of the assignment.

Qualities of the Leader

Leadership, cooperation, organizational ability, authority, initiative, philosophy of education, fairness, firmness, and ability to inspire confidence make up terminology often used relative to the work of the administrator. All such abilities are highly important, but they are really appropriate only as long as the users of such terminology do not lose sight of the fact that the administrator must still be a **worker**. The majority of his work may be in directing others, and it is of utmost importance that he do this, but he has a job to do, just as any other worker, and he must produce. He cannot be merely an idealistic philosopher developing incomplete ideas, then directing someone else to finish the job. Such a person is merely an "idea man." The administrator must be able to provide the direction for completion of the job, and he is the one person designated by the institution to see that all work is completed efficiently, accurately, and totally.

Work of the Administrator

Regardless of the many types of work, variations of activities, and total responsibilities involved, the work of the administrator may be divided into three logical procedural steps:

1. Develop and state the objectives.
2. Develop ways and means for accomplishing the objectives.
3. Provide direction and management for himself and his staff in all activities in completion of the ways and means.

Philosophy of Education

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And The Agricultural Curriculum

Introduction

As a professional discipline philosophy of education is the product of a liaison between philosophical speculation and educational practice, and, as a consequence, philosophers of education are abandoned offspring, often rejected by both philosophers and educators, and in constant search for a rightful place in academia. To some extent, this problem is shared with certain

other philosophies such as philosophy of history and philosophy of science. Yet it would be presumptuous to maintain that philosophy of education has nothing to say to educators, in general, or to agricultural educators, in particular. What it says is disputable and often disputed. But at least is some sense philosophy of education influences educational practice and, therefore, is exceedingly relevant. What John

Progressivism

Maynard Keynes said about the relationship between economists or political philosophers and the social world could well be said about the relationship between philosophers of education and the educational world:

The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else (1).

In this article, I should like to suggest what the relevance of philosophy of education to agricultural education is by relating two theories of education—essentialism and progressivism—to some of the debate concerning the undergraduate education of agricultural students. In addition, I will say something about the philosophical connections of these two theories of education. Though neither essentialism nor progressivism are represented by powerful organized movements in contemporary American education, influential educational spokesmen are often found to be committed to some of the fundamental postulates of one or the other.

Essentialism

Most essentialists accept the following propositions:

1. Reason is the distinctive characteristic of humans, and the cultivation of the mind is the major, if not the only, legitimate concern of the school.
2. The cultivation of the mind is achieved in two ways: (a) disciplining the mind to be logical, which means "teaching students how to think" (the mental discipline theory); (b) filling the mind with facts and truths.
3. A mind once cultivated can then adapt itself to new subjects and new situations with relative ease (transfer of training theory).
4. There are certain subjects that are essential because they are useful in disciplining the mind, such as grammar, geometry, and logic.
5. There are other subjects which are essential because they contain facts or truths every human being must know in order to operate effectively in the world and/or to attain spiritual fulfillment. Examples are literature, religion, philosophy, history, physics, biology, etc., subjects usually subsumed under the heading of general or basic education.

Philosophically speaking, essentialism is commonly associated with the metaphysics of certain types of realism or objective idealism which radically separate mind and body or mind and the external world. Reality is either the world "out there," waiting to be known (the spectator view of reality), or is in the mind and independent, logically, of the world. To essentialists it is the function of education to expose reality—facts, truths, or values—to the student so that he may adapt to it, and, further, to train his mind in such a way that he can logically deduce truths or relationships not patently evident. For the essentialist, then, education is largely a mental affair. Such other matters as vocational training or learning how to get along with people are at best incidental to the true nature of education if not completely outside its pale.

Progressivism, in at least one of its many manifestations, finds theoretical support in certain aspects of pragmatism. As a philosophy pragmatism rejects dualisms, such as separations of body and mind or mind and the world. Man's creations and man himself are no less a genuine part of the world than is "nature." There are no absolute truths waiting to be known and adjusted to. This is an open, indeterminate world, and the relationship between it and human beings is always problematic. The world is experienced by a feeling, aspiring human being capable of reflection. Truth is not built into the world. A truth is an event that may happen as a consequence of men acting upon hypotheses intelligently arrived at in the course of human experience. Thus, scientific knowledge in itself is not a "good." It may become a "good" if used in such a way that it advances desirable human causes. Scientific knowledge could be used for evil purposes.

One learns by actively experiencing problems and attempting to resolve them. In this way, the most desirable of all habits, the habit of intelligence, is developed. Thus, progressivism in the Deweyan sense does not reject mind training, i.e. intellectual discipline, but does reject the methodology of essentialism. "Knowing how to think" is most important, but it is not an excellence achieved through contending with the logical structure of certain subjects. It is a habit attained by encountering real problems of immediate interest and attempting to resolve them by ordered reflection.

In sum, insofar as progressivism is related to pragmatism, persons, not just minds, are central to the educational enterprise. Substantive knowledge is important but not as an end in itself nor as an infallible guide to man's behavior, but as a means to be used by people to further mutually agreed upon and desirable ends. Truths are not built into the mind nor are they "out there" waiting to be acquired by it; they result from active and purposeful inquiry.

Essentialism and Progressivism in Agricultural Education

Although I do not contend that the debate about undergraduate education in agriculture is being carried on by people committed to one or another of the philosophies of education, it seems to me that the essentialist temper and the progressivist temper are reflected in much of what agricultural educators have to say. This is particularly true with respect to three educational concerns: (1) learning how to think; (2) basic versus technical education; (3) farm or practical experience.

Learning How to Think

In my reading of the literature on agricultural education, I have been struck by the extensive concern on the part of administrators and teachers that students "learn how to think." Just how this educational end is to be attained is

usually left unsaid, but one gets the impression that there is a wide commitment on the part of administrators and teachers to the tenets of mental discipline and transfer of training in the essentialist tradition; that all courses should be taught in such a way that the major gain would be a sharpening of an independently existing mind.

A striking contrast to the prevailing opinion of educators is the opinion of agricultural graduates on this matter. Graduates generally rank "learning how to think" rather low among the objectives proposed for the undergraduate curriculum. I am not sure why this is the case, but I find it hard to believe that agricultural college graduates rate clear, logical thinking as of little importance to their work. The more likely reason—and I base this on the opinions of graduates in other matters—is that graduates have little faith in educational aims that are isolated from real problems directly related to their vocational objectives.

Again, this is not to suggest that agricultural graduates are systematic philosophers of education, but they seem to know what they want, and unless agricultural educators are willing to assume that student interest is of little or no importance in the educational process, they might do well to heed the reaction of one agricultural economics professor, progressivist in temper, who declared: "Students already know how to think." What they need in agricultural economics is to be "trained in the process of thinking economically; of developing economic rationality." (2)

Basic Versus Technical Education

In the last decade or so, agricultural educators, particularly administrators, have been emphasizing the need for the development of top-level leadership for the agricultural industry. The claim is made that agricultural colleges have been derelict in this function and that, though they have been successful in producing graduates capable of competently assuming "middle range" positions, the colleges have not succeeded in producing graduates capable of filling "higher range" positions. The reason usually offered for this failure on the part of the agricultural college is that it has been overly concerned with technical and vocational education and not concerned enough with basic or general education.

Reflecting the sharp divisions in subject matter value made by essentialists, many administrators as a result have taken the position that the agricultural curriculum must deemphasize technical or professional education because it restricts the growth potential urgently required by future agricultural leaders. To illustrate, the president of one Land-Grant college has remarked that students will grow:

... if we give them the broad understanding of the basic sciences that will affect their lives, or the social sciences that will make it possible to understand human behavior, and of the verities that can make life meaningful and satisfying (3).
and he has said elsewhere:

We . . . must ask ourselves whether our friends in the liberal arts colleges do not have a point when they allege that we are too occupied with technical and vocational education and find too little time for ethics and philosophy and religion in our courses of study (4).

In contrast, the progressivist mood may be observed among some administrators who, for want of a better name, might be labeled the "integrationists." To them subject matter is all of a piece; they see connections, not separations. And they are not convinced that liberal arts courses are necessarily "liberating" or that technical courses restrict growth. Some integrationists view agricultural education as an especially suitable medium for integrating technical and basic education because agriculture embraces many fields of knowledge and, hence, possesses a natural, liberal quality.

Perhaps the most eloquent and perceptive of contemporary integrationists who address themselves to agricultural education is Paul A. Miller, President of West Virginia University:

The first and most basic element is that we come to an honest view that higher education in agriculture is a projection of "technical humanism" rather than technical vocationalism. No student anywhere is educated if he fails in understanding the application of science to the condition of man. . . .

Perhaps the only useful bridge in today's world between the "scientists and the non-scientists" is the great technological edifice which has meaning for both. Since agriculture is one such edifice, all higher education may profit from courageous attempts to consider agriculture a humane topic rather than a vocational skill. This should make the topic more attractive to quality students and prepare them for leadership at those levels of intellectual abstraction which agriculture so desperately needs. To accomplish this, leaders in agricultural education must discover a new interest in planning a curriculum which carefully and relevantly integrates the liberal subjects (the sciences and the arts included) into a technological core of producing food and the human organization which accomplishes it (5).

Dr. Miller goes on to explain that such an integration "discards the folly of attaching a few liberal electives to a vocational curriculum or a few vocational electives to a curricular slum of arts and sciences." (6)

Among the specific recommendations made by integrationists are the following:

1. An agricultural faculty whose interests and competencies enable them to contribute to the general as well as the professional education of agricultural students.
2. Teachers of the arts and sciences who are willing to orient their courses to the interests and needs of agricultural students.

Farm or Practical Experience

It is on the matter of practical experience, particularly farm practice, that the difference between educators of an essentialist temper and those of a progressivist temper is most clearly observed. Almost all spokesmen for agricultural education in the Land-Grant colleges accept the position taken by Robert Hutchins that the best

thing to do with vocational education is to forget it. (This position, by the way, is in marked contrast to that of agricultural college graduates who overwhelmingly favor more practical training in the curriculum.)

The general attitude of administrators in the Land-Grant colleges on this matter is reflected in the fact that few of the colleges make farm experience a prerequisite for graduation and hardly any offer on-campus, practice courses for credit. The assumption made is that higher education in agriculture is and should be committed to providing an education that stresses basic theory. Vocational education is the function of two-year schools, short course programs, and on-the-job training programs—not degree programs. Besides, vocational education is of limited value in view of the fact that technical agricultural skills soon become obsolescent.

There are other spokesmen for agricultural education—they are to be found principally among professors in the Land-Grant colleges and among both administrators and professors in non-Land-Grant colleges—who deplore the separation of practice and theory. They take the progressivist position that the student is of a piece and that the learning of theory is facilitated by personal and current experience with practical problems. The rationale of proponents of farm experience is that intrinsic motivation is a powerful stimulus to genuine learning and that meanings develop out of active involvement rather than from an exposure to facts or principles unrelated to personal experience or felt needs. And it is primarily for this reason (though it is not the only reason) that animal judging courses, student projects, required summer work, and the like, are recommended.

Conclusions

Since World War II, agricultural educators have been concerned with a number of pressing problems, including the proportionate decrease in enrollment, the failure to attract enough students of high academic ability, the need to educate top-level leadership for the agricultural industry, and the growing importance of agribusiness and graduate school in the absorption of agricultural college graduates. One of the significant responses to these problems was the widespread establishment of options in agri-

cultural business, agricultural science, and agricultural production.

In the course of the post-war reevaluation of the purpose and character of agricultural education, a powerful movement developed in favor of providing a curriculum that would emphasize basic education and, correspondingly, would radically deemphasize technical education, particularly the so-called vocational type. The rationale of this movement bears close resemblance to the essentialist tradition in education. As a result, the question has been asked as to whether an agricultural college can justify its existence if its curriculum is dominated by non-professional, basic education courses. This question remains to be answered.

Although the movement toward "basics" has found more ready acceptance in the Land-Grant colleges, many of the non-Land-Grant agricultural schools and departments have been caught up in it. In part, this may be attributable to the academic respectability sought for in the competition with Land-Grant colleges. In any case, administrators in the non-Land-Grant schools can find theoretical support for their "practical" approach to agricultural education in the postulates of progressivism. And it may be that with this support, they will feel free to conduct imaginative experiments in education that will fortify the professional character of the curriculum of agricultural students.

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Reaching Educational Objectives Through Cooperation

Was there ever a time when educational programs in agriculture were limited in scope and when each institution knew what its "arena" was? In the world of expanding enrollments, more accurate appraisals of employment opportunities and personnel needs, more realistic appraisals of the manpower needs of production

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