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Curriculum Trends from the 1930s-1970s: Narrative and Dialogue

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CURRICULUM TRENDS FROM THE 1930'S - 1970'S
NARRATIVE AND DIALOGUE

by
Doris Marian Frentress

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the School of Education of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education May 1988
The purpose of this study was to determine major trends in the field of curriculum from the 1930's through the 1970's. The author used three major educational texts as criteria for ascertaining which trends would be considered significant for this study. William Schubert, Diane Ravitch and Daniel and Laurel Tanner were the authors of the texts used.

The writer of this dissertation reported the chronology of the life and death of four major trends in curriculum. The activity school of the 1930's-1940's, the life adjustment curriculum of the 1940's-1950's, the curriculum projects of the late 1950's-1970's and the open education movement of the 1960's-1970's were the major trends investigated.

These trends were then depicted in a narration in the setting of the wake of the field of curriculum—Mr. "C". The mourners who attended the wake represented an era of curriculum trend in American history. The narrator of the story represented the field of education; he discussed with each mourner the rationale behind each curriculum movement.

The recurring theme throughout the dialogue is that nothing endures but change. Curriculum trends are the products of fears, hopes and crises that create the need for something new.
This paper concludes with an understanding of the past trends in curriculum, their reasons for being and their reasons for dying. The questions and problems implicit in the field of curriculum remain the same. When society has problems to solve, it turns to the schools for solutions and guidance. For the field of curriculum, this means continual uncertainty.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere appreciation is extended to Dr. Barney Berlin, advisor and dissertation committee chairman. Dr. Berlin provided counsel, encouragement and guidance throughout the many facets of the author's doctoral program.

Gratitude is additionally expressed to Dr. Phillip Carlin and Dr. Diane Schiller for their valuable assistance as members of the dissertation committee. Their faith in the writer and interest in the topic is truly appreciated.

Above all, the author is extremely grateful for the love, understanding, support and sacrifice of precious family togetherness, given by her husband, Farrell Lee Frentress, and daughter, Michelle Marion Frentress. A doctorate is a degree earned and shared by all members of the family.
VITA

Doris Frentress was born January 29, 1944, in Chicago, Illinois. She is the daughter of Albert and Marion Hosler.

Her elementary education was obtained at Gage Park Elementary School, and secondary education at Gage Park High School, Chicago, Illinois. In January, 1962 she entered college and graduated in April, 1965, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in education from Chicago Teachers College.

During the ensuing years she taught adult education for the Chicago Board of Education under the Manpower Development Training Act, and acted as an educational consultant for the United States Job Corps. In April, 1973 she was awarded a Master of Science degree in education from Chicago State University. Her major field of study was the teaching of reading.

Since 1973 the author has been a staff member of the Chicago Board of Education, Donald L. Morrill Elementary School, which has an enrollment of eleven hundred students. Her teaching experiences have included the teaching of primary, intermediate and upper grade elementary education. Currently, she is a consulting remediation teacher, the reading coordinator, and acting school counselor.
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Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance, he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning.

Clifford Geertz
DESIGN OF THE INVESTIGATION

HISTORICAL APPROACH

A traditional historical approach will be used in the writing of this investigation. Focus will be placed on the analysis of books, periodicals, yearbooks, and official records. This literary analysis approach will involve reading sources in the field of curriculum and then deriving evidence to support a conclusion or generalization.

Whenever possible, primary sources of material will be used. When secondary sources are used all possible information about the origin of the statements quoted will be investigated.

After presenting these statements, the next step in this investigation will be to determine the meaning of the statements. Both literal and non-literal meanings will be ascertained. The investigation in this dissertation is concerned with real meanings of statements. According to Homer Hockett, statements are the raw materials and they must not be mistaken for facts. Hockett emphasized that history receives its meaning and value when conclusions, interpretations and generalizations are drawn from facts.¹

Accordingly, the purpose of this investigation will be to analyze statements in the field of curriculum from the

late 1930's to the late 1970's, and to ascertain facts which will be used to produce interpretations, make generalizations and draw conclusions about major trends during these decades.

An investigation into the field of curriculum must begin with a specific definition of the term. However, this is easier said than done. Thomas Briggs, in his all-encompassing view of the secondary school curriculum, contended that "one of the greatest weaknesses in our professional literature...is the failure adequately to define terms."\(^2\) Florence Stratemeyer, referred to the current chaotic condition of curriculum terminology as a "verbal jungle."\(^3\) While different and conflicting definitions exist, the following discussion is an attempt to define curriculum for the purposes of this investigation.

**DEFINITION OF CURRICULUM**

In 1928 the Department of Superintendence advocated a standardization of curriculum terminology. The Department viewed the lack of standardization as problematic:

"Virtually the same body of subject matter or grouping of


subjects may be found under different curriculum titles."  
During this same year, as a result of a study on curriculum development in twelve large cities, Walter Cocking discovered that nine of the twelve cities had distinctly different definitions of the term curriculum.  

In later years Hollis Caswell, indicated that the early 1930's saw an increased great emphasis on the importance of defining curriculum. Carter Good, in the Dictionary of Education, identified twelve patterns of curriculum organization and as many other terms which were commonly used in discussion of curriculum organization; the dictionary pointed to the need for clarification of the concept of curriculum.  

A curriculum is a written plan depicting the scope and arrangement of the projected educational program for a school.  

experiences a child or youth has in school, but the formal course work taken by students. Curriculum is a structured series of intended learning goals indicating what is to be learned, not why it should be learned.

Further critical definitions abound. R.M. Gagne defines curriculum as a series of content units which can be mastered under a single set of learning conditions. Frederick Bonser characterized curriculum as experiences that students are expected to have in school and the sequential order of such experiences. Franklin Bobbitt defined curriculum as a series of experiences which children and youth must have by way of attaining objectives. Joseph Schwab defined curriculum as a document designed to be used as a point of departure for instructional planning.

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The definitions of the word curriculum could continue ad infinitum, for each curriculist, each educator, each theorist can view the meaning of the word differently. As pointed out in the *Review of Educational Research*, no matter how curriculum is defined, the definition does not affect significantly the kinds of questions and problems dealt with by the field itself.  

The author of this dissertation will define curriculum as a document stating desired educational outcomes based upon an educational philosophy or theory.

**ISOLATION OF THE MAJOR TRENDS**


Primary sources, quoted in their books, were then located and read to verify the strength of these trends in American schools. Each trend was analyzed to determine its assets and deficits. Other synoptic and general curriculum texts and periodicals were used to check the validity of the trends.

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trends' strengths and weaknesses.

A timeline was determined for these trends to aid in isolating, as much as possible, the beginning of one trend and ending of another. The time frames for major trends determined by the author were: 1930's - 1945, 1945 - 1957, 1957 - 1976, and 1967 - 1975. Not all critics are in agreement as to the exact time frames of the trends, but these dates serve as general guidelines and were substantiated by the major texts.

Undoubtedly, some readers of this dissertation will disagree with the choice of trends which were isolated. However, using the parameters of the above-mentioned general texts on curriculum history, I concluded that these trends were the most significant.

I am sure that some scholars will dispute the selection of texts used, the reliance on certain critics, and the author's interpretation of the sources. However it is through commentary and discussion that the field of curriculum can be fully analyzed, and thus reveal its strengths, weaknesses, and hopes for the future.

LIMITATIONS

When dealing with a time span of forty years in American education, some restrictions in study must be made. First, discussions of each of the major curriculum trends do not include all research done in the area.
Ideally, the best contemporary scholars advocating the trend will be cited as well as scholars refuting its merits. Current authors will cast a historical look at the trend's strengths and shortcomings.

Some of the major trends may be too extensive to discuss all specific curricular programs attributed to this trend. Due to the limitations of the scope of this dissertation, only the major programs of the trend will be discussed.

The author's own judgement will be used in deciding which program of a more nebulous trend (such as curriculum projects of the late 1950's) will be used to exemplify the theory of the trend. Recognition of the program by two major curriculum texts will be the criterion established for its inclusion in this dissertation.

The major curriculum trends do not emerge one after another in a neat pattern. The open education movement of the 1960's was becoming a national trend while curriculum projects were also very much in vogue. Some school systems were developing alternative schools, open classrooms, and curriculum project schools simultaneously. I will deal with this problem by discussing the trends in the order in which they occur on the timeline.

Chapter III of this dissertation will be a satirical look at curriculum trends. Satire can be difficult to write unless the author has the ability to exaggerate the
facts. When the truth is stretched for this type of writing it should not always be considered invalid. An exaggeration's purpose is to enlarge the facts to make them more obvious and memorable to the reader.
Dissertation Outline

I. Definition of Curriculum
   A. Various curriculum experts' definitions
   B. Doris Frentress definition: A document stating desired educational outcomes based upon an educational philosophy or theory

II. Curriculum Trends
   A. Late 1930's-1945: Activity Movement
      1. Active interaction between the learner and the environment
      2. Child-centered
      3. No structured, pre-planned, subject matter approach
   B. 1945-1957: Life-Adjustment Curriculum
      1. Life-adjustment training designed to prepare youth not intending to attend college
      2. Attempt to fill gap between high school curriculum and the needs of youth
      3. Less child-centered; more group-centered
      4. No pre-planned curriculum
      5. Intrinsic motivation of students caused by their concerns would result in an effective learning
      6. Situations of everyday living take the place of traditional subject matter
C. 1957-1976: Back to Basics with Curriculum Projects

1. Response to demands of conservatives in society

2. Grew out of America's fears of losing competitive edge in science and technology

2. Support for projects came from federal government, foundations, and universities
   a. Arthur Bestor insisted scholars had a responsibility for the way disciplines were taught in public schools
   b. University of Illinois developed new math materials for high school teachers
   c. MIT formed Physical Science Study Committee aimed to revise physics teaching
   d. Rockefeller Foundation Report: Pursuit of Excellence (1954) concluded that human potential development should be goal of school
   f. Federal government funded scores of experimental programs
   g. "Man: A Course of Study" (MACOS): a National Science Foundation course (1976)
D. 1967-1976: Social Equality and Open Education

1. Featherstone reported revolution in English primary education; this format was called "open education" (1962)

2. Shady Hill School and Education Development Center of Massachusetts influences open education

3. Crisis in the Classroom (1970) by Charles Silberman brought open education to public attention

4. Ford Foundation actively promoted open education

5. Open education meant children exercised a large degree of choice in selecting activities and materials

6. In high school the students used the city and its institutions as their classrooms

7. Elimination of traditional high school graduation requirements.

8. Losing adult authority led to the public's perception during mid 1970's that a lack of discipline was most significant problem in American schools.
CURRICULUM TRENDS FROM THE 1930'S - 1970'S
NARRATIVE AND DIALOGUE
OUTLINE

I. Introduction to the narrator
   A. Narrator will speak in first person, his name will never be given
   B. The narrator will be the field of education
   C. Narrator will decide one morning not to go to school but attend wake of famous Mr. "C"
      1. Heard of Mr. "C" for years
      2. Heard how Mr. "C" influenced what was taught and how it was taught in schools
      3. Heard how Mr. "C" had influenced the youth of America

II. At the wake, narrator has a dialogue with each mourner
   A. Each mourner represents a major trend in curriculum history
   B. The narrator listens to the mourners expand upon "their" contributions to the growth of Mr. "C"'s life
   C. As each mourner leaves a new mourner arrives and refutes, the previous visitor. Each blames the other for Mr. "C"'s death

III. All mourners have left except our narrator
   A. He reflects on influences of Mr. "C"'s life
3. He leaves and as he walks in the rain down the street, he turns back to look at the chapel and the read neon sign—Resurrection Funeral Home, he realizes Mr. "C" is still alive.
The reference and general library resources of the following institutions were used for the research: Loyola University, Northwestern University, Concordia College, St. Xavier College, University of Chicago, Rosary College, College of DuPage, College of Optometry-Chicago, Chicago Public Library, and the Professional Library of the Chicago Board of Education.

To assist in the location of books in print in the field of curriculum history, the following references were most helpful:

**Books in Print** (New York: R.R. Bowker Company) (Past and present editions, particularly the subject guides).


**The Education Digest** (November 1985) "A Historical Collection of Articles and Authors of the Last 50 years."


Critical sources for this dissertation were limited to curriculum books published in English, including monographs and yearbooks. Pertinent journal articles located through the use of ERIC, were also included in the research.

The central criterion that guided the selection of sources was this question: What publications contributed substantially, directly or indirectly, to the study of major trends of curriculum thought in American schools from the late 1930's to the 1970's?
Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.

(H.G. Wells 1920)
CHAPTER II

MAJOR TRENDS IN CURRICULUM FROM
THE 1930's THROUGH THE 1970's

THE ACTIVITY MOVEMENT

Respect for the child and concern for his present happiness and welfare were undoubtedly important considerations in the minds of those who led in the development of the activity curriculum. A scientific study of child behavior had demonstrated that children, with their abundant energy, have a more satisfying experience when they are engaged in purposeful group activities than when they are confined to fixed seats and subjected to teacher-dictated routines of drill and memorization.

We gain knowledge not by gazing at things, but by interacting with them, and by discovering the interconnections that bind things together. Knowledge is attained through experience, and experience is not a process in which a subjective mind intuits an external world; it is, as Dewey has emphasized, an active process of doing and undergoing—a process in which we do things to the environment and the environment reacts to us. In other


17 Ibid.
words, we get knowledge in and through activity, and without activity there is no acquisition of knowledge."¹³

John Dewey outlines the essential elements of this active process in educational practice:
- The pupil is given a genuine situation of experience; there is a continuous activity in which he is interested.
- Problems develop within the situation as a stimulus to thought.
- The pupil possesses the information and makes the observations needed to address the problems.
- The pupil is presented with solutions which he will be responsible for developing.
- The pupil has the opportunity to test his ideas by application and to discover for himself their validity.¹⁹

According to Childs, Dewey's development of an activity curriculum was a response to a demand for a school program which would stimulate and build the intellectual powers of its students.²⁰ The Laboratory School, established at the University of Chicago in 1896 as a cooperative venture of parents, teachers, and educators under the direction of John and Alice Dewey, was the first elementary school in

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 273.


²⁰ Childs, p. 280.
America to use an activity curriculum.21

Central to the development of Dewey's activity curriculum was the recognition of four human impulses: the social impulse, which is shown in the child's desire to share his experiences with the people around him; the constructive impulse, which begins with the young child at play and progresses to the child shaping raw materials into useful objects; the impulse to investigate and experiment, which manifests itself in the child's desire to research and discover results; and the expressive or artistic impulse, which is a refinement and further expression of the child's communication and construction impulses.

The curriculum of the Dewey School was designed to encourage such basic impulses in the education of the young.22 Thus, the program was focused on the teaching of occupational skills such as cooking, sewing, and carpentry. These occupations were conceived by the founders as extensions of man's fundamental relationships to his world--fundamental relationships which are revealed in the activities of acquiring food, securing shelter and clothing, and in providing the conditions within which the higher interests and values of life may be developed and


An interest in reading, writing and arithmetical computations arose out of the activities involved in the occupations. No special attempt was made to teach reading or any other academic skill until the child felt a need for the skill. It was one of the fundamental beliefs of the Dewey School that only when the child had acquired an interest in learning a skill should it be taught.

John Dewey's philosophy of education influenced educational thought throughout the United States and Europe. Adolph Ferriere's Activity School adopted Dewey's principles as part of its foundation. According to Ferriere, interest is the cornerstone of the Activity School: "Nothing without interest, nothing beyond it. Interest is a hunger that is evidenced, a hunger for knowledge. Hunger is a power of the mind, working logically or practically. It is obvious that interest is inseparable from effort."

True effort and true interest cannot exist independently, for both are the means used by the growing child to realize himself. Effort based on interest is

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23 Ibid., p. 5.

24 Smith et. al., p. 267.


spontaneous effort. If the child's choice inclines ever so little not to knowledge but to power, not to assimilation but to construction with his hands or his mind, we are in the presence of what may be called creative effort or creative expression.  

In creative expression, the child gives himself spontaneously to a constructive activity which is not directly imitated, and which helps to enlarge the scope of his personal experience, art or science. According to Ferriere, there are five elements to a child's creation: (1) The creation results from spontaneous interest. (2) This interest is charged with affective potential (joy is necessary to creation). (3) This interest pursues an end; this is the intellectual element of creation. (4) The creation is expressed by an activity of the mind or, commonly, of the mind and body. (5) Finally, this expression is relatively new.

Ferriere believed the Activity School pedagogy was not a method of instruction but a spirit. Where this spirit rules the child no longer says, "I would and I cannot." With the spirit of the Activity School the student is empowered to carry out what he wills.

The educator starts with the child he has before him,

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27 Ibid., p. 66.
28 Ibid., p. 58.
29 Ibid., p. 71.
as he is, not as a text on educational psychology says he should be. To Ferriere, the teacher who complains of his pupil accuses himself.\(^{30}\) To educate one starts with what one has, in order to lead toward what is better. The teacher is there to bring out the child's consciousness so that the child may grow and express his interests.\(^{31}\)

Though John Dewey and Adolph Ferriere appear similar in their philosophies, they differed greatly in their beliefs on whether education should be individual or group-oriented. Ferriere believed the child should be the center of education, while John Dewey believed that the group, the individual child being one of many, was most important. "The school cannot be a preparation for social life excepting as it reproduces, within itself, the typical conditions of social life.\(^{32}\)

**THE ACTIVITY MOVEMENT DEFINED AND ANALYZED**

In an attempt to define and delineate the parameters of the activity school, the National Society for the Study of Education devoted its thirty-third yearbook to the activity movement. The committee collected and analyzed forty-two definitions written by experts, twenty-five published

\(^{30}\) Ibid., p. 113.

\(^{31}\) Ibid., p. 114.

activity curricula, and fifteen books on the subject. William Heard Kilpatrick, a contributor to the report, concluded that the activity curriculum involved active interaction between the learner and the environment. The prevailing belief was that learning was the result of such interaction. Kilpatrick surmised that proponents of the activity curriculum generally made no separation of the intellectual, psychological or physical aspects of life. He found that activities and experiences were planned in advance by school administrators in a few instances, more were planned by the teacher and the class, and most activities and experiences were the result of the teacher and class working cooperatively. The child was to be given progressively greater responsibility in the work of the activity curriculum. Greater freedom was to be extended along with greater respect for the personality of the child.

As the activity curriculum movement grew in American schools, educators began to study its effectiveness. Clyde Hisson analyzed the weaknesses and contributions of the

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The absence of a central program and a well developed and dominating philosophy were stated as major weaknesses. Hissong felt the movement ignored the group in favor of the personal factor in the educational process. No alternative to adult authority except child authority was identified in the movement.

Although Hissong found many weaknesses he also noted contributions of the activity movement. There was an increased emphasis on the importance of the individual by placing the student at the center of the educational process. Secondly, there was the recognition of learning as an active process, which gave educators the freedom to move from a passive role in education to a dominant active role. Lastly, there was an emphasis placed upon the importance of a broad environment which could provide students with an expansive framework of experiences.

One of the most comprehensive and well designed research studies of the activity movement was a New York City experiment involving 75,000 children and 2,500 teachers over a six-year period. In 1935, the Board of Education of New York City launched an experimental program with activity schools. The schools were encouraged to develop curricula based on the interests and needs of students rather than on


36 Ibid.
traditional coursework. Although seventy schools were involved in the study, only eight activity schools were used in the evaluation of learning. These eight schools were matched with eight traditional schools by neighborhood, average intelligence, and socioeconomic status of pupils.

Tests of study skills, social attitudes, "work spirit," and individual adjustment were developed J. Wayne Wrightstone. Evaluation procedures included both tests and classroom observations. The results were encouraging for the activity movement. Activity children surpassed control children in growth in critical thinking, initiative, leadership, and other objectives emphasized by activity curricula. Control pupils gained somewhat more in arithmetic, although the differences were small and unreliable.37

THREE DISTINCTIVE PRINCIPLES WHICH CHARACTERIZE THE ACTIVITY MOVEMENT

The primary principle of the activity curriculum is that the interests of children determine the educational program. Interests do not have to be created; they are always present in children to some degree. It is the teacher's responsibility to discover these and to build

educational activities around them. From the activities they build, new activities will continually and spontaneously develop. The activity curriculum is often characterized by "activity leading to further activity."

This principle suggests that traditional subject matter is learned by way of fulfilling the interests of the individual or social group. The interests of the child are determinative of what is learned. It reverses traditional methods, in which educators set out subject matter to be learned, and the child's interest is merely an aid to learning. An activity curriculum recognizes that children acquire knowledge by doing activities. In the course of their activities, they acquire a need for knowledge of subject matter; and as a result of manipulating content and materials in their activities, they learn.38

A second principle which characterizes the activity movement is the belief that common learnings result from the pursuit of common interests. Strains of common backgrounds and common interests surface at certain age levels. If the number of such common interests is sufficiently large, the activity school can provide for common learnings.39 On the other hand, if children lack common interests or choose widely different paths in the pursuit of their interests, then the activity school might not have a common learnings.

38 Smith et. al., p. 272.
39 Ibid., p. 273.
program. The extent of commonness depends upon the extent to which needs and interests are shared by the children.\textsuperscript{40}

A final characteristic which distinguishes the activity school is its disapproval of pre-planned curricula. Since the child's interests provide the starting point for instructional planning, it follows that the curriculum cannot be pre-planned. To predetermine the activities would be to assume that all groups of children will have interests in these activities.

However, preparation by the teacher is endorsed. Furthermore, the teacher is expected to work with individuals and groups to determine interest. The teacher must be a guide and help in the evaluation and selection of interests and activities. He must help to plan and carry out the activities required in the pursuit of these interests. The teacher must also aid the students in assessing what they have accomplished.\textsuperscript{41}

THE IMPACT OF THE ACTIVITY MOVEMENT

The activity movement began to influence the curricula of elementary schools in America. By 1930, several features of typical elementary schools were clearly different

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., p. 273.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., p. 275.
from those of 1915. Individualized learning activities and more informal classes emerged.

However, the high schools of 1930 were still very much the same as those of 1910, although educational needs had changed. There were more young people going to high school during the Great Depression because they could not find employment. The students did not plan to go to college. The high school curriculum of 1930 did not meet the changing needs of these students.

While many educators recognized this problem, they did not want to jeopardize the chance of admission for the college bound by changing the curriculum. The Progressive Education Association addressed the problem of the high school curriculum. A Commission on the Relation of School and College was appointed to try to solve the conflict between educators who sought to reduce the requirements for college preparatory courses, and college officials who feared if requirements were eliminated, students who were unprepared for college would be admitted.

The commission recommended a pilot study. Thirty schools and school systems from every region of the country except the South were included in the study. These included large and small schools, both private and public. The

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43 Ibid., p. 39.
schools were encouraged to develop educational programs that each school believed to be appropriate for the students, without concern for college entrance requirements. The purpose of the study was to determine whether students taught in activity curriculum schools were as successful in college as high school students taught using the traditional subject discipline curriculum.

The initial financial support for the study, which became known as "The Eight-Year Study," was provided by the Carnegie Foundation. The schools of The Eight-Year Study began their pilot efforts in 1933. Assistance in curriculum development and evaluation was provided by the Progressive Education Association.

The report of the Eight-Year Study appeared at the time the United States became involved in World War II. According to Ralph Tyler, the report would have received more attention if the war were not in the forefront of our country's concerns. The results showed that "activity" children surpassed control children in growth of critical thinking skills and in almost all other skills necessary for success in college.

Tyler notes the ways in which the Eight-Year Study impacted secondary education. It demonstrated that a curriculum that could interest students could still prepare them for college. It led to the recognition by colleges that

44 Ibid., p. 41.
many high school graduates who did not meet specific course requirements in high school could still succeed in college. It freed high schools from the dogmatic mandatory programs imposed for college preparation. It led to the invention of the in-service workshop for the assistance of teachers. It brought about the acceptance of educational evaluation as a procedure for appraising the attainment of several main objectives. Finally, it led to the recognition by educators of the value of defining educational objectives in terms of the behavior patterns displayed in students.

Other researchers find the study equally significant. William Schubert says the study "is often regarded as the most important educational research project in the first half of the twentieth century." Neve before had the curricula of a large group of students been studied so thoroughly over a period of years. According to Schubert the study revealed that on a range of outcome measures students who attended progressive, experimental secondary schools were superior or equal to students who attended traditional discipline oriented schools.

THE ACTIVITY MOVEMENT IN SUMMARY

The activity school has its roots in the philosophies of John Dewey, William Heard Kilpatrick, John Childs, Adolph Ferriere and other educators usually regarded as progressives.

The activity school was child-centered. The child's interests and purposes determined the curriculum. Its philosophy was that children learn through activities formulated around their interests. As children engage in activities, subject matter knowledge is assimilated. One activity will lead to another with increased knowledge being the end result.

Teachers work cooperatively with students planning activities. The teachers in the activity school should have a broad, general education; extensive knowledge in one specific field is not necessary. However, teachers in activity schools must have training in child development and activity methods of teaching.

The entire educational program in the activity school is flexible. Periods of time, grade levels, classroom furniture, materials, and field trips are flexible enough to permit the desired activity.

THE DECLINE OF THE ACTIVITY MOVEMENT

Despite the promises and hopes for American education sparked by the activity school, educators in the late 1930's
were dismayed to discover that the schools had still failed to meet the educational needs of millions of young people.46 The chief problem facing youth was unemployment; many were employable only for the most simple kinds of work. Despite attempts, school programs had failed to change with changing vocational requirements.

One of the most important studies on the needs of youth was undertaken in 1938 by the Board of Regents of New York state. The study examined the needs of graduates and dropouts from secondary schools. The study revealed a wide gap between school curricula and the needs of adolescents.47

The findings of the Regents' Inquiry revealed a lack of guidance with regard to curricular choice and a poor relationship between local schools and the business community. The study concluded that the aims of progressive education were not being implemented.48

World War II held educational change in abeyance. After the war, with the studies of the 1930's still in the minds of educators, change began to occur. There was a shift in emphasis from the needs of the individual to the needs of the community.


48 Ibid., p. 310.
the individual as a member of society. Americans wanted students who could survive, function and contribute to the American way of life.

1945-1957: THE LIFE ADJUSTMENT CURRICULUM

The 1940's brought prosperity back to the United States. Workers were in demand; they were needed to support our involvement in World War II. The 1940's was a decade of fear, distrust and enlightenment.53

When World War II ended in 1945, the Cold War with the Soviet Union began. America became a world power no longer isolated and protected by two oceans. Americans' views of their country, their lives, and their children's lives began to change.

According to Newton Edwards:

The postwar social order will be characterized by planning and design; the citizen will be required, as never before to pass judgement on important matters of public and social policy. The schools will face the responsibility of cultivating in youth the knowledge, the insights and the motivators which they will need to resolve important issues they cannot avoid. In no small measure the center of interest in education will need to shift from the individual to society.59

During the 1940's education moved from the activity movement which was child-centered to another progressive movement which was group-centered. The 1940's brought deep

53 Schubert, p. 97.

concern for students who were educated and informed on the principles of a democratic society. The American educational system tried to cultivate in youth an understanding of the workings of our economic and social arrangements to enable them to make wise decisions now and in the future as they function in society.

The Educational Policies Commission developed a model secondary school curriculum based on their perceptions of students' needs. The commission reported ten educational needs of youth:

1. All youth need to develop salable skills. Most youth need supervised work experience as well as education in the skills and knowledge of their occupations.

2. All youth need to develop and maintain good health and physical fitness.

3. All youth need to understand the rights and duties of being a citizen in a democracy.

4. All youth need to understand the importance of family life and the conditions conducive to a successful family life.

5. All youth need to know how to purchase goods and services intelligently.

6. All youth need to understand the methods of science, the influence of science on human life and the main scientific facts concerning the nature of the world and of man.

7. All youth need opportunities to develop an appreciation of the fine arts.

8. All youth need to able to use their leisure time well and to budget it wisely.

9. All youth need to develop respect for other persons.
10. All youth need to grow in their ability to think rationally.60

One outcome of the Educational Policies Commission's report was a conference sponsored in 1945 by the Vocational Education Division of the United States Office of Education. The result of this conference was the development of "life-adjustment education," which was a curriculum designed for high school youth who did not intend to go to college. According to the Commission, functional experiences were needed in the areas of practical arts, home and family living, civic competence, and physical and health education. A supervised program of work experience was also suggested.

Charles H. Prosser, a vocational educator at the conference, proposed the following resolution:

It is the belief of this conference that, with the aid of this report in final form, the vocational school of a community will be able better to prepare 20 percent of the youth of secondary school age for entrance to the field of work with desirable skilled occupations; and that the high school will continue to prepare another 20 percent for entrance to college. We do not believe the remaining 60 percent of our youth of secondary school age will receive the life adjustment training they need and to which they are entitled as American citizens--unless and until the administrators of public education leaders formulate a similar program for this group.

We therefore request the U.S. Commissioner for Vocational Education to call at some early date a conference or a series of regional conferences between an equal number of representatives of general and vocational education--to consider this problem and to take initial steps as may be found advisable for its

The "Prosser Resolution," as it was labeled, was adopted unanimously by an enthusiastic conference.

Regional conferences were convened throughout the country to consider the significance of "Prosser's Resolution" and ways to implement it. Prosser addressed each of the regional conferences. These conferences were attended by people eager to improve American education. Their goal was to design a plan which would aid in achieving for every youth an education truly adjusted to life.

The life-adjustment movement was an attempt of postwar educators to close the gap between the secondary school curriculum and the needs of youth. Yet in the early post-war period, approximately one out of every two students who entered the ninth grade failed to graduate four years later. According to Tanner and Tanner the problem was not the goals of the "life-adjustment" movement, but its name. "Adjustment" had connotations of passivity rather than active self-fulfillment. There was a calling within the movement


63 Tanner and Tanner, p. 339.

64 Ibid., p. 339.
for a curriculum program which would more actively respond to the needs and problems of students.

Florence Stratemeyer proposed studies of the transfer of learning where school learning was based on problems faced by students outside of school. Her curriculum was similar to the life-adjustment curriculum but its rhetoric did not arouse reaction from anti-"adjustment" groups. The Association for Childhood Education favored Stratemeyer's persistent-life situation curriculum for its action-oriented dimension of curriculum construction.\(^6^5\)

Stratemeyer and her associates stressed that a good curriculum required that teachers know the difference between superficial interests of students and interests that will be of importance to students in life both now and in the future.\(^6^6\) No pre-planned, structured curriculum was devised for Stratemeyer's persistent-life situation movement, for it was believed that the intrinsic motivation of students caused by their concerns would result in effective learning.\(^6^7\)

Stratemeyer pointed out that individual and group situations of daily living called for three kinds of growth: (1) in individual capacities, (2) in social participation, (3) in personal development.


\(^{67}\) Tanner and Tanner, p. 341.
and (3) in ability to deal with the environment. Stratemeyer and associates contended that these three divisions provided a basis for grouping the persistent-life situations with which the learner is dealing.

Arthur Foshay highlighted the essence of the persistent-life situations curriculum:

The curriculum based on persistent-life situations takes into account the sequential nature of experience emphasized by the emerging curriculum, the needs of the child as emphasized in the needs curriculum, the problem-solving activity of the experience curriculum and the necessity for child-like subject matter stressed in earlier interpretations of the curriculum.\(^\text{68}\)

In the persistent-life situation curriculum, the content and organization of learning experiences were determined by the experiences of learners as they dealt with everyday concerns and the persistent-life situations which were part of them. These situations of everyday living took the place of "subjects" and the varied other ways of focusing the curriculum.\(^\text{69}\)

The major areas within which persistent-life situations are found are health, intellectual power, moral choices, aesthetic expression and appreciation, person-to-person relationships, group membership, intergroup relationships, natural phenomena, technological resources, and (3) in ability to deal with the environment. Stratemeyer and associates contended that these three divisions provided a basis for grouping the persistent-life situations with which the learner is dealing.

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and economic-social-political structures. Within each of these areas, persistent-life situations can be identified. For example, in the area of "intellectual power," Stratemeyer identifies life situations such as making oral presentations, expressing ideas in written form, using graphic forms to express ideas, using reference materials, understanding symbols and relationships, budgeting time and energy, and solving recurrent practical problems. Students will encounter situations demanding these skills throughout their lives. Stratemeyer's design did not employ the use of traditional subject areas as the basis for curriculum. The persistent-life situation curriculum used as a basis the perceived social, cultural and personal needs of the student.

The federal government's U.S. Office of Education fully supported the campaign for all forms of life-adjustment education. In 1947, the Commissioner of Education developed a National Commission on Life-Adjustment Education for Youth. Representatives from such organizations as the NEA, American Association of School Administrations, the NASSP, American Vocational Association, and the National Council of State School Officers joined Commissioner John W. Studebaker in fostering life-adjustment education. The Commission sponsored conferences, publications and helped develop a state commission on life-adjustment education. A second national commission was appointed in 1950, which continued.

70 Ibid., pp. 155-65.
the promotion of this concept, until its term ended in 1954.71

ANALYSIS OF THE LIFE-ADJUSTMENT MOVEMENT

The impact of the life-adjustment and persistent-life adjustment movements on schools during the late 1940's and early 1950's is somewhat difficult to ascertain. According to Ravitch,72 the life-adjustment curriculum was at times indistinguishable in everything but name from other versions of progressive education, such as core curriculum programs, activity programs and common learning courses. However, education during this period stressed functional teaching using everyday situations as the medium for instruction. The purpose of education during the late 1940's and early 1950's was to change students' attitudes and behavior to conform to social norms. The objective of the school was to produce a student who was well adjusted to live in society and function as an educated citizen.

THE DECLINE OF THE LIFE-ADJUSTMENT MOVEMENT

Robert Hutchins said, "No educational system can escape from the political community in which it operates."73

71 Ravitch, p. 66.
72 Ibid., p. 57.
Two major political happenings occurred during the mid 1950's: McCarthyism and the Russian launch of Sputnik. America's desire to compete against communism, and our fear of lagging behind, were motivating forces behind a "back to basics" movement which helped cause the death of progressivism, including the life-adjustment trend.

As Lawrence Cremin stated: "The surprising thing about the progressive response to the assault of the fifties is not that the movement collapsed but that it collapsed so readily." 74

1957-1976: BACK TO BASICS--THE MOVE TOWARD CURRICULUM PROJECTS

Arthur Bestor's interview with U.S. News and World Report in 1956 gave Americans the view that all was not well with American education. Bestor felt that our schools had lost their sense of purpose. Schools in the 1940's and 1950's were undertaking a large number of activities that weren't essential to education at all. The result was the neglect of basic subjects necessary for educated Americans. 75

Bestor believed that basic subjects were not being taught effectively: "It's not a question of omitting them


entirely. It is a matter of treating them too casually all the way through school." Bestor was concerned that the Soviet Union was spending forty per cent of educational time on the sciences and mathematics, while in the United States, more than half of the high schools were offering no physics and roughly a quarter offered neither physics nor chemistry.76

Bestor believed the deterioration in American schools had begun twenty-five or thirty years before 1956. He blamed the ruin of America's schools on fallacious ideas. He disapproved of the idea of professional educators trying to train students for jobs, rather than educating them academically. The life-adjustment curriculum, according to Bestor, was preparing students for how to act on dates rather than preparing them for the academic challenges of the future.77

Bestor preached for a return to the fundamentals. He believed that English, foreign languages, science, mathematics and history were the basics needed by every student. These fundamentals would help the child think. The fundamental subjects would help students as citizens make intelligent decisions.

Bestor heartily favored "selective education"—taking the gifted students and enabling them to go forward as

76 Ibid., p. 68.
77 Ibid., p. 70.
rapidly as possible. He said:

We cannot uphold our way of life by committing intellectual suicide. We have got to give our best students the toughest mental training they can take... Intellectual ability can be detected early. Some countries rely on detecting it by the age of eleven or twelve. I think we should keep the door open longer than this. But, as soon as we know that a given child does have ability, we should not allow him to waste his time. 73

Bestor condemned some major aspects of progressive education: "When progressives began to think that interesting the pupil was the main thing, rather than how substantial might be the knowledge he acquired, then the movement began to be regressive rather than progressive." 79

Bestor believed progressive education was on the right track by making the subject matter more alive to students, but progressive education failed to produce well educated American youth. In reality, the children of 1950 were not better prepared academically. Bestor felt that the student who completed high school in 1900 would have knowledge of the fundamental subjects and would have met well recognized standards:

He wasn't allowed to waste his time on trivialities. Today a student is much less likely to keep to the fundamentals if he decides he wants to fool around with easy courses. And, of course, he may live in a town where the high school has gone all-out for 'life-adjustment' education and doesn't offer enough of the basic work." 30

73 Ibid., p. 71.
79 Ibid., p. 72.
30 Ibid., p. 74.
Bestor believed that knowledge of academic fundamentals fostered creative thinking: "One can search history and biography in vain for evidence that men or women have ever accomplished anything original, creative, or significant by virtue of narrowly conceived vocational training or of educational programs aimed at 'life-adjustment'."81

Bestor's criticism of life-adjustment and other forms of progressive education were refuted by many scholars including Harold Hand and Lawrence Metcalf of the University of Illinois. However strong their arguments against Bestor, their voices could not be heard over the impact of Bestor's article in the U.S. News and World Report. Bestor had been successful in convincing Americans of the need for fundamental subjects in education.

While scholars were debating the pros and cons of progressive education versus academic fundamentals, international politics helped to decide the outcome: the Soviet Union launched Sputnik on October 4, 1957. American fears of communism and its power grew. Our democratic nation was lagging far behind the Soviets in science and technology. The reason for the communist innovation in technology, according to critics of American schools, was better educated Soviet youth.

A little more than a year after the launching of Sputnik, U.S. News and World Report interviewed Bestor again. Bestor stated that the federal support of vocational education is evidence of the "vocationalism and anti-intellectualism" found in our public schools. Bestor believed the lack of academics in our schools would leave America in danger of losing the space race.82 Admiral H.G. Rickover was also critical of American education. He maintained that the European system of dual schooling should be a model that America should use, and that vocational training should be provided in schools separate from academic schools.83 Rickover criticized life-adjustment education because he believed that it was concerned with giving something in education to everyone without regard to academic studies. Educators were sacrificing the gifted students to life-adjustment education, according to Rickover.

On November 14, 1957 in Oklahoma City, President Eisenhower said:

I wish that every school board and every PTA would this week and this year make one single project their special order of business: to scrutinize your school's curriculum and standards to see whether they meet the stern demands of the era we are entering ... As you do remember that when a Russian graduates from high school, he has had five years of physics, four years of chemistry, one year of astronomy, five years of biology, ten years of mathematics through trigonometry, and five

years of a foreign language.\textsuperscript{84} President Eisenhower helped to direct the nation's attention to the deficiencies within the American school system. American education was deemed too easy, especially in those areas that would develop scientists and mathematicians.

According to Robert Hutchins, "American education is characterized by waste of money, waste of time and waste of talent. Since we do not take education seriously, we do not try to figure out what it is. We confuse it with schooling and, conclude that if we have everybody in school our responsibility is discharged and our task accomplished."\textsuperscript{85}

In the same article, Hutchins discussed the superiority of Russian education over American education. He encouraged spending more money on education. Hutchins viewed education as a national concern. He mentioned that local and state supervision of educational policy should yield rational direction.\textsuperscript{86}

The United States Congress passed the National Defense Education Act. It was based upon two assumptions: first, national security required the fullest development of the mental resources and technical skills of America's young


\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p. 36.
men and women; and secondly, that the national interest required that the federal government give assistance to education for programs which were important to our country's defense.87

The NDEA provided federal assistance to programs designed to improve instruction in mathematics, science and foreign language. The NDEA also provided grants on a matching basis to the states, to improve guidance and counseling in secondary schools. The NDEA provided specific assistance to critical areas of the school's curriculum which were deemed to be crucial to our nation's defense.

During the late 1950's the federal government was not alone in putting dollars into American schools—major foundations began to focus their attention on elementary and secondary education. In 1956, the Carnegie Corporation agreed to support a series of studies of public education by James Conant, former president of Harvard University and Ambassador to West Germany.

Conant's reports attracted great attention and exerted considerable influence on educational policy and practice. He called for the pursuit of academic excellence through ability grouping, special counseling, and testing programs to discover and develop the talents of academically

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gifted youth. He also called for advanced placement programs for the academically talented, and the institution of an academic inventory to ensure that academically talented youth pursue a maximum quota of demanding academic and advanced-placement courses.  

Conant's curriculum prescription for academically talented students was a minimum of four years of mathematics, four years of one modern foreign language, three years of science, four years of English, and three years of social studies. Conant recommended that a special guidance officer be assigned to highly gifted pupils who should receive instruction in a special class, and also pursue advanced-placement studies through which they might be able to attain sophomore standing upon entrance to college.

Conant believed foreign language study was necessary for the nation's battle in the Cold War:

The nation badly needs young people who can quickly master a foreign language for missions overseas, both official and private, it is evident to all who read the daily news ... the grim competition with the Soviet Union in newly developing countries turns quite as much on an adequate supply of competent linguistics as our ability to send competent engineers and businessmen to these nations.  

During the same period, the Ford Foundation addressed the "crisis in the schools." They proposed two major programs: (1) a "Comprehensive School Improvement Program"

89 Ibid., p. 72.
which funded leading communities to serve as model districts for educational reform, and (2) a "Great Cities-Gray Areas Program" to help big-city schools create compensatory and remedial programs for their increasing numbers of low-income pupils. The Ford Foundation's Comprehensive School Improvement Program encouraged the implementation of innovative practices in curriculum, staffing, technology and facilities, such as the use of team teaching non-professional personnel, flexible scheduling, programmed instruction, federally sponsored science curricula, language laboratories, open space classrooms, and school-university cooperation.

The National Science Foundation's (NSF) role in reforming the secondary school curriculum increased dramatically. NSF was established by Congress in 1950 to promote basic research and education in the sciences. NSF initially had little to do with pre-college programs. In 1956, responding to governmental concern about manpower shortages in scientific and technical fields, NSF funded the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Physical Science Study Committee's revision of the secondary school physics curriculum. As a result of Sputnik, NSF expanded its high school curriculum projects to include mathematics, biology, chemistry, and social science. From these efforts came innovative curricula which included "the new math," new social studies, and revisions in the natural sciences.90

90 Ravitch, p. 232.
The National Science Foundation eventually allocated hundreds of millions of dollars for curriculum reform at the elementary and secondary levels. According to mathematician Morris Kline, the mission-oriented scholars from the universities were busily engaged in applied research during this period. The federal government turned to the universities to enlist scholars for national curriculum reform programs to be directed at the lower levels of schooling. Therefore scholars who were engaged in the more remote and puristic pursuits were suddenly able to seize control of the curriculum reforms.  

University scholars who were not involved with research projects for our nation's defense and who had been bypassed over the years in connection with federally supported research, suddenly found huge grants now available for curriculum reform projects through the National Science Foundation. The result of these grants was that the curriculum reforms for the late 1950's and early 1960's were dominated by the puristic structure of a discipline doctrine. For the first time in the modern age, American scholars in our most prestigious universities and institutions would convert knowledge into pedagogy. The youth of America would learn from the great minds of our


92 Tanner and Tanner, p. 403.
time.

In 1958, a conference composed predominantly of scientists, mathematicians and psychologists was convened at Woods Hole on Cape Cod in Massachusetts by the National Academy of Science. Providing financial support and planning assistance for the conference were such agencies as the National Science Foundation, the Air Force, The Rand Corporation, the U.S. Office of Education, the American Association for Advancement of Science, and the Carnegie Corporation. The conference was designed to explore the possibilities for improving curricula in the field of science in our elementary and secondary schools.

The results of the Woods Hole Conference were reported in a text by Jerome Bruner entitled The Process of Education. Bruner's text was used to aid in curriculum reform in our elementary and secondary schools during the next decade.93

Bruner's philosophy was that a child could learn almost anything if properly taught. Bruner placed much emphasis on the structure of the disciplines. He believed that any discipline could be taught if broken down to the intellectual level of the student. Over ten years later Bruner reexamined his studies. In a speech delivered at the annual conference of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in 1971, he discussed the educational

93 Tanner and Tanner, p. 407.
reform climate of the late 1950's:

Nineteen fifty-nine was a time of great concern over the intellectual aimlessness of our schools. Great studies had been made in many fields of knowledge and these advances were not being reflected in what was taught in our schools. A huge gap had grown between what might be called the head and the tail of the academic procession. There was great fear, particularly, that we were not producing enough scientists and engineers.94

Private foundations were the chief sources of encouragement and financial support of educational reforms in the 1950's. Large sums of money were provided by the Ford Foundation to support innovative programs for schools. Larger, older foundations, such as the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Rockefeller Foundation and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, also gave money to effect educational reform. By 1959, the National Science Foundation was providing funds to support reforms in science education in an amount that nearly equalled the total amount of money provided annually by private foundations.95

Curriculum building was to be the responsibility of university scholar specialists working on curricula in their respective disciplines. The discipline-oriented university scholars developed a rationale for modeling curriculum reform in our schools along the more abstract lines of university scholarship in which knowledge is pursued and treated in its


95 Tyler, p. 48.
pure form.  

Philip Phenix advocated a curriculum based upon the structure-of-a-discipline approach: "All curriculum content should be drawn from the discipline, or, to put it another way, only knowledge contained in the disciplines is appropriate . . . the disciplines reveal knowledge in teachable forms . . . non-disciplined knowledge is unsuitable for teaching and learning."  

Joseph J. Schwab believed that we need to take the structures of the disciplines into account and make them integral to the curriculum, or a failure of learning will result.  

Educators want to teach what is true but . . . truth is a complicated matter. The conceptual structure of a discipline determines what we shall seek the truth about and in what terms that truth shall be couched. The syntactical structure of a discipline is concerned with the operations that distinguish the true, the verified, and the warranted in that discipline from the unverified and unwarranted. The conceptual and the syntactical are different disciplines. The significance for education of these diverse structures lies precisely in the extent to which we want to teach what is true and have it understood.  

The discipline doctrine of Schwab, Phenix and other scholars of this era rejects the traditional conception of

96 Tanner and Tanner, p. 409.  
99 Ibid., p. 205.
knowledge as fixed or permanent. The discipline doctrine regards knowledge as the product of a process known as disciplined inquiry; it confines such inquiry to the boundaries of the established disciplines.\textsuperscript{100}

As university scholars wrote curricula, a strong need arose by educators on how to teach the complicated disciplines.

In the era of Sputnik, competition with Russian education opened the doors to a new technology in American education: programmed instruction. Sidney Pressey at Ohio State University first gave America programmed instruction in the 1930's. However B.J. Skinner at Harvard, with his work on operant conditioning, gave scholars a way to teach their complex disciplines to the youth of America in small bits and pieces, until students could complete a total complex behavior correctly.

The United States Department of Defense supported courses of programmed instruction for use in the training of military personnel. Carnegie Corporation encouraged the adoption of programmed materials in public schools and colleges, and subsidized the development of courses and their demonstration.\textsuperscript{101}

The tools of programmed instruction included workbooks, programmed textbooks, machines and computers. The

\textsuperscript{100} Tanner and Tanner, p. 13.

\textsuperscript{101} Tyler, p. 53.
technique was to expose one learning exercise at a time, and to present the next exercise only after the student made an appropriate answer.

According to Ralph Tyler, programmed instruction was encouraged because many believed that it could individualize instruction, thereby enabling students to proceed at their own rate of growth. Programmed instruction could also insure mastery of even the most complex discipline by breaking down a complex subject into smaller concepts that could be easily learned. Programmed instruction could either eliminate the need for a qualified teacher or it could increase the number of students a qualified teacher could teach at one time.

The most significant effect of programmed learning, according to Harry Broudy, was that machines could aid in efficient learning. Other advantages were independent and individualized learning. Learning programs which utilize small steps of progress from level to level tend to negate individual differences in IQ. Broudy believed that this meant that bright students could learn despite poor teaching, and mediocre students could keep up with the subject matter being taught.

The negative effect of programmed learning turned out

102 Tyler, p. 53.

to be so great that it is not used to any extent today. The	negative result was the boredom that children and youth.
experienced from continuous use of programmed materials.104

For some time, programmers thought that an overt
response, such as filling in a blank or pressing a key, was
"active" and therefore important for learning. However,
studies indicated that programs allowing only a covert
response, or providing no opportunity for a response at all,
were just as effective.105

While some scholars investigated the possible use of
programmed instruction, other educators were developing
another approach. Vast quantities of material presented to
students by scholars of the disciplines was taught by
educators using what became known as curriculum projects.

CURRICULUM PROJECTS

The first curriculum project was developed by the
Physical Science Study Committee under the leadership of
Jerrold Zacharias. The curriculum project entered the
American school system as a complete one-year physics course
in 1960.

The physics curriculum project was directed at
familiarizing the student with two central notions of modern

104 Tyler, p. 53.

105 John Feldhusen, "Taps for Teaching Machines," Phi
physics: the wave–particle duality theory and the modern concept of the atom. Since the project was to teach these two topics of physics in detail, much that had been conventionally taught as physics was to be ignored or skipped.106

Zacharias considered the teacher's purpose in curriculum projects to be, "to see that what the student learns is appropriate." He believed that "through what the student has learned, he will be able to grasp the significance of the discipline as a whole."107

Zacharias and the committee at Massachusetts Institute of Technology who worked on the physics curriculum project believed that the function of instruction was to teach a discipline indirectly. Indirect teaching refers to the teaching of styles and methods of thought, as opposed to teaching a myriad of facts. This idea spread rapidly through the several science curriculum projects supported by the National Science Foundation after 1955. This same basic idea also appeared in the new mathematics programs then under development. It appeared in chemistry and biology almost at once.108


107 Ibid., p. 72.

More than one hundred curriculum projects were identified by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. In 1971, Eliot Eisner noted that over one hundred million dollars had been used in curriculum development in science and mathematics and over fifty projects in social studies were then listed, with one of them (Man: A Course of Study) having an annual budget of about three million dollars.

Each project was initially focused on one subject field and was usually a year long course. Broader projects developed later. Each was funded by the federal government and/or an educational foundation and sometimes included contributions from a university of school district.

The national curriculum project method of curriculum development is illustrated in Figure 1.

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112 Ibid.
The National Curriculum Project Method of Curriculum Planning

STEP TO TOWARD NEW CURRICULUM PROJECTS

I. Scholars in the discipline define

II. These scholars + educational practitioners and producers prepare

III. Classroom teachers and project consultants try out and refine materials to aid

IV. School districts, educational organizations, and/or project staff may continue evaluating the program and the materials to maintain

The Subject Field
1. Its structure
2. Its form and sequence of presentation

Tentative Teaching-Learning Materials
1. Textbooks, laboratory guides
2. Audiovisual aids
3. Materials for teacher's study
4. Other learning aids.

Implementation Processes
1. Inservice education of teachers
2. Large scale production of teaching-learning materials
3. Evaluation programs

Continuing Revision
1. Of the subject field
2. Of teaching-learning materials
3. On implementation processes

*(Back to steps I, II, III)
Each new curriculum package was tested, retested and revised. Thousands of teachers attended summer sessions and in-service programs to learn how to use the new materials and methods.113

The curriculum project leaders had hoped to replace teacher "telling" and student retelling with curriculum packages that used "discovery," "inquiry," and "inductive reasoning" as methods of learning. Through the use of carefully designed exercises or experiments, it was hoped students would learn and retain more because they "figured out" the basic principles of a discipline. The leaders of curriculum projects wanted to end the traditional reliance on a single textbook by having school systems use a prepackaged multimedia total program. The packages would include films, hands-on activities and readings. There was an emphasis on the understanding of a few central concepts in a discipline rather than trying to learn an entire field. Where past curricula stressed the informational, descriptive and applied aspects of a subject (the discipline's "product"), the new curricula would stress the structure of the discipline and how a scientist, mathematician or social scientist thinks (the discipline's "processes"); thus the student would "do" a discipline.114


114 Ravitch, P. 232.
At first the curriculum projects were widely accepted. They were devised and revised in the early 1960's. The climate change was unusually receptive. There was a feeling of national spirit and dynamism during the Kennedy administration. For the first time, the educational change was jointly sponsored by federal agencies, university scholars, private foundations, big-city school school system and educators in general. In all educational arenas "innovation" was the catchword.¹¹⁵

Ultimately, curriculum projects proved to be not without problems. Controversy over one particular project—"A Course of Study" (MACOS)—brought the entire National Science Foundation (NSF) Curriculum Development effort under congressional scrutiny in 1976. Its developers hoped that children would be encouraged to ask questions such as, "What is human about human beings? How did they get that way? How can they be made more human?" The course touched on subjects such as evolution, infanticide, wife-sharing, senilicide and communal living. As the course began to be distributed across the country, it was attacked by conservative groups who objected to its subject matter and its cultural relativism. A House of Representatives subcommittee held hearings on MACOS, the NSF conducted an internal review, and the General Accounting Office investigated the financial

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 233.
relationship between the NSF and the MACOS developers.116

Enthusiasm for curriculum projects had begun to wane much earlier, however. By the late 1960's, the expected educational revolution in the schools had not occurred. Political, social, and economic unrest at home, and international politics in Vietnam, caused change once more in the American schools.

THE DECLINE OF CURRICULUM PROJECTS

Between 1963 and 1965, the nation sustained a series of blows. There was violence against blacks and civil rights workers in the South; President Kennedy was assassinated; the social plight of the poor emerged; and America began military involvement in Vietnam117

The issue of desegregation moved to the forefront of the country's educational concerns. To desegregate our nation's schools, judicial action went hand in hand with congressional legislation and civil right enforcement. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination in education. It provided for federal enforcement through the courts. There was a provision that prohibited discrimination in programs that were federally funded; school districts and educational institutions that discriminated would lose


117 Ravitch, p. 233.
federal funds.

The cry for the pursuit of excellence was silenced by concern for the needs of the disadvantaged. As racial discrimination became one of the nation's most pressing problems, concern over Russian superiority began to fade into the background.

Government agencies and foundations redirected their agendas to search for ways to meet the needs of the poor and minority children, and scores of compensatory programs were created throughout the country.118


Remedial and compensatory programs initiated by local, state and federal departments of education and new federal agencies were born in crisis. Programs were tried, hastily evaluated, and declared a failure. In some cities, civil rights groups conducted demonstrations to demand integration and protest inferior schooling. Critics charged that the curriculum, the professionals, the tests, the bureaucrats organization, and the methods of the conventional school were inherently biased against blacks.119

In 1965 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was passed by Congress to aid in the education of poor

118 Ibid., p. 234.

119 Ibid., p. 234.
children. Federal funds were allocated to schools on the basis of the number of poor children in school. The Act authorized grants for elementary and secondary school programs for children of low-income families. It provided funds for library resources, textbooks and other instructional materials for school children. It fostered educational research and research training.

The Act was amended in 1967 to included aid to education the handicapped. It also gave technical assistance in educational to rural areas; funds for dropout prevention projects, and support for bilingual education programs.120

The enactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 1965, under President Johnson's administration, began a new era of federal aid to education. Unlike previous aid programs, the ESEA provided general aid to elementary and secondary schools. As part of the War on Poverty, Johnson wanted to help the disadvantaged enter the mainstream of society.121

The ESEA funds followed the "child benefit" theory. Federal aid was available to educationally disadvantaged children in both public and parochial schools. The aid was for the child's benefit and not the school's.

Research on the problems of educating the poor and

121 Gutek, p. 94.
minorities had an unusual urgency about it, since it was widely perceived that the schools and cities were in crisis. It was asserted that the public schools were failing to assimilate the tide of black immigrants as they had previously assimilated millions of illiterate European immigrants.122

During the 1960's, a vast amount of literature was produced which sought to account for the low achievement of poor and minority children in urban schools.

In June 1964, thirty-one social scientists met at the University of Chicago, with the support of the U.S. Office of Education, to review what was known about cultural deprivation and education and to recommend specific solutions. The scientists were aware that Congress was planning to invest large sums of money into an anti-poverty program. The group, which included Benjamin Bloom, Allison Davis, and Robert Hies, recommended several projects to reverse the cultural deprivation of the poor.

First, it recommended that the school and community should provide each child breakfast and lunch, appropriate medical care and necessary clothing, if the parents were unable.

Second, it suggested that nursery schools and kindergartens be provided for culturally deprived children. These programs should simulate a learning environment found

122 Ravitch, p. 150.
in the most favorable of homes.

Third, the group maintained that each child should have an individual prescription for learning during the first three years of elementary school, which would enable him to "master" the fundamental skills in language, reading, and arithmetic, as well as develop general skills in learning itself. The objective, the scientists stressed, "is to start with the child where he is and to proceed by a carefully developed and sequential program to being him up to a level where he can learn as well as other children and eventually under the same conditions as other children." 123

Deeper doubts began to develop in education in the closing years of the 1960's. Did revision of curriculum suffice to change the inequities of our educational system, or was a more fundamental restructuring of the entire educational system in order? The doubts were largely due to the changing culture and technology the times. The racial unrest, the war on poverty, and the war in Vietnam led many to doubt American society. "How could a society be so enormously wealthy, yet so enormously and callously destructive, while professing idealism? How can we wage a war in the name of a generous way of life, while our own way of life included urban ghettos, a culture of poverty, racism 123 Benjamin Bloom, et al., Compensatory Education for Cultural Deprivation (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965) pp. 25-26.
By 1970 the goal of educational reform was to change schools according to the needs of society, to change them as institutions. In this climate of reform, Joseph Featherstone wrote about the British infant schools and created a new trend in American education. Featherstone reported, "a profound and sweeping revolution in English primary education, involving new ways of thinking about how young children learn, classroom organization, the curriculum and the role of the teacher." Classrooms were filled with children busily and happily learning. Featherstone's articles publicized the findings of Britain's Plowden Commission which endorsed the activity-centered infant school. Within a year after Featherstone's articles appeared, the magazine sold one hundred thousand offprints, and the British model became the talk of American education.

Featherstone described a typical day at the Westfield


127 Ravitch, p. 239.
Infant School in Leicestershire County. Early in the day, before the teachers arrive, children between ages five to seven are reading, writing, painting, playing music and tending to pets. Children work and play individually or in small groups, rarely in an entire class. The classroom is noisy because the children talk freely. They move about among the classroom, hallway and playground. There are no assigned desks; rather, the children move freely from well-equipped tables and activity centers for art, number work, sand and water play, quiet reading, and a play corner with dolls and furniture. The routine of the day is left completely up to the teacher, and the teacher, in turn, leaves options open to the children.

The children's writing is profuse and fluent, and older children teach younger ones how to read. The teacher who oversees the activity of the children sometimes sits at the desk where the children can go for consultations, or the teacher will move around the room advising, listening or asking questions. It is believed that a rich environment will enable children to learn a great deal by themselves, and that most often their own choices reflect their own needs.128

Diane Ravitch summarized the appeal of the "open education" approach described by Featherstone:

For American educators who had been brought up on the progressive creed of Dewey, Kilpatrick and

Rugg, the British "integrated day" sounded a familiar chord which had been shouted down by the attacks of academic critics and the nation's anxiety during the post Sputnik era. Young teachers who abhorred the authoritarianism of the traditional school saw in the British concept the possibility of infusing the classroom with a humane and democratic spirit. Part of its instant mass appeal was the fact that it offered so much to so many different audiences.129

Many contemporary proponents of the open classroom or open education rejected the traditional discipline centered curricula and looked to the activity approach of open education. Herbert Kohl viewed the open classroom as a setting which would enable students to make decision and pursue their interests. According to Kohl, the activities that work best for the educator are the unplanned ones, those which arise spontaneously because of a student's suggestion or a sudden perception.130 Kohl goes on to state that the open classroom is in a constant state of flux and takes its direction from whatever happens to lure the attention of students and the teachers at a specific moment. "it is hard to distinguish between apparent chaos and creative disorder."131

Craig Wilson referred to open education as "open access curriculum." His perceptions of open education were similar to those of Featherstone and Kohl. Wilson believed

129 Ravitch, p. 241.


131 Ibid., p. 39.
that with the open access curriculum, class distinctions, which were often inadvertently reinforced by traditional practices, would be minimized. There would be a place for everyone; all students would find success regardless of past failures or negative environmental influences.

Wilson also believed that learning would tend to be more reflective, more cooperative and more scholarly. There would be less need for hasty feedback for purposes of gaining teacher approval. Furthermore, standards of excellence would be higher because the ultimate responsibility for learning would rest with the learner. The pessimism expressed by alienated and frustrated students would be dissipated by an environment in which the student controls his own personal goals. Usually, in education, the teacher receives whatever he or she expects of the student: If we expect little, the student rarely disappoint us; if we expect much, they are equally responsive.132

John Holt believed that it was the task of the teacher in open education to make the pupil feel that whatever interested him was acceptable. According to Holt, curriculum planning is a kind of adult intervention: "the more educators intervene in children's lives, however intelligently, kindly, or imaginatively, the less time we leave them to find and develop their own ways to meet their

true needs. The more we try to teach them, the less they can teach us."133

As partners, children and teacher build and extend the needs and interests that arise out of their ongoing experiences in school. Goals for learning are defined and experiences selected. Room is made for children to work on their own and in small groups as well as to function within the total group. The concerns and problems for exploration are kept open to admit new interests. This approach is child-centered with guidance from teachers.134

According to Alexander Frazier, the question of the teacher's role in maintaining order in the classroom has not been altogether resolved. The British Primary School placed heavy stress on the acceptance by teachers of responsibility for close and continuous assessment of progress. Progressive education in Great Britain has learned how to prepare teachers to teach informally in an open educational environment. Teachers carry about in their own heads all that is needed to impost order in their classroom.135

However, the American teacher has not had the benefit of the guidance that comes from textbooks and curriculum


135 Ibid., p. 187.
guides in the area of maintaining order in an open classroom. Teaching informally in America will require more formal training. British teachers had curriculum guides, such as the Heifield mathematics materials, to help them. Teachers-to-be were trained in informal open education. Much attention in Britain was spent on pre-service and in-service education for teachers.136

Schools in Britain were small. Teachers in open education schools probably knew their pupils from the community. Head masters or mistresses worked directly with teachers in assessing what children knew and helped shape experiences for them.137

The American open education schools operated in varied situations, sharing two main characteristics: freedom of educational choice for the students and humanity in education. They were noted for the informal atmosphere and flexibility which characterized each and every aspect of the school. Characteristics of the open education trend in American schools are outlined in Figure 2.

136 Ibid., p. 138.
137 Ibid., p. 183.
Figure 2

Characteristics of Open Education

The Schools

- Walls in the school removed
- Learning areas equal in floor space to several classrooms
- Expansion out-of-doors; field trips
- Use of public facilities as study space
- Community-centered study projects
- Some space may be structured as interest or work centers
- Larger units may be called learning communities, schools within schools, subschools
- Grouping may be inter-age, vertical, family-type
- Children may remain with same teacher or teachers for several years
- No bells; few fixed time divisions
- Work going on in many aspects of study at same time
- Individual pupils planning own use of time within some limits
- Relatively few occasions for work in large groups--mostly small group and individual or independent study
- Many resources of all kinds--may have media center easily accessible.
- Live animals; garden; pond
- "Junk" or "nonstructured stuff"
- Few textbooks in sets--more trade and reference works in or close to wherever study takes place.

The Faculty

- May plan and teach together
- May be assigned to large group of children as a staff rather than to 25 or 30 children
- Paid and volunteer lay workers included in faculty

The Process of Learning

- Much emphasis on learning rather than on teaching
- Teacher as guide and helper
- Planning done by children
- Emphasis on learning by doing; centered on activities
- Stress on satisfaction and sense of growth in personal competence
- Many options and choices for children
- Use of unexpected incident to lead into group undertakings
- Much attention to interest, sense of need, current concerns
- Emphasis on large or global goals
Figure 2 (con't)

- Structure for learning exists chiefly in heads of teachers, not on paper
- Free and easy
- Children treated as partners
- Movement from one place to another informally
- Noise and messiness seen as likely products of meaningful activity
- Friendly and good humored

Source: Frazier, pp. 192-93.
The open education movements in America received nationwide publicity through the Shady Hill School, the Education Development Center, an article in the Saturday Review, and a best-selling book.

The Shady Hill School was a private progressive school founded in 1915 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Education Development Center (EDC) in Newton, Massachusetts was a major, federally funded regional laboratory for the improvement of education. As ideas and communication between the schools passed back and forth, a link was forged between the progressive open education school and the post-Sputnik curriculum project institution.

Through the Education Development Center, Shady Hill was selected to use a new elementary science curriculum developed by the National Science Foundation. The science units were intended to be used by individual students in no special order, and to encourage discovery.

The open education movement was supported by enthusiastic advocates who believed that open education could solve many of America's problems. In May 1970, Beatrice and Ronald Gross wrote an article expounding on the virtues of open education. They stressed that open education could be used for ages five through twelve, not just five through seven. The Grosses stated that Piaget, "proved that it is a waste of time to tell a child things that a child cannot experience through his senses...Piaget is critical of classes
where the teacher is the dominant figure...and where large group instruction is the rule." The Grosses wrote that when the children are in the suppressed environment of a traditional classrooms where they are not stimulated, their minds may be damaged or actually atrophy.138

A few months later, Charles Silberman published *Crisis in the Classroom*. He wrote that the nation's institutions, its schools, churches, newspapers, magazines and television had all failed to meet the needs of society. He believed that what was needed was a transformation of the school system.

Silberman viewed our schools as grim, joyless, oppressive places. He saw them as petty and intellectually sterile, preoccupied with order and control. His antidote for the crisis in our schools was the "new English primary schools," that is, open education.139

By 1971, Joseph Featherstone was concerned about open education becoming a fad rather than an innovation in education: "From today's perspective, which is no doubt morbid and too disheartened, it seems that our successive waves of educational reform have been, at best, intellectual and ideological justification for institutions whose actual


workings never changed all that much."140

The 1975 Gallup poll on "Public Attitudes Toward Education," stated that Americans surveyed felt the number one problem in American schools was lack of discipline. When asked where respondents to the poll would like to send their children to school, the option chosen was a special public school that had strict dress code.141

The number of articles about open education in professional journals peaked between 1972 and 1974, then quickly declined. By 1974 there was a demand once again that schools go "back to the basics." In many school districts the "back to the basics" movement blamed open education for lowering academic standards and for lack of discipline in schools. By 1975, when the College Entrance Examination Board announced that scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test had fallen continuously for the last ten years, open education and similar programs were faulted.142

Open education schools were quickly losing popularity, as by 1976 the movement's strength, energy and hopes for reform had dissipated, as the American public looked to the "back to basic" movement once again as their new hope for curing America's educational and social problems.

140 Featherstone, p. 13.


142 Ravitch, p. 255.
AN ANALYSIS OF OPEN EDUCATION

Open education was seen as a panacea for the wrongs of American education and society.

In open education students were able to make decisions and pursue their interests as individuals. Students and teachers worked as partners in developing curricula. There was an emphasis on learning rather than on teaching. Learning was achieved through "doing," rather than through reading textbooks and following preplanned curriculum projects. Open education was democratic, activity centered, and above all child-centered. The goal was to develop each student to his potential in a humane, friendly, informal educational environment.

The use of school space was unique in open education. Walls in schools were removed to allow for easier movement of children from one activity area, learning center, discussion group, and resource center to another.

There were few occasions for work in large groups; small group and individual work was preferred. The teacher's role was one of guiding, teaching and inquiring.

Another "back to basics" movement was beginning to gain momentum by the mid-1970's. Advocates of the movement argued that school curricula should emphasize basic skills and subjects. They viewed declining SAT scores as result of neglect in the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic. Parents and educators urged a return to discipline and order.
in a structured classroom with the teacher as the center of authority.143

According to William Schubert the 1930's brought a public conservatism that called for a return to fundamentals. The public also calling for education to fill moral and ethical voids. The society wanted education to somehow end social violence and disharmony.144

In addition, the 1980’s continued to push for technology advances in education. The computer revolution impacted every classroom.

More demands on education were made by the depressed economy and need for job acquisition by high school graduates. Reports by a large number of commissions between 1982 and 1985 demanded that schools change curricula to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society.145

Ben Brodinsky contends that several developments led to the fall of progressive education in America and a call for a back-to-basics movement. First, parents took a larger interest in school affairs, and tried to reshape policies and programs in accordance with their views. Secondly, Blacks and Hispanics claimed that their children were shortchanged

143 Gerald L. Gutek, Education and Schooling in America (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-hall, 1983), p. 188.


145 Ibid.
in instruction in the basic skills. Third, over the years teachers were urged to focus on creativity and development of a child's independent thinking, without clarification as to whether or not this was to be at the expense of the teaching of basic skills. Employers have long complained that high school graduates do not make productive workers because they lack in basic reading and math skills. Colleges have long complained that the typical high-school graduate is unprepared for college, as evidenced by the twelve year drop in national test scores. Finally, there is a financial issue: it is less costly to finance a stripped down program than an open-classroom school program.146

Just as we have seen with other trends in curricula, open education was pushed to the side when the American public perceived weaknesses in the movement and directed educators to find the "true" Utopian curriculum for its youth.

Introduction to "The Wake of Mr. 'C'"

"The Wake of Mr. 'C'" depicts the history of curriculum presented Chapter II. The causation, life and death of each of the four trends will be discussed by the narrator, representing the field of education today and a mourner at the wake of the field of curriculum (Mr. "C"). Each mourner represents the era in which the trend was popular. Other characters in the dialogue will be discussed in the conclusion of this paper.

CHAPTER III
CURRICULUM TRENDS FROM THE 1930'S - 1970'S
NARRATIVE AND DIALOGUE

Nothing endures but change.

Heraclitus (c. 500 B.C.)
THE WAKE OF MR. "C"

Oh Lord! How can a disc jockey in his right mind wake people up at six-thirty in the morning with "Rock-Around-the-Clock"? Who needs a golden oldie at this hour?

Drowsily, I push back the bed covers and tumble out of bed. At least my orange and blue striped terry cloth bathrobe is here right where I left it, on the floor. One day I'll have to look for its belt, but in the meantime the brown leather belt from my brown suit will do.

Now if only I can make a dash for the paper without being seen by every jogger in the neighborhood.

Yuk! Stepping into a puddle of rain water in my bare feet is the pits.

Another miserable day in school. With the rain, we'll have to do something creative during indoor recess, like fill out federal racial surveys or free-lunch forms.

Maybe my name will appear in the obituary column in today's paper and I won't have to go to school.

No such luck, but I notice that Mr. "C" has passed away. I had heard rumors that he was on his death bed for some time now. He had done so much to influence what was taught and how it was taught in school. I wonder what we'll do without him. I really should go to his wake and give my condolences to his family.

Today, even a wake would be more enjoyable than going to school. No one will ever miss me. I'll go to the
Resurrection Chapel and pay my respects to good old Mr. "C."

The Resurrection Funeral Home was in the tough section of town—the kind of neighborhood where dead bodies show up frequently in places other than funeral homes. The gangs controlled the neighborhood. There were gang symbols spray painted on the sides of buildings, cars and fences. It looked from the graffiti that four rival gangs were using the territory as a battle ground. Most likely, Python's New Revengers were the most powerful; they had red PNR's sprayed on everything. There was even a PNR drawn on the heavy, carved, dark wooden entry door of the funeral home. I quickly opened the door to get out of the street.

No one was there to greet me. You would think morticians would always want to meet prospective clients, but I was forced to fend for myself. I read the chapel directory and discovered that Mr. "C" was in Chapel F. I walked down the long narrow corridor and rehearsed the usual cliches I used at previous wakes. Sincerity with grieving relatives was a forte of mine.

Surprisingly, no one was in the chapel except for the deceased. It was a large square room painted a light mauve, fitting for someone of Mr. "C"'s importance. The room was filled with flower wreaths on stands. I have never seen so many yellow and orange gladioli in my life. A large potted fern was placed in front of the dark bronze casket. I walked up to the casket which was half opened, exposing only the top
half of Mr. "C"'s lifeless body. Covering the bottom half of
the casket was a large bouquet of lilies with a gold and
white banner imprinted with RIP.

There were large, comfortable-looking, flower
patterned easy chairs placed near the front of the casket. I
sat down in one of the chairs and stared at Mr. "C." He
didn't look old but his face was wrinkled with deep furrows
that made him look very wise. Mr. "C" was a big man, not
only in height but weight. He must have been impressive in
his day.

He was attired in a light grey pinstripe suit, with a
pale pink button-down collar shirt and a grey and maroon
striped tie. I wondered who had chosen his burial clothes.

Since no one was there but me, and I felt a man of
Mr. "C"'s status should have someone to greet his mourners, I
decided to stay. Also, it was still raining out and I knew
if I left I probably would have to go back to school and fill
out those awful federal forms.

I didn't have to wait too long before an older woman
entered the rear of the chapel.

She was dressed in a black suit, with a white silk
blouse that had a lace collar which spread out over the
lapels of the suit jacket. A fox stole was draped over her
shoulder--the kind of stole where one fox is biting the tail
of another fox who is biting the tail of yet another fox. On
her silver haired head was a small black felt hat shaped like
a crescent moon. She looked as if she had just come from the
inauguration of FDR.

As she slowly walked to the casket, aided by a wooden
cane, I approached her.

Narrator: Hello, Madam. May I give you my arm to
guide you?

Older Woman: No thank you, young man. I am accustomed
to doing things myself. I am perfectly
capable and indeed better than other people
who let others guide them through every
step they make.

Mr. "C" looks so worn. I remember him
in his youth, when he was so energetic, so
progressive. Now he looks so tired, so
haggard, so dead.

Narrator: How long ago was it when you last saw him?

Older Woman: Oh, it was after World War II that he and I
drifted apart. We had a good life
together. He was full of vigor and always
concerned about the needs of others. He
was always encouraging individuals to
investigate and delve deeply into their own
interests. He truly respected all people
and he loved to find activities that would
stimulate a person's interests.

Narrator: Were you and Mr. "C" close?
Older Woman: I should say so. We were together from the Great Depression to the end of World War II.

Narrator: Ah...great. Then you were lovers. I always wondered about Mr. "C." I knew he never married and I was rather suspicious when in his later years he found no difference in the educating of boys and girls.

Older Woman: No, we were not that intimate. We were just close. He helped me educate the children of America. Mr. "C" guided educators in developing educational outcomes and helping them develop ways to achieve their goals.

Narrator: I'm sorry for my inappropriate query. It's just that I've always had so much admiration for him and I wanted to know as much as possible about his life. Mr. "C" must have been very powerful and intelligent. Was he influenced by other people? Was he influenced by anything or anyone in particular?

Older Woman: Of course he was influenced by people,
politics, economics, our culture and society. Anyone with half a brain knows that Mr. "C" did not function in a vacuum.

By the way, young man, who dressed you, Arthur Bestor?

Let me sit down here on this easy chair. I'm, a little teary eyed remembering the good times Mr. "C" and I had. I can remember our lives together as if it were yesterday.

It was the time of the Great Depression and so many of our nation's youth were staying in school, not because they wanted to, but because they couldn't find jobs and had nowhere else to go. The high schools of the '30s were trying to prepare students for college, but most students were not interested in college preparation or for that matter the curriculum of any of the elementary or secondary schools.

Mr. "C," with the help of many forces, created a way to interest students in their education. It was called the activity movement. Students were encouraged to find interests, to investigate, to read, to
solve their own questions, to grow intellectually—not through rote memorization of the disciplines but through their interests and needs. Teachers were guides for students.

It was an exciting time. Students and teachers respected each other and learned from each other.

Narrator: Huh? You mean kids and teachers worked together? That means in this activity movement students had the opportunity to decide what they would learn. But if you allow students to choose for themselves, they'll choose making banana splits over making an atom split. Children are a tabula rosa in need of a teacher to fill them with impressions of knowledge of the past, so they may live in the present and mold the future.

Kids can't choose anything but what flavor bubble gum they want. The reason McDonalds is so popular is that you make no decisions. You order a cheeseburger, you get the same kind of cheeseburger ten million other people have received. That's the way education should be. Everybody
Older Woman: What were you and Mr. "C" trying to create; kids who couldn't function in society?

We felt the individual was more important than the group. Respect for the child and the child's interests was the motto.

Children were given the responsibility to choose their activities. Children became active, not passive, like the kids of the '20s and late '50s. As our children learned from new experiences they would relate them to old experiences. Learning was the outcome of experiences in the environment. We were terrific. Mr. "C" and I were on top of the world. Sure, we had our problems with people not understanding us but we worked things out. We talked, we wrote, we even invented something new. We invented the in-service program. If educators wanted to know more about the activity movement, they were given in-school instruction before or after school.

Narrator: Oh, so that's where the dog and pony show came from.

Older Woman: Excuse me--dog and pony show?
Narrator: Sure, you know, experts come in to talk to the faculty for an hour. They display some tricks and promises of wondrous feats. Then they pack up their carpet bags and move on to the next school, never to be heard from again. I call it a dog and pony show because it reminds me of a traveling circus. There's no business like show business except running in-service meetings. So tell me, were there many "experts" in the activity movement?

Older Woman: Of course! (She gestured with a swish of her white gloved hand. She reminded me of Jack Benny answering Rochester's question on whether he locked the safe.)

The Progressive Education Association developed a study to determine the effectiveness of the Activity Movement. It was so important and innovative that it became one of the most extensive educational studies ever done. It was called the Eight-Year Study. Do you know why?

Narrator: (This is probably a trick question.) No, I don't know; why was it called the Eight-Year Study?
Older Woman: I could tell by your age that you wouldn't know. You probably received your knowledge by memorizing the contents of textbooks. It was called the Eight-Year Study because it lasted from 1933-1941. Over thirty school systems were included in the study. Impressive, don't you think?

Narrator: Sure, sure. What was the purpose of the study? To see if children could become interested in opening a book in eight years of school?

Older Woman: No, however, if you were there with your attitude the Eight-Year Study might have been less than a glorious success.

The study's purpose was to allow thirty secondary schools the freedom to develop educational programs that each school believed to be appropriate for its students. The schools were not to be concerned with college entrance requirements. The study tried to determine if students taught in activity schools were as successful in college as students taught using a traditional subject discipline curriculum.

Narrator: And of course, I presume the activity
schools were as successful or even more successful. However, allowing students to be educated through individualized or small group instruction based on their own interests may have worked in the '30s but not today. Today's kids are too undisciplined for the unstructured approach.

Furthermore, the Eight-Year Study probably was successful due to the Hawthorne Effect. The students were in the limelight and they achieved because of the attention they received. There once was a study that tried to show that students crawling around on their hands and knees improved their reading comprehension. And you know what? That study was successful too.

Older Woman: Not all educational research is humbug, and not all educational research is the result of the Hawthorne Effect. Teaching someone through their interests was not a fly-by-night trend. If a child is interested, he is motivated; if he is motivated, his needs are being met; and if his needs are being met hopefully we will end up with a self-
actualizing citizen in America. As someone interested in today's youth, what are your concerns?

Narrator: I'm interested in improving discipline, student and teacher accountability, and keeping kids drug-free.

Older Woman: I see. You don't seem interested in meeting the psychological needs of your students or teachers.

Narrator: That's not my present concern. Let the home, church or somebody else take care of that stuff. I just want the kids to get high scores on the SAT's and stay out of trouble and oh...maybe develop some strong football athletes for possible college scholarships.

I'm also concerned with making sure today's children can read and write, which is more than you can say for the activity movement. I recall a study by the Board of Regents of New York State in the late 1930's. They studied students who left high school either by graduating or dropping out. You know what they discovered about schools during the '30's? They found out that there was a big gap
between the curriculum and the real needs of the students. The students lacked guidance with regard to choosing studies. Also, schools had a poor relationship with the business world.

Other studies showed over one-third of the unemployed were adolescents, many of whom could not read or write. The Civilian Conservation Corps was teaching thousands of young adults during the '30's to become literate.

Thank goodness you're not in our schools today. The kids would have to wear armor for their child-centered, child-selected, Rambo and laser-beam battle activities.

Children don't voluntarily ask to be taught their multiplication facts or how to find the main idea of a paragraph. Children must be guided, directed and probably forced to learn and survive in our society. What were your students doing: collecting wildflowers and baking cookies for twelve years of schooling?

What probably killed the activity movement was when your students were
drafted during World War II and they wanted to vote on their war activities. No one volunteered for the activity at front line infantry. The army had to develop a new fast way to educate the draftees. They didn't choose the activity methodology, they chose the structure of programmed learning. They needed to educate your students quickly and efficiently. Your activity movement didn't prepare students for their role in society or much of anything else. The only place that could use the activity methodology for education is probably heaven. There you may not need to know how to read, write or do mathematical calculations. Learning how to fluff up clouds and make thunder would be good heavenly activities, and as useful as most of the activities of your movement. I can picture Mr. "C" right now sitting around with other angels and one lead angel deciding on the day's activity.

Older Woman: Sir, the activity movement was not as you depict. The activities served the needs of our youth. They did teach children the basic disciplines. Furthermore, the
Regents of New York State concluded that though most educators were preaching progressive education few were implementing its philosophy. So, who really was to blame for the illiteracy and unemployment of the '30's?

Oops! Look at the time, oh, I must run. It has truly been a...ah...a unique experience talking to you. I'm truly sorry I couldn't stay longer. Please give my condolences to members of Mr "C"'s family. He was very important to me. I wouldn't have been the same without him.

(I rose to help her out of the chair next to me but before I could get up, she was briskly walking, aided by her wooden cane, out the door of the chapel. As I watched her go, I admired her spunk and her dedication to a dead movement. It was just too cream puffy, too unaccountable, too unprogrammable, too child-centered for today's society.

It was deadly quiet and lonely in the chapel with just Mr. "C" and myself. I wondered what he died from? He looked old but not too old. Maybe a sudden shock killed him, or maybe he just faded away.
Sometimes, I think that if I weren't here anymore no one would miss me.

A sudden noise caused me to turn and I noticed an older gentleman coming to pay his respects. He was quite spry and alert for his age. He looked rather well dressed, except that the lapels on his brown suit were too wide, as was his brown checkered tie. The fedora hat in his hand made him look like a cross between Indiana Jones and Harry Truman.

He strode to the open casket looking as if he had been to several wakes before. He had an air of self-assurance; he appeared to be the kind of man who knew what to do and say at all the right times.

After a moment of silence as he viewed Mr. "C," he turned to me.)

Mourner: You have my deepest sympathy, sir. You must have been very close to Mr. "C" to make the vigil at his casket.

Narrator: Yes, he really was something, wasn't he?

Mourner: I know I wouldn't have been the same without him. Through him the children of the '40's and '50's were better adjusted to society and more responsible citizens for
our nation.

Narrator: You know there was a lady here an hour ago who reminded me of you. Was she your wife or are you related? She felt the purpose of education was to meet the needs of kids too.

Mourner: No, we're not married but I know who she is. We do have similar educational philosophies, but I believe the youth of America should be prepared to cope with real life situations found in our complex society.

Narrator: Me too. I believe in preparing kids for coping with real life college entrance tests and living within the laws and rules mandated by the school, and the municipal, state, and federal courts.

Mourner: No, that's not how Mr. "C" and I viewed education. We were motivated by the desire to teach students how to deal with functional everyday situations. We wanted to produce a well adjusted citizen.

By the way, who dressed you, James Conant? Do you always dress like this or just when you're going to a wake?

Narrator: I like the way I'm dressed; this is the way
I always look. Being an accountable, conservatively dressed person is the only way to survive in today's chaotic society. You just look a little uptight. Mr. "C"'s death probably came as too much of a shock to you. I know his demise wasn't unexpected, as far as I was concerned. He was under excessive pressure to be everything to everyone. If something in this world went wrong, the sword always seemed to fall on Mr. "C."

Narrator: I was shocked by Mr. "C"'s death; I didn't know the state of his health. I know how instrumental he was in educating past generations, but I don't know what the future will be without him. Maybe we'll replace him with a computer disc devised by a textbook publishing company.

Mourner: How sad to think that all we've learned in educating our young will be thrown away. Mr. "C" gave us stepping stones to reach the pinnacle of educational effectiveness. We were almost to perfection in the '50's with life-adjustment education but politics reared its ugly head and destroyed the promise of life-adjustment.
Narrator: Oh, you mean Sputnik! It was one of the best things that could have happened to shake up our educational system. We were too mealy mouthed, too wimpy, there was too much flag waving. The American educational system was beginning to look and sound like Kate Smith. We were overweight with unnecessary programs and we were so concerned about perfecting citizens for America the Beautiful we forgot about preparing the kids for college and how to gain and control power. In the '50's we should have been concerned about preparing students for the rat race and space race. But your method of education could lead children to be disrespectful of our country. They would think of their needs only and not what is best for society. With your idea of education, kids would be void of self-love and love of others. They would become confused, non-goal directed, looking for a leader and diversion from their aimless life. You must educate with love. Your theory of educating is the antithesis of Mr. "C"'s and my life-adjustment system.
Have you ever sought psychiatric help for your drives for greed and power?

Narrator: I'm not crazy; I'm in touch with the real world and the students' real needs. Thank goodness for Sputnik. If the schools would have continued with life-adjustment education, America today would be suburb of Moscow.

Mourner: You know maybe Mr. "C" didn't die of natural causes. Maybe he thought of society today and its educational wasteland and then he committed suicide.

Narrator: You're probably right, Mr. "C" didn't die of natural causes, but he didn't commit suicide. He was probably killed by some taxi driver, educated under the life-adjustment movement who couldn't read the WALK sign in an intersection. When Mr. "C" was crossing it the taxi hit him causing him to become air borne for two hundred feet and landing him head first on a soap box.

Mourner: Remember, my son, as with the couturieres of fashion, if you live long enough you'll see wide lapels and cuffed trousers return in vogue, and you'll see the return in
education of several trends including a
desire by educators to produce well-
adjusted human beings.

(He rose from the chair extended his arm
for a handshake, turned and walked out the
back of the chapel.)

(What a ridiculous prediction. There's as
much chance of wide suit lapels and cuffed
trousers returning as there is a chance for
the return of some of our educational
trends. In America we move forward. We
are always improving and getting bigger and
better in everything. Our American cars
get bigger each year (except during the oil
crisis). However, they get better each
year (except that some Japanese and German
autos are better engineered). Well, our
American food is the best in the world
(except we did find that red dye and
saccharin are carcinogenic and we became so
good at producing food that many small
farmers went bankrupt, but we're still
moving forward). There's no such thing as
the good old days in American industry,
farming or schooling.

Suddenly, a door slammed and a female
voice cried, "Where is he? Where is he?"
A beautiful, slender, auburn-haired woman ran into the chapel with a look of shock and grief. She seemed hysterical as she rushed to the casket to view the remains of the Mr. "C." I quickly went to her side to try to comfort her.)

Narrator: Miss, please may I help you? I know this was a shock to many people. Were you related to Mr. "C"?

Young Woman: No, I killed him! I killed him! (She began sobbing, and black mascara streaked her lovely face. I placed my arm around her shoulders to try to calm her.)

I know I murdered him. I should have never suggested such reform to a man of his age. I'll never forgive myself.

Narrator: Please, please sit down. I'm sure you did not kill him. (I led her to the overstuffed chairs. She sat down and pulled a delicate lace handkerchief from her purse and attempted to wipe away the tears.)

Young Woman: You don't understand, I really did kill him. It's all my fault. I wanted the school children to be free from the
pressures of society, free from its many prejudices, free from its inequities of socio-economic status.

Narrator: What a democratic wonderful thought—equality for all. That could not have killed Mr. "C." Was your method of educating so radical that it taxed his stamina? Do you believe in excessive physical education?

Young Woman: No, no. I believe in teaching the basics, the basic disciplines. I favor two hours of language arts, two hours of mathematics and science, and social studies being taught daily.

Narrator: (Staring into her beautiful blue eyes.) Really, so do I. Your ideas and philosophy seem ideal for today's children. How could you ever think you killed Mr. "C"?

Young Woman: I did kill him. You see in order to be truly free and truly equal as human beings you must be naked. Clothing inhibits creativity, clothing creates prejudice, clothing is unnecessary.

Narrator: Huh?

Young Woman: We are not born unequal, we are not born prejudiced, clothing is a symbol of our
inequality and biases.

Mr. "C" was truly interested in my educational reform. I called it the Venus Rising Movement. Mr. "C" was so professional. He wanted to study, plan, organize and evaluate my program. He was very thorough.

Narrator: Yes, yes, continue. Please continue.

Young Woman: Well, he had been working all day at the State Board of Education building on some new revolving movement. He said we would meet that evening in his office.

I went to his private office at 3 p.m. Mr. "C" seemed happy to see me. He appeared a little exhausted and complained of a headache caused by being hit on the head by an Eskimo tribe called MACOS or something. He said he had an awful lunch of Spaghetti O's. He really was acting strangely.

Well anyway, we sat and talked about life in general and about how lonely he was. He mentioned he never seemed to meet someone he could stay attached to for life.

Mr. "C" wanted to see how the Venus Rising Movement would work. I suggested we role play an average day using the program.
Mr. "C" eagerly agreed. He was kind enough to help me disrobe and then quickly disrobed himself. I was amazed at how fast he could move.

We had just begun the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. I was holding the little American flag from his desk in my left hand and had my right hand over my heart when Mr. "C" gasped, clutched his bare chest and fell face down on the orange shag rug.

When the paramedics arrived, they asked me all kinds of questions, took my phone number and wheeled Mr. "C" on a gurnee to the hospital. That's the last I saw of Mr. "C." Do you think I should turn myself in to the police?

Narrator: I really don't think so, but let me think about it. Could you give me your phone number?

I do believe in many of your educational viewpoints. I do believe clothing can influence the way people judge other people but I have just one question for you.
Young Woman: Yes, what's your question?

Narrator: Instead of bringing about equality by having everyone undress, why not have everyone wear the same thing like a uniform?

Young Woman: I didn't think of that. That would probably work too. I wonder why Mr. "C" didn't think of that?

Narrator: Oh, I know he would have eventually.

Please don't be too concerned over the death of Mr. "C." I really don't think you killed him. Can I walk you to the door?

I'll continue to contemplate your problem concerning notifying the police. I should reach a conclusion by Friday evening.

Since I have your phone number I'll call you and possibly we can meet to discuss more of our mutually shared viewpoints.

Good bye.

(As I walked her to the door I smiled to myself thinking about Mr. "C" evaluating the Venus Rising Movement, but I also thought about other curriculum movements we were fortunate not to have in America. Nazi Germany had developed a curriculum for schools complete with objectives and
content. The Soviets control their people by controlling what and how they learn. Even the French have a curriculum based more on the cultural values of a subject than on its usefulness. Maybe our American education is as good as it is because we are willing to change; we are willing to admit we are wrong and go about correcting our mistakes, we are willing to let educators and not political bureaucrats decide what and how concepts should be taught.

With Mr. "C"'s death I wonder who or what will guide our schools? We'll probably use an all American technique of deciding what to teach by seeing how well a curriculum movement is packaged and publicized. We'll choose educational movements by counting how many are on the bandwagon.

I returned to the chapel and sat down in one of the overstuffed chairs to relax and think pleasant thoughts about Friday night. A slender gentleman wearing a dark blue suit and horn rimmed glasses walked quickly down the aisle to Mr. "C"'s casket. He was carrying a slender black attache
case. He glanced at Mr. "C" through his horn-rimmed glasses and then turned to me.)

Man with Glasses: I'm so sorry for your loss. Please excuse this question but what was the official cause of death?

Narrator: Ah...I don't really know. I've only heard a few rumors.

Man with Glasses: His death is truly a great loss to American schooling. I had heard a rumor that Mr. "C" died while cataloging curriculum projects. As you undoubtedly know there were well over one hundred projects, some of them with detailed guides for programs lasting as much as one year in length.

Well, you can imagine the thickness and weight of some of these projects.

Mr. "C" supposedly was working in the basement of a university library. He had spent over six months cataloging and stacking the curriculum projects on a large steel bookshelf. Unfortunately, there was a minor earthquake, only a 4.0 on the Richter scale. The steel bookcase began to sway and toppled over on Mr. "C" as he was counting the pages of a physics project.

Over one hundred twenty-three projects landed on Mr. "C." However, I heard it was
Narrator: MACOS that did him in. Apparently, he got hit with it right between the eyes.

Gee, I didn't hear that one. Those were big bucks spent in the '50's and '60's on the curriculum projects. I'll bet the weight of all those titles alone would be enough to do someone in.

Were you involved with working with Mr. "C" or are you a relative?

Man with Glasses: I worked with Mr "C" after the Sputnik scare and during the Cold War. We tried to bridge the gap between American and Russian education. We wanted to win the space race.

Narrator: You really did a great job. You had the youth of America scared stiff that if they didn't learn the curriculum projects produced by MIT or some other egg-head institution, we'd all be speaking Russian and learning to love borscht. I really admired your tactics. The kids were told to learn the basics, or the Reds would take over America.

Man with Glasses: Our strategy was based on the truth that Russian education would result in the development of space technology to the
advantage of the USSR. We needed fresh young blood to win the space race. We united all the possible contributors to education to focus on developing scientists, mathematicians and linguists for the needs of America's pursuit of space leadership. We had private foundations, universities, school systems, educators, the U.S. Congress, and President Eisenhower joining hands to build an educational plan to beat the Russians.

We had over one hundred different curriculum projects developed and utilized throughout country. We believed a child could learn anything if properly taught. Knowledge is a search and not merely a body of facts and information. We didn't just dump quantities of information into a student; we taught the student the structure of the discipline and the workings of the discipline. When a student studied the atom he became a physicist.

Narrator: Curriculum projects from the '50's and '60's sounded like a good idea. Why didn't they last forever?

Man with Glasses: Society rules education. Maybe we should
have a small elite group of leaders who
dictate what could and could not be taught.
They could decide on the curriculum—not
only what is to be taught but how. This
party of leaders could decide who would
receive vocational training and who would
be formally educated. We wouldn't have to
worry about problems such as MACOS, or
discussing controversial topics such as
sexual customs and infanticide. The group
would decide what should be taught.

Look at all the money we could save;
no more state and local control over
education. No more whims of society
telling educators what to do. This group
would be in control of curriculum in the
schools.

We could probably raise SAT's and
improve discipline. The group could throw
out of school those not destined to be
educated and give them vocational education
at an early age. Think of all the money on
education we could save. Time has been
wasted arguing about sex education,
vocational education, child-centered or
group-centered education, disciplined or
activity centered education. All these
decisions could be made for the schools, saving us time.

Narrator: Hold it! Haven't you ever heard about the Constitution? We guard our liberties in this country, we are not about to give them away. Maybe educators fight a lot trying to decide which way is best to educate our youth, but at least it's healthy to argue instead of being a lifeless lump letting a group of bureaucrats decide on educational programs.

By the way what did kill curriculum projects, anyway?

Man with Glasses: Society. The American people wanted a change. They wanted equality of the races and sexes, more freedom for individual thought, and more inclusion of special education students into the mainstream of education.

Curriculum projects were great. Mr. "C" and I worked very hard to produce the best possible education that we could, but times change. There was the war on poverty, the Vietnam War, cries for more freedom of speech and individuality. Curriculum projects' time had come and
It is sad to think that all the hard work which went into producing the curriculum projects was pushed to the side.

Do you think Mr. "C" was frustrated by the changes in society?

You have to be a realist in education. We knew, Mr. "C" and I, that we were nothing more than mirrors of society, indeed, rose colored mirrors of an ideal society we wished to reflect.

I was just thinking of the rumor you heard about Mr. "C" having a bookshelf of curriculum projects fall on him. Well possibly it wasn't an accident. Maybe educational reformers felt he wasn't moving fast enough and gave the bookshelf a little shove. After all, assassination is faster than impeachment.

Mr. "C" may have been pushed to an early grave but his critics did not kill him—circumstances did.

Besides death and taxes, the only inevitable thing in life is change. The war on poverty and the hope of the Great Society created unusual circumstances. As
Jose' Ortega Gossett said, "I am myself plus my circumstances and if I do not save it, I cannot save myself."

Mr. "C" did not move fast enough and so he could not save himself from the bookshelf or whatever else descended upon him. I am truly sorry for your loss. Mr "C" will not be easy to replace.

I must leave now. Please give my deepest sympathy to his family.

(As he rose from the overstuffed chair, I could not help admire his wisdom, to know one's limits and accept them.

It was late afternoon now, and I was hungry and thirsty. I walked around the empty funeral home and found a small reception room with coffee and cookies available for visitors. I was on at least my twelfth cookie when a middle aged man joined me in the small lounge.

He poured himself a cup of coffee, picked up a chocolate chip cookie and sat down across the table from me.

He was a tall thin man with a thick black mustache. It seemed strange to see someone wearing a pair of jeans in a
Narrator: It's a long exhausting day when you're here by yourself. Are you attending a wake?

Mustached Man: No, no, I work here. I'm the grave digger. I just came in to get my orders for tomorrow's burials.

Narrator: I thought my job was tough but yours must really, excuse the pun, be the pits.

Mustached Man: Well it has its ups and downs but it wouldn't be too bad if I had more decision making capabilities. I would like to use more of my intellectual potential and be less submissive to my supervisor.

Narrator: Don't you think having a creative grave digger might lead to some problems. You might decide to plant good old Aunt Alice on the embankment of Interstate 94 or on the seventh green at Timber Trails Golf Course.

Conformity is sometimes necessary, especially in educating children and grave digging. I should know—I'm an educator.

Mustached Man: It is difficult to suppress one's creativity and join the ranks of the non-thinking.

Schools have become masters at
developing children who adapt. Children have become like computers by being filled with deposits of information. You fill kids up with information like filling a piggy bank up with quarters. The poor kids become so passive that they stop thinking for themselves.

Narrator: No, that's not true. Conformity is necessary in schools; we just can't have students engaging in activities on their own. Who's to say when a kid's being creative and when he's being disruptive? After all, schools are meant to help students adapt to society. Where would we be without them?

Mustached Man: Probably in a better world. Children sometimes learn in spite of schools, and heaven knows they would learn more without an oppressive education.

Let there be a dialogue between student and teacher. Let there be cooperation instead of suppression. Let children grow through independent activities.

Narrator: You know, you sound just like Mr "C." Mr "C" expounded the virtues of independent
Mustached Man: child-centered education during the '30's. He sounds like a real humanist. What is Mr. "C" doing in education now?

Narrator: On, he's lying in the coffin in chapel F. You know there's more to life than doing what you think is best for society. Society has pressures from unemployment, fear of political upheaval, feelings of inequity caused by racial and sexual prejudice, and hostility caused by lack of communication with the government. One of its only hopes for a brighter future is the "proper" education of its children.

Unfortunately, society changes, its needs change and what was a "proper" education ten years ago is no longer relevant. Your ideas of a child-centered education were relevant for the '30's but not in the '50's and early '60's. Mr. "C" had to change with the times.

Mustached Man: What killed Mr. "C"?

Narrator: I'm not sure. I've heard several rumors. One said that Mr. "C" went to the new state board of education building and upon entering the building he became trapped in the revolving door. He kept going around
and around and around. The fire department had to be called to try to stop the revolving door. By the time they freed Mr. "C" he had broken the Guiness Book of World Records feat for walking farther than anyone else on earth without ever getting anywhere.

He died shortly afterwards. I heard the cause of death was vertigo.

Well, it looks like I've eaten the last chocolate chip cookie. I should go back to the chapel and welcome any other mourners.

It was nice meeting you. I wish you well in your creative grave digging endeavors. Maybe when my time comes you can find someplace really unique for me.

Mustached Man: I wish you a long fruitful life.

Narrator: Gee, thanks. (I rose from the chair brushed away the cookie crumbs and walked back to the chapel. It hadn't become any more cheery. In fact, things were even more gloomy. The gladioli were beginning to droop.

As I glanced toward the back of the chapel I noticed a young attractive blonde
woman wearing a two piece polyester pantsuit. She was wearing sensible low heeled patent leather shoes, and she carried a matching shoulder bag.

She approached the casket, stopped in front on it, viewed Mr. "C" and appeared to be saying a prayer.)

Narrator: Excuse me, Miss. I would like to thank you for coming. Are you a friend or a relative of Mr. "C"'s?

Woman in Pantsuit: I'm not a relative. Mr. "C" and I were very close during the time of the Vietnam War and LBJ's goal for the "Great Society."

Narrator: Oh, those were exciting times for schooling. Were you involved with the innovations of open education?

Woman in Pantsuit: Mr. "C" and I were very involved in open education. We were working hard to overcome racial and sexual prejudice. We wanted our schools to reflect the epitome of the American ideal—freedom and democracy for all.

Narrator: Oh, yes, I remember. You were successful. The children were so free they became undisciplined and SAT scores went down. I don't call "open education" great. It was
not "open education" but "free-for-all education." "Do your own thing" education. "Life's a bowl of cherries" education...

Woman in Pant suit: Please stop! We had our problems but they could have been corrected, if we had the chance. You know all change means disorganization of the old and organization of the new. Change takes time and we didn't get a chance.

Narrator: You got a chance to lower SAT's for ten years in row a and produce kids who wore black leather jackets, torn tee shirts and rioted at Kent State.

Woman in Pant suit: Hold it! You can't blame open education for everything that went wrong in society. There are reasons for unrest in society and declining SAT's that are not a direct link to the schools. After all, not every school in America practiced open education. The rioters during the 1968 convention in Chicago were not all students of open education and the same goes for Kent State.

After all, conflict is the essential core of a free and open society. If there was not conflict there would be no reason to change and grow.
Narrator: Well you changed the appearance of several neighborhoods, they were burned down...okay, okay. I'll admit, it wasn't all open education's fault. But the schools reflect society and our schools were not well organized.

Woman in Pantsuit: I agree, change requires time. We expected our schools to expand their walls, set up learning centers, teach children in open areas and outside of the regular schools; but we didn't invest the time to educate our teachers on how to do it. We didn't develop enough real objectives, and determine how to achieve our objectives and evaluate them. We can't just pull a light switch in education and announce a new way of educating. Time must be spent in preparation, training, and coaching our teachers.

Narrator: True, that's one reason curriculum projects weren't as effective as they could have been. But you must admit, it was the people who turned against open education and closed down "open" doors.

Woman in Pantsuit: With all our knowledge, all our education, you would think that educators as well as
Mr. "C" would remember Machiavelli's advice that those who have power rule. We didn't build a strong enough power base. We didn't have the people with us. We left education to educators. We needed to work more with the community. Not only should the educators have worked for the people, they should have worked with them.

Hey, you're pretty smart for a woman.

You're right. But, you also moved too fast in open education. Sure open education had vestiges of the activity movement but so much was new in open education for this generation of children and parents. Mutual planning of instruction, freedom to move from one activity to another, varied class sizes, no fixed times. This was too much of a change.

In some ways you are right. We wanted to develop children who could think, make decisions, be responsible, be accepted, and accept others, but we forgot that we should have started where the world was and not where we would like it to be.

So you blame Mr. "C" for the death of open education?
Woman in Pantsuit: No, I don't blame Mr. "C" for open education's death, nor do I blame open education for Mr. "C"'s death.

Narrator: What do you think killed him?

Woman in Pantsuit: Well, I heard one rumor that Mr. "C" died trying to develop an activity for a curriculum project in mathematics.

Mr. "C" wanted the children learning every minute of the day. Unfortunately, the federal government's free breakfast program and free lunch program left little time for education. My source said Mr. "C" was in a school cafeteria working on the math project activity to be incorporated during lunch time. He wanted to teach children how to count, add, and subtract using Spaghetti O's. Sadly, he became too engrossed in the project. Mr. "C" got his head stuck in a five gallon can of Spaghetti O's and drowned.

However, I don't believe that story. I'm more philosophical. I believe that his critics, society, politics, economics, television, and anything that touches the human spirit touched and killed Mr. "C."

Maybe, he died because he was no longer needed, just as the old eskimo woman put to
sea on an ice float to perish. Or maybe he died because he lacked power. Life without power, as Alinsky said, is death.

**Narrator:** Well, how could Mr. "C" get power?

**Woman in Pantsuit:** Through the people, through becoming organized. Power means building an army of supporters. Power means you have the people behind you.

**Narrator:** The Russians use fear as power. No one challenges their schooling.

**Woman in pantsuit:** But power based on fear has too narrow of a foundation, it can easily be toppled. Mr. "C" and I didn't work fast and hard enough to build our power base. Maybe the future will learn from our mistakes.

**Narrator:** Yes, and maybe open education could have learned how to develop discipline in the schools and raise the academic achievement of students.

**Woman in Pantsuit:** Maybe. We'll never know. I must leave now.

I am truly sorry for your loss. Mr. "C" must have meant a great deal to you, too.

**Narrator:** (I escorted her to the door and then returned to the windowless dreary chapel F. The smell of the lilies saturated the air.)
I stood at the back of the chapel and stared at the lifeless remains of Mr. "C."
A faint sound of organ music filtered into the room. It was so soft and so soothing. It filled the chapel like a slowly moving fog. I was sure I heard the voices of a choir singing.)

A...men, A...men, Amen, Amen, Amen...

The progressive activity movement is gone and dead, But God knows, 'tis better to be dead than Red. A...men, A...men, Amen, Amen, Amen.

Let perpetual light shine upon Life-Adjustment,

For from society's heaven it was sent,

Then Sputnik orbited and away Life-Adjustment went,

A...men, A...men, Amen, Amen, Amen.

May curriculum projects have an eternal life,

For they died on earth during social and racial strife,

A...men, A...men, Amen, Amen, Amen.

Open education was Mr. "C"'s martyrdom to humanity,

It gave children respect, love and
responsibility,

Sadly, open education begat SAT instability,

May it rest in peace in everlasting tranquility,

A...men, A...men, Amen, Amen, Amen!

(The music and the soft voices slowly drifted away and once more Mr. "C" and I were very alone.)

Well, Mr. "C," we've both had quite a day. Your problems are behind you now. However, I must continue to wrestle with the problems of low SAT's and a public fearful of lack of discipline. Maybe, old guy, it's time we looked at a more structured way of teaching. A practical mode of instruction that would be both easy to learn and easy for educators to implement. One that would provide for more teacher and student accountability.

You know, Mr. "C," I've heard that James Block and Ben Bloom have been doing research in this area.

I could really use your help in solving the problems of educating today's students, but being in a coffin really
slows one down.
Well, goodbye friend. Hope we meet against sometime.
(I walked down the corridor to the front door thinking about the management of learning. I could see a fine drizzle hitting the stained glass windows of the chapel. As I reached for the door knob, I turned to look back down the corridor. I thought I heard a groan coming from Mr "C"'s chapel. There was another noise. It sounded like the creaking open of a door, no a lid --a casket lid, there was a soft thump... what could it be? Was it the overturning of the large green fern in front of the casket? Could Mr. "C" have ... no couldn't be.

I opened the door to the funeral home, pulled up the lapels of my suit to shield me a little from the rain. As I began to step outside I thought I heard a voice from inside the chapel yell out, "Back to Basics!"

No...it couldn't be. It was probably just the rain hitting the garbage can lids and my imagination.

As I walked quickly down the street,
holding the lapels of my suit tightly
around my neck, a cold shiver went up my
spine. I stopped, turned, wiped the rain
from my forehead and eyes and glanced back
at the funeral home...could he really be...

I smiled as I looked up at the red
neon sign. I knew it to be so...

Resurrection Funeral Home.
...the efforts to eliminate through convention the subjectivities that must inevitably enter into any interpretation of reality seem to be less candid than an upfront recognition that a human being is providing his or her best effort to describe, interpret, and to appraise some aspect of the world in which he or she lives.

Elliot Eisner (1985)
"The aim of the historian is to ascertain facts, as they must be made the basis for all conclusions or generalizations. These facts should clarify our understanding of the past and its significance for the present."147 The purposes of this chapter are to use the ascertained facts to summarize, draw conclusions, analyze, express limitations and make suggestions for further study about the field of curriculum trends from the 1930's through the 1970's. It is through reflection of the past that we may more carefully view the present and plan for the future.

History is necessarily made up of selected facts.148 The summary that follows is a compilation of selected facts derived from the historical research written in Chapter II of this paper.

The late 1930's and early 1940's was the era of the activity movement. The activity schools had their roots in the philosophies of John Dewey, William Kilpatrick, John Childs, Adolph Ferriere and other educators usually regarded as progressives. The activity school was child-centered. The individual child's interests and needs determined the

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148 Ibid.
school's curriculum. Often children learned skills necessary for daily living such as cooking and sewing. The basic disciplines of reading, writing and arithmetic were incorporated in the child's activities as the needs for the basic disciplines arose. One activity would lead to another, with increased knowledge in many diverse areas being the projected end result.

The teachers worked cooperatively with students in planning the curriculum. The curriculum was designed around the child's interests with the teacher as a guide, instructor and aide in helping the child successfully reach his own educational goals.

The teachers in the activity schools, ideally, had a broad, general education with training in child development and activity methods of teaching. The teachers were to regard their students as partners in deciding the activities of the school day. The student was an equal member of the educational team.

The entire educational program in the activity school was flexible. The school curriculum was not cast in stone. Length of class periods, grade levels, classroom furniture, and outside field trips were flexible enough to permit the accomplishment of the individual child's objectives.

Unfortunately, the teachers were not always trained in the methodology of the activity school as was intended. Though school boards, administrators, and teachers praised
the movement, research in 1938 by the Board of Regents of New York State revealed that many schools never really implemented the philosophy and methodology of the activity movement. The findings of the Regents Inquiry also revealed a lack of guidance with regard to curricular choice and a poor relationship between local schools and the business community. Adolescents and young adults between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four accounted for one-third of all unemployed during the Great Depression. The high incidence of unemployment had a strong affect on school curricula. Schools had failed to change with changing vocational requirements. Students needs for health, citizenship and socialization were not being met.149

World War II held educational change in abeyance. After the war, with the studies of the 1930's still in the minds of educators, change occurred. There was a shift in emphasis from the needs of the individual to the needs of the individual as a member of society. Americans wanted students who could survive, function and contribute to the American way of life.

When World War II ended in 1945, the Cold War with the Soviet Union began. The United States became a leader of nations in the world, and Americans began to view their country, their lives and their children's lives differently. The focus of interest in education shifted from the

149 Tanner and Tanner, p. 332.
individual to society; from the activity movement which was child-centered to another progressive movement which was concerned with the individual functioning in society. The 1940's brought deep concern educating students on the principles of a democratic society.

The life-adjustment movement was an attempt of postwar educators to close the gap between the existing secondary school curriculum and this new societal demand. The "new" curriculum was determined by the experiences of learners as they dealt with everyday concerns. These situations of everyday living took the place of content field subjects.

Florence Stratemeyer and her associates stressed that a good curriculum required that teachers know the difference between the superficial interests of students and interests that will be of continuing importance to them. Her curriculum was called the persistent-life situation curriculum. Stratemeyer pointed out that individual and group situations of daily living called for three kinds of growth: (1) individual capacity, (2) social participation, and (3) an ability to deal with the environment. The major areas of education in the persistent-life situation curriculum were health, intellectual power, moral choices, aesthetic expression and appreciation, person-to-person relationships, group memberships, intergroup relationships, natural phenomena, technological resources, and economic-
According to Diane Ravitch, the life-adjustment curriculum was very closely related to other versions of progressive education, such as core curriculum, activity programs, and common learning courses. However, its main distinguishing characteristic was that it stressed functional teaching using everyday situations as the medium for instruction. The purpose of education during the late 1940's and early 1950's was to change students' attitudes and behavior to conform to social norms. The overriding objective of the life-adjustment movement during this time was to produce a student who was adjusted to live in society and function as an educated citizen.

The 1950's was an era of political unrest. As Robert Hutchins stated, "No educational system can escape from the political community in which it operates." America was the hero of World War II but with this honor came the responsibility to protect the world from the political threats of communism.

During the 1950's America went to war in Korea trying to protect Syngman Rhee's government from its communist neighbors. At home, Joseph McCarthy was fighting what he

150 Stratemeyer, et al., pp. 337, 116-117.
151 Ravitch, p. 66.
152 Hutchins, p. IX.
perceived as communist threats in America. For over five years Senator McCarthy interrogated possible communists and communist sympathizers. It was not until 1957 that the U.S. Senate condemned his actions.

With fear of communism in the forefront of American thought, October 4, 1957 brought a serious blow to America's technological strength. The Soviet Union launched Sputnik. This event highlighted the fears of many Americans concerned with losing a competitive edge in science and technology. Its impact on education was that it finalized the end of the progressive movement and created a new emphasis on "back-to-basics."

The decline of the progressive schools began as early as 1951, when Arthur Bestor pushed for a return to the basic subjects and a dedication of time and energy needed to teach them correctly. He believed that educators were treating the sciences and mathematics too casually. He pointed out that in the Soviet Union over forty per cent of educational time was spent on the sciences and mathematics.153 After the launching of Sputnik, Arthur Bestor was again interviewed. He stated that the lack of academics in our schools would leave America in danger of losing the space race.154 Admiral


H.G. Rickover was also very vocal in his criticism of American education. He believed that education in the early 1950's was concerned with catering to individual needs, while ignoring basic academic studies.\textsuperscript{155}

In November 1957 President Eisenhower pleaded with local boards of education to review their curricula in light of the Soviet Union's stringent curriculum in the areas of the sciences, mathematics and foreign languages.\textsuperscript{156}

The educational response to society's pressures for more academic training was the curriculum projects. Vast quantities of material were presented to students by university and government agency scholars through the use of curriculum projects. The first project was developed by the Physical Science Study Committee under the leadership of Jerrold Zacharias from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It entered the American school system in 1960.

More than one hundred projects found their way into American schools. Many of these projects took the classroom teacher over one year to complete. Each new curriculum package was tested, retested and revised. Thousands of teachers attended summer session and in-service programs to learn how to use the new materials and methods.

The goal of curriculum projects was to replace


\textsuperscript{156} Eisenhower, pp. 404-05.
teacher "telling" and student "retelling" with "discovery," "inquiry," and "inductive reasoning." It was hoped that students would learn and retain more because they would understand the basic principles of a discipline. For the first time in American history, the educational change was jointly sponsored by federal agencies, university scholars, private foundations, big city school systems, and educators in general. In all areas of education, innovation was the catchword. Innovation in the teaching of science, mathematics, social studies and other disciplines was accomplished through carefully designed curriculum projects.

Unfortunately, the expected educational revolution in the schools did not occur. Political, social and economic unrest at home, and international politics in VietNam, led to pressures on the American school system for further change. Between 1963 and 1965, America was hit with a series of devastating events. There was violence against Blacks and civil rights workers in the South, President Kennedy was assassinated, the social plight of the poor gained national attention, and combat marine units landed in Vietnam. With America's staggering domestic problems engulfing daily life the concern over Russian superiority began to fade into the background.

During the late 1960's society looked to the schools' curricula for possible solutions to America's problems. Social equality was the new goal. Remedial and compensatory
programs initiated by local, state and federal departments of education were born in crisis.

By 1970 the schools began to change as institutions. Changing the programs within the schools was not enough; the entire philosophy of American education had to be changed. The new vision was that school would be a place for everyone, success would be guaranteed regardless of past failures or negative environmental influences. The educational system focused on benefitting the child.

The new school of the early 1970's was called "open education." However, it was not totally new. Most of its ideas were reflections of the activity schools and the educational philosophy of John Dewey. The American open education schools took a variety of forms, but shared two main characteristics: freedom of educational choice for the students and belief in a humane education. They were noted for the informal atmosphere and flexibility which characterized the schools. Many buildings had few formal classrooms; walls were removed so children could move about. Children could be grouped in several ways--by age, interest, or ability--or the child could work independently with the aid of a teacher. There were no set times for specific subjects. Individual pupils planned their own use of time.

In the open education school there was more emphasis on learning than on teaching. Children learned by doing, by engaging in activities. Children developed feelings of self
<table>
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To educate the child by using the student's natural impulses through the medium of meaningful activities such as cooking, sewing, and carpentry. |
To produce students who were well adjusted to function as educated citizens. |
To teach the basic principles of the disciplines through discovery, inquiry and inductive reasoning. |
To educate through open academic activities based on the interests of the individual. |

Figure 3, below, shows a comparison of the four major trends in the 1930's through the 1970's.
satisfaction and personal competence. The school was a place to be accepted and a place to accept everyone, reflecting the country's emphasis on social equality. The school became a friendly environment for individual success and growth.

The number of articles about open education peaked between 1972 and 1974, then quickly declined. By 1974 there was a move once again for schools to go "back to the basics." Many school districts blamed open education for lowering academic standards and for lack of discipline in the schools. The 1975 Gallup Poll on "Public Attitudes Toward Education" showed adults felt the number one problem with American schools was lack of discipline. Parents stated that they wanted schools that had strict discipline, a dress code, and placed emphasis on academic basics.

The search began again in the mid-1970's for an educational curriculum that would meet the needs of the ever-changing American society. A search began for a curriculum that would bring control in the classroom back to the teacher. The teacher, the schools, the curriculum would make discipline in the classroom a priority. Along with discipline would come vast amounts of school time spent on reading, writing and arithmetic. The pendulum had swung back--"back to the basics."

AN ANALYSIS OF "THE WAKE OF MR. 'C'"

To depict the major trends in curriculum from the
1930's through the 1970's, to show the influences on new
trends and the influences causing the death of old trends,
were objectives in the writing of the satire.

"The Wake of Mr. 'C'" shows the importance of the
field of curriculum study in education. Curriculum changes
and new trends are constantly being presented to
curriculists. Curriculum trends win and lose popularity
depending on economic, social, and political influences of
the time. The unsuccessful attempt of the Venus Rising
Movement presented in the satire shows that trends must have
a strong political base in order to be accepted. Any trend
in violation of our fundamental rights or values could not
survive.

The grave digger represents a conglomerate of some of
education's critics. After the grave digger expresses his
negative opinions on the education of today's children, he
wishes the narrator a long life. The conversation purposely
ends with this tone. Critics need education alive in order
to express their discontent. They need education alive to
have a reason for their existence. Likewise, education needs
its critics. They are a healthy sign of a democratic
society. We should always have critics; they help keep the
field of curriculum on the right track.

Each of the mourners at Mr. "C"'s wake represent a
period of time during which there was a major curriculum
movement. The older woman represents the 1930's. The
gentleman in wide lapels symbolizes the era of the 1940's and early 1950's. The man with the horn-rimmed glasses represents the early 1960's and curriculum projects. The young woman in a polyester pantsuit depicts the era of the late 1960's and early 1970's. She helps to explain the role of open education in America's schools.

I chose the setting as the wake of the field of curriculum for two main reasons. First, dialogue is an easier format in which to convey a message in a limited number of pages. Dialogue does not need as much setting, plot or character development as other forms of descriptive prose.

Secondly, I chose the setting of the wake because of the articles that have been written on the death of the field of curriculum. This was my opportunity to resurrect curriculum. I feel it exists, it cannot die, and it is responsive to the voices of society.

"The Wake of Mr. 'C''" allows the reader to view curriculum as a changing field. It was only when the field of curriculum did not move fast enough to keep up with the changes in society that it became an easy target for critics. Figure 4 depicts some of the influences on the field of curriculum that help to create change.

CONCLUSIONS

The progressive school of thought found its way into
Some Significant Influences on Curriculum

- Social Inequality
- Economic Depression
- Lack of Discipline
- Fear of Foreign Superiority
- Educational Philosophy
- Falling Achievement Scores
- Racial Inequality
- Democratic Ideals
- Sexual Inequality

Figure 4
the American schools during the 1930's with the activity movement. During the 1940's, progressive educators believed that a school curriculum should prepare students to become contributing members of society. They developed life-adjustment programs, which relied upon more group-centered approaches. The individual was important but survival and contributions to society was the main focus. The progressive school of thought returned with a democratic approach to education in the 1970's, called open education. The basic disciplines were stressed in the curriculum projects of the late 1950's and early 1960's. The sciences, courses in mathematics, and foreign languages were all broken down into understandable lessons, organized for instruction and taught by the classroom teacher.

What can be learned from these trends is invaluable. We investigate the past so we know how to cope with the present. Our schools' curricula during the forty year period from the 1930's to the 1970's was not planned ten years in advance; it was created out of need and crises. The schools are a part of American society. The schools may also be called a reflection of American society, for they reflect the hopes, problems and concerns of our nation. Society looks to the schools for solutions to problems such as losing a space race, unemployment, racial prejudice, sexual inequality and class conflict.

Schools look to the field of curriculum for help and guidance. As pointed out in the Review of Educational
Research, no matter how curriculum is defined, the definition does not significantly affect the kinds of questions and problems dealt with by the field itself. The field of curriculum must try to solve society's and therefore the school's problems.

As an organ within a larger system, schools can isolate themselves from that system about as much as the liver can isolate itself from the heart and lungs. We cannot easily or accurately predict what new developments, crises, and the like will occur, either within our nation or outside of it; thus there will always be a need for those planning educational policies and programs in context... We need, I believe, to recognize the contingent character of educational practice, to savor this complexity, and to be not afraid to use whatever artistry we can muster to deal with its problems. For the curriculum planner this means a life of continual uncertainty...157

LIMITATIONS

To do research has come to mean to do scientific inquiry, and to do such scientific inquiry in education has meant to do inquiry in which variables are identified, measured and analyzed statistically... To do other forms of inquiry, to do historical or critical analysis of existing educational or social problems, to engage in philosophic inquiry, is not to do research... To count is somehow better, perhaps, because counting or measuring yields numbers that can be carried to the third or fourth decimal place and hence provides the illusion of precision...158

I do not consider the lack of statistical research a limitation in this dissertation.

Statistical interpretation of the judgements, however scientific, do not prove anything if the judgements are


merely subjective reactions; but statistics do have a certain aura. As a result, we tend to take these subjective judgements, put them into an objective format, and think that we have discovered milk."

The selection of trends analyzed may have been different if other sources were used. The use of William Schubert, Diane Ravitch and Daniel and Laurel Tanner as authorities in the field of curriculum could be considered a limitation. Other curriculum experts may disagree with the consensus of thought found in the textbooks used as criteria for choosing the trends.

Secondly, there were many trends occurring simultaneously. I chose the trends that appeared the most in available literature, and found in the three texts of curriculum, the criteria for determining the trends. This does not mean other trends did not occur. There were many movements in the field of curriculum, and choosing the four that I chose may indeed be a limitation in this paper.

The time periods used in this paper to delineate a curriculum movement may be a limitation. Undoubtedly, somewhere in America the activity school of the 1930's, the life-adjustment school of the 1940's, the curriculum projects of the 1960's, and the open education school of the 1970's, are still in existence. The time lines were developed to correspond to when the curriculum trend was most influential in American education.

The four trends discussed in this paper may have some missing information on the specific movements. Not every piece of research on a specific trend may be found in this paper. More information on the activity school, life-adjustment school, curriculum projects or open education may be found in other sources.

When discussing the reasons for the rise and decline of the trends in curriculum, not every influence may have been cited. Other influences, such as decline or rise in school enrollment, unionization of teachers, and the influence of textbooks may have greatly impacted the birth or death of trends.

The satire, like the text of the dissertation, may be limited in some ways. The complexity of the changing trends in curriculum makes it somewhat difficult to convey a theme in the form of a satire; in many ways it is an oversimplification. My original intent was to write a satire similar to The Saber-Tooth Curriculum, in which Mr. Peddiwell satirized the lack of progressiveness in American education. His book had a central theme, while my narration, in dealing with the birth and death of four trends, does not have one movement but four to satirize.

Lastly, there is the unavoidable limitation caused by interpretation which, according to Charles Frankel, creeps into all historical explanations. Whenever an author

160 Charles Frankel, "Explanation and Interpretation in History," Curriculum: Readings in the Philosophy of Education, ed. Martin Levit (Chicago: University of Illinois
tries to explain a phenomena some interpretation occurs. I tried to avoid my own interpretations by using the works of authorities in the field. I used primary sources of information whenever possible. When dealing with the activity schools of the 1930's, I tried to use the books of the time, so as not to include a noncontemporary author's interpretation of the trend. However, the limitations caused by my own interpretations and those of my sources almost certainly exist.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Taking into account the limitations presented, a duplicate study of the trends could be undertaken to check the reliability and validity of this paper.

In general, current texts were used for this investigation. Further research may be warranted to investigate the trends by using periodicals of the 1930's through the 1970's.

An interesting piece of research could be developed using the four trends described in this paper. The researcher could choose one or more school districts and investigate the extent to which these trends were actually implemented in the schools during the 1930's through the 1970's.


Gagne, R.M. "Curriculum Research and the Promotion of Learning." Invited address to AERA meeting, 1966. (Mimeographed)


The dissertation submitted by Doris Marian Frentress has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

April 20, 1988
Date

B. M. Berlin
Director's Signature