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PROJECT REPORT / TWO

TEACHER EDUCATION:

THE YOUNG TEACHER'S VIEW

A REPORT OF FOUR REGIONAL CONFERENCES FOR STUDENT TEACHERS AND BEGINNING TEACHERS OF THE DISADVANTAGED

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NDEA NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED
STUDY IN TEACHING DISADVANTAGED YOUTH

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
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THE FOUR CONFERENCES

The Conference Background

Four regional conferences were planned as one of several projects of the NDEA National Institute for Advanced Study in Teaching Disadvantaged Youth. All four conferences had two broad purposes:

To identify, clarify, and specify the issues relevant to preparing teachers of disadvantaged youth;

To recommend substantive changes and appropriate strategies for improving the preservice and in-service education of these teachers.

Today's college student has become a vital and powerful force in instigating and demanding reform in education. There is a strong movement growing among students to have a telling voice in the shaping of their education. It is most clearly evident on college campuses, but signs of demand for genuine student involvement in educational planning are beginning to appear in some high schools across the country. The passive, uncritical student of yesterday is giving way to a new, more active student who is insisting on a redefinition and reformation of what is to be considered "good education."

In order, therefore, to utilize the resources of such a thoughtful and articulate group, the four conferences emphasized the importance of the role of the college students and beginning teachers in evaluating the relevance of their training programs to the realities of teaching in a disadvantaged area.

Adult professionals--teacher educators and school administrators—were invited to listen and to advise. The insights and perspectives of community people were sought in order to define the disadvantaged child and his environment.

It was hoped that the dialogue among the participants would evolve into recommendations for new conceptual models of teacher education, designed to prepare more effectively teachers of the disadvantaged and to help them to become active agents of change in schools with high concentrations of disadvantaged youth. On the other hand, the conferences were not designed to be used either as forum for debate between conflicting points of view or as campfire site around which atrocity stories could be swapped.

The Conference Settings

Regional conferences were thought to be the best vehicle by which the greatest number of student teachers and beginning teachers might be involved. Too, such conferences would make possible an exploration of the differences among the regions.

Although all four conferences were concerned with the same basic issue, each had its own format. While each planning committee was free to develop the program which, in its opinion, would most effectively utilize regional resources in achieving the major aims and general objectives of the entire project, there were several general requirements for all conferences. Each was to involve approximately seventy participants — the majority to be student teachers and beginning teachers--and each was to take as much advantage as possible of existing organizations which might be potential vehicles for implementing the suggestions, solutions, and conclusions of the conference.

The distinguishing features of each conference will be seen in the following accounts. Again we must note that this is one of those occasions when words simply cannot do justice to the color and, often, the drama of the reality.

A schedule of the conferences, the names of the directors, and other information appear as Appendix of this publication.

Los Angeles

The Los Angeles planning committee, which operated under the direct leadership of a young woman teacher from Jordan High School in the Watts section, stressed community involvement. Basic to the conference planning was the view that teacher education is the business of many people—parents and professors, community workers and teachers, the poor and the affluent. The conference aim was to consider the preparation of teachers of children in the two major disadvantaged groups of California: the Mexican-Americans and the Negroes.

To provide an authentic setting, the conference moved out into the community. On the first day, it met in East Los Angeles to consider the problems of education for the Mexican-American; on the second day it moved into Watts to take up the problems of the Negro student. Since a major objective of the conference was to go beyond the "parley" stage, participants were selected with an eye to their coming together after the conference in cooperative college-school-community action groups. Students and faculty from the six state colleges in the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas were the nucleus to which young teachers and school administrators were added. To improve the chances of getting the results of the conference into actual teacher education, representatives from the state department of education, teacher associations, and professional organizations were included.

A measure of the degree to which the planning committee made good its aim to achieve full participation by all parties concerned is to be found in the special papers which keynoted each day of the conference. The plight of the Mexican-American child in his frightening first contact with the English-speaking world was movingly told by a woman community worker who recalled her own painful entry as a young child into the Los Angeles schools.

The realities of life for the Negro boy growing into manhood in Watts, their effect on his attitude toward himself and school, took on new meaning for the conference participants as they sat in a Watts neighborhood center listening to a young man who had gone through the Watts schools, on to the university, and after training as a social worker, had returned to Watts to help his people. The direct consumer of teacher education, the student teacher, was represented by the president of the California Student Teachers Association who graphically described the gap between the professed goals of public education and the realities of an irrelevant curriculum of teacher education.

It is not surprising that this stimulation set off discussions that centered immediately on the basic conference issues. The Los Angeles meetings were a fine beginning, setting a model of tempo, energetic involvement, and idealistic commitment for the others to follow.

New Orleans

The New Orleans regional planning committee organized its program around a consortium involving representatives of five private universities and colleges, and the public and parochial school systems in New Orleans Parish. The consortium is currently cooperating in a joint program designed to improve integrated student-teaching experiences in both public and parochial schools in advantaged and disadvantaged areas of New Orleans.

The same spirit of cooperation was evident throughout the conference. School principals who were members of the planning committee arranged the community visitations, a distinctive feature of the New Orleans conference. The presence of consortium members reassured the young conference participants that their concerns, criticisms, and recommendations would not just be so much talk but would be fed back directly into the reality of local operations and plans.

As at Los Angeles, the tone of the New Orleans conference was set by a keynote speaker who identified the psychological tensions that inevitably result from a Negro child's attempt to cope with the demands of two communities—his own and that of the majority culture.

For the first two days of the conference each participant was assigned to a group which visited one of four poverty areas in New Orleans — sections of the city known as (a) Irish Channel, (b) St. Bernard, (c) Desire Street, and (d) Central City. Visits were made to homes, schools, community centers, settlement houses, recreation centers, housing authorities, and churches. Opportunities were abundant for talking with children and teachers in the schools, with parents in their own homes, with professional community workers and community volunteers, and with the clergy. Even though the area groups followed a full schedule of visits, time was planned for on-site group discussions with selected school and community people. On the final day of the conference, a panel of representatives from the major component groups of the conference discussed these community visits and their implications for teacher education.

Detroit

The midwestern regional conference was based in Detroit, bringing together teams of participants from the Chicago, Toledo, Cleveland, and Detroit areas. The focus of the conference was on the special problems of disadvantaged children in the large city. Not only do these children, both white and Negro, face the problem of poverty, but many of them face added difficulties in making the adjustment from a rural background to industrial, city ways of life.

At the outset of the conference, the planning committee supplied strong input to the conference theme by means of a film montage; this depicted the ecology of the inner city with clips from several well-known films, alley walks in several sections of Detroit, and a slide-tape portraying life in the city through the eyes of a local youth. Such a direct contact with the city helped to illuminate what many urban educators believe is a too often neglected fact: the great variety within the Negro population in the large urban centers of the country in regard to values, attitudes, achievement, and patterns of social interaction. In other words, there is no monolithic description to fit the urban Negro.

From this base of common experience, conference members met, discussed, and planned solutions to problems of teacher preparation for inner-city teaching.

Boston

The site for the northeastern regional conference, held at Castle Hill in Ipswich, differed from the other conferences in that all the participants were asked to join a "live-in" experience. It may have been simply the fact of being together for the full term of the conference that led to discussions lasting far into the night, but many thought that the atmosphere of the castle by the sea was most conducive to serious reflection on the problems and issues of teacher education.

The conference drew together people from states ranging from Maine to Washington, D. C. As far as possible, the participants were chosen in order to constitute teams which could continue to work together on follow-up activities after the conference. Teams were composed to cover these areas: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York City, New Jersey, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D. C. In terms of numbers, twenty-two colleges and universities and fourteen school systems were represented.

Four papers, each representing a different point of view on teacher education, were prepared and distributed before the beginning of the conference: one by a school vice-principal, one by a professor of education, a third by a director of Upward Bound, and a fourth by two student teachers.

In order to bring a touch of reality, a group of junior and senior high school students came to Castle Hill the second day to talk out their education in the public schools of Boston, Cambridge, and Brookline. Later, conference members had a chance to meet in small groups with one or two of these young people. On the final day, the teams reported to the total conference what they saw as next steps in implementing some of the ideas presented, as well as effecting recommendations for changes in the present pattern of teacher education in their areas.

MAJOR CONFERENCE THEMES

One of the ideas behind the four conferences was to determine whether or not there actually were regional differences in the substantive problems and issues involved in teaching disadvantaged children, all alike in poverty, but differing in skin color and in subcultures. Were the problems that a teacher in San Fernando Valley faced in a third grade classroom composed mostly of Negro and Mexican-American children, the same as or different from the ones confronting a teacher in a third grade classroom in Philadelphia? The answer can easily be found in the fact that the most striking characteristic of all four conference dialogues was the commonality of concern. Precise formulation, therefore, of the nature and degree of genuine differences, if they do exist, must await further study.

The problems facing teachers of the disadvantaged involve the essential ingredients of every educational enterprise. These have to do with motivation, learning capacity and style, the curriculum—all within the broad context of what the enterprise is all about in relation to its basic functions. The disadvantaged child was defined by almost every conference participant as any child who is not connected to American schooling as it is offered today. Estranged from the "school system," the child is automatically denied any further meaningful participation in the affairs of the mainstream of society. Responsibility for this lack of connection was perceived as the fault of the system rather than the child.

Despite the participants' persistent concerns with the profound problems of value conflict in a pluralistic society and with its inevitable social tensions, the teaching task of equipping all children with the techniques necessary for an intelligent and rewarding human experience was clearly identified. In its simplest expression, the teachers want to be able to help these children acquire the fundamental competencies of a functioning member of a sophisticated society.

We who attended all four conferences think it a safe bet to assume that if a similar set of conferences were held on preparing teachers of culturally advantaged youth, the same general questions would underlie the discussions. A case in point: at the present writing, the April 1968 issue of *Impact*, the journal of the Student National Education Association, was just off the press. Keynoted was this excerpt from the convention speech of the Texas Student Education Association held at Houston, March 1968: "It is quite obvious that too much of education today is irrelevant to students' needs tomorrow. Too much of it is not education for today but education for yesterday. Social change has outrun educational reform." And the lead quotation from a student teacher at the same conference, on the need for experience in the teacher education program, states, "I regret that I failed to have enough contact with children prior to student teaching. I do not believe that college students realize how important this is. A teacher who can interest and motivate children will be a good teacher. In order to do this, the teacher must know children, their habits, interests, fears, and strengths. In order to know children, you must work with children. This is what teaching is. You cannot make the child learn, nor learn for him. You can only organize and lead the child to a situation in which learning can take place."

What these young people are probing are the basic ideas shaping those activities which define the profession of teaching: how to predispose a child for learning; how to organize and sequence the learning experience itself; and how to reinforce learning once it is initially achieved.

Listen to a young man from Watts, a high school dropout, now a community worker at the Westminister Neighborhood Association, speaking on the problem of teacher education:

"On the idea of what should be done for the teachers before they get into the situation. I think it should be asked: Is the program really effective? Or, can it be better devised? Nobody is really that dedicated to teaching the disadvantaged; there may be one or two in the whole batch. I think there should be a program set up in the classrooms dealing with the minority, minority cultures and values. I think there should also be field work and involvement—say, like Westminster. Here you have a social agency in a ghetto community right here. They can come down here, they can take over the classrooms. They could also do it in Jordan High School and many other schools. So they can see some of the things that go on before they even get into the situation. They should have seminars. Seminars should be sensitivity stations; by that I mean, they should be run through with a real fine-tooth comb. They should be there with, maybe, psychologists, psychiatrists—maybe all the way to the high school dropout. He is the one who knows the problems. He's proven it because he has dropped out of school.

"I think they should be aware of ways and means whereby they can make effective changes in the classroom, so that they can teach a class and know the children are going to get the most good out of it; so that we have a high quality of education. Changes are needed and the schools need to know how to bring about these changes. I think they should also deal with

social problems in the community. They all should know that we are a black community, that we have segregated everything — including citizenship — in America. They should be made aware of the broken home situation, the police problems, the job problems. All of this should be a part of it, because all of these problems have a direct effect on the students they are trying to teach.

"They need to be aware of the family structure, the one parent, the mother that's in and out, and so forth, whatever the situation may be. I think that they should stress student involvement in everything that pertains to the school. *And I mean everything.* How can teachers set down rules for the children to go by, if they don't know anything about their situation? Who are they to dictate to the children what they should be like, to take away freedom of choice from the child, when he has some degree of intelligence to determine what he wants and doesn't want?

"I heard somebody mention community participation. We have to have something specific to bring about this community participation. We have to have the community take an active part in school programs and maybe even in school planning. This type of involvement is needed. Have them sit in on situations; have them try and correct the child, give them the opportunity to explain the problems that others don't understand. And, they [teachers] should be taught that they don't know everything. Even in the kindergarten, the five year old child can teach the teacher something. I think she should make them feel that they have contributed something. Tell them how much they help her. Give them the feeling that they give *you* ideas; praise them for their cooperation.

"They need more awareness of our culture, and the values that exist in our community. What is our culture? We do have a culture, you know; but it's not here in America. They have to go back to Africa. The black people in America don't have a culture. But as African-Americans we have a culture. They should find out what it is, and refer to it."

What this young man is talking about is education, and he knows quite clearly that in order to teach, the teacher must have insight into the cultural, motivational, and personal factors that affect learning. Moreover, he sees the need to translate these abstractions into a real experience for the student who is to become a quality teacher by means of live contact with the world of the children she hopes to teach.

Beyond the immediate relation of the one who instructs and the ones who are instructed, he perceives the role of the school as a vital agent of social change. Perhaps even more directly than some professional educators, he is facing the fact that the question of what is to be taught to whom in what ways is not an interesting academic question any longer; it is now a question of utmost urgency facing all of us. **The focus of all conferences was on the needed revolution in teacher education.** A young teacher from San Fernando Valley set forth the conference objectives with masterful directness: What are we going to change? What are we going to change to? What are we going to do when we change?

This report plans to give an account of the conference discussions and recommendations, emphasizing several major themes, indicating consensus positions, then describing whatever local provisos might be necessary to insure accuracy.

Let us turn first to the matter of direct experience in the preservice program of teacher education.

The Practicum: Program Note -- or Panacea

If there is one key to effective teacher preparation, say these young teachers, that key is experience—a lot of it, coming early in the program, and involving the widest possible range of school and community people and activities. Many ideas of how experience should be incorporated into the collegiate program streamed forth in the following list of mandates:

1. Beginning in the freshman or sophomore year, students interested in becoming teachers should work with children as teacher aides, teacher assistants, tutors, or recreation aides through school and community based programs. A case study of one child involving discussions with the child's teacher as well as home visits, would be an easily planned introduction into the practical realities of teaching.
2. Early experience should be more than simply "learning about"; it should involve the student in serious effort to provide genuine services.
3. A community "live-in" experience should be made available for all students in those communities which present a social context different from the student's own social background. This exchange should be multidirectional with students moving freely from the inner city to the suburbs to the country, if feasible; and among all possible socio-economic, ethnic, and racial groups.
4. Experience should be planned for all grade levels, to allow the students to get a first-hand view of the general development of the child.
5. Observation of, if not direct contact with, children with special problems—the mentally retarded, the physically handicapped, the emotionally disturbed—should be provided.
6. The experience of student teaching should be subjected to immediate analysis and evaluation for the student's own use in learning about himself as a teacher. Videotaping, demonstration teaching through role playing, student observation of other students are some ways in which a dynamic evaluation program could be developed to effect a continuous interaction between the student teacher and his teaching coach.
7. The bulk of the teacher training time should be spent on the actual scene of the future teaching. The schools themselves should become the college laboratories and it is there that the teachers of teachers should be located.

8. Student teaching assignments should be the result of a joint decision of the individuals concerned—the student teacher, the college coordinator, the school administrator, and the supervising teacher.
9. The student teacher should be treated as a full member of the professional team, contributing as much as possible within the limits of his professional skills and abilities.
10. The student teaching experience should be as long as possible — a year, ideally, and remunerated, particularly if it is set up as a fifth year or internship program.

Here, then, are the young teachers' views on the matter of practical experience. Let us consider their recommendations a little more closely.

A first reaction might be that they do not sound any particularly new and fresh notes in the ear of the experienced educator. After all (many professors of education could say) each of these field experience arrangements has been tried in one form or another in numerous teacher training programs and over a fair number of years, albeit on a small scale and often on a short term basis. But perhaps the element of novelty is not really the important point, even though implementation of the total combination of experiences suggested may be unique. What these young teachers seem to be saying is that the *sine qua non* of professional training is direct experience. The fact that few of them went beyond a statement of need for some formal live interaction with the educational enterprise in its community setting does not diminish the importance of their comment.

However, it was a young teacher in Los Angeles who raised the significant question about the role of experience in teacher education. She asked, and asked continuously, "How will this experience help you to be a better teacher?" "How will getting to know the child, his family, his problems make you do things differently?" She was posing a fundamental question about teacher education, a question that deals with the content as well as with the form of experience in professional education. Is it general experience that is needed by the prospective teacher, or is it a special kind of experience? More specifically, is it raw experience or analyzed experience?

If mere exposure to objects, events, or people is a guarantee of the formation of desired ideas, attitudes, or ways of doing things, why is it that experience so often seems to leave the human being relatively untouched? It seems reasonable to expect that when people are in close contact with one another, they would get to know and understand each other better. Yet T. S. Eliot can write of that most intimate of human relationships, the family, thus:

> "Two people who know they do not understand each other,
> Breeding children whom they do not understand,
> And who will never understand them."*

Although Eliot is here reflecting on profound implications of the human condition, it is instructive to ponder the import of his ideas in relation to teacher education.

* Eliot, T. S., *The Cocktail Party*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1950, p. 14.

Nonetheless, these young people were convinced that "live" experience, the making of human connections, together with competent analysis and discussion, would significantly improve their teaching performance.

It may well be that teacher educators have not stressed sufficiently the difference between content and form (assuming that they know the difference themselves). For example, it may be that, traditionally, we have just talked about the need for communication. It is quite another thing to consider what is or should be communicated, and then to set about doing it. The young teachers have clearly identified experience as a necessary component of teacher training. Now it is the responsibility of the teachers of teachers to produce beginning professionals who can ask significant questions about their professional practice; and, moreover, to have available some means by which they can better analyze what they are doing and to make revisions on the basis of that analysis. In other words, these young teachers have illuminated a pressing need in the profession today: the need for a relevant theory of learning and instruction which can provide guidelines for the orderly development of practice and its continuing evaluation.

But if we listen even more clearly to the voices of our young conferees, we hear another, perhaps more important, message. They seem to be saying that the traditional image of the theoretician-practitioner will have to yield to the demands of the day. New professional levels must emerge if the needs of an educationally hungry society are to be met. The reality may be that beginning professional practice will be somewhere between highly skilled performance and theoretically informed activity at a level of personal awareness. In short, the profession of education may well be on its way to a more carefully delineated hierarchy of specialized services which in the long run can make better use of a wider variety and a larger number of people.

As to a more effective attribute of a profession—commitment——these young teachers evidence genuine involvement. They want to teach and they want to teach well. They have issued a clear challenge to the teacher educator: make better sense of the preparation that you give us by connecting us with the real world of teaching. In good professional conscience, there is no way of ducking this issue. However, the professor of education, in heeding the challenge, should not make the mistake of promising more than can be delivered at the present time, for the relevant body of knowledge for the training of teachers is yet to be formed.

Yet herein lies a most exciting opportunity for the development of a truly professional program of teacher education By bringing together the creativity of young minds with the experience of mature minds in a genuine collaborative effort to forge such knowledge, the current attempts to revise and redefine professional practice to provide an education for these times would have an excellent prognosis. The meeting of immediate pragmatic needs in a troubled school world would be wedded to more inductive research and conceptual framework in a partnership that would ultimately produce relevant theories of teacher training.

Theory Courses: Knowledge of Most Worth

This section could be subtitled: an exercise in irrelevance. For this was the constantly reiterated criticism of course offerings in the professional sequence at all four conferences. Some elements of a relevant program of teacher education here follow; first, in the words of the conference participants, then restated in more formal, programmatic terms.

Community Worker — Los Angeles

"I feel that a Mexican-American child can be segregated in an integrated school. Because until you have integrated his entire personality, and until he no longer feels a marginal man, he will always feel isolated in an integrated school. And no matter how beautiful your buildings may be, and no matter how decorative, or how sensitive you may be to lighting, that child will be in darkness if you do not think of that child's personality and what you do to him when he first starts on that first day on which he comes into the school and meets the stranger, a teacher."

A dynamic psychology of the child which views him as an individual and which views the ways in which he relates to his society and to his culture, as individual.

Beginning Teacher — Detroit

"Meaningful steps must be taken to broaden the view of the future teachers, and to enrich them culturally. They must know the culture, the problems, the values that operate in the child's life. No matter how creative or how brilliant the teacher is, if he doesn't know the child, he will never really get through to him. I do not believe that the average department of education is equipped to impart this kind of knowledge."

Sensitivity training which develops perceptive awareness of self and others.

Teacher Educator — New Orleans

"We would like to introduce more broad behavioral science and sociology courses. These would be action courses. In these courses, students would re-evaluate and assess their own personal feelings toward the disadvantaged, and toward society in general. The courses would be built around the needs of the children; at least, this will keep the students aware of the fact that they will be dealing with people. Their ultimate goal is working with people and helping to resolve human values."

A concurrent sociology, anthropology, social psychology which places the student in the context of his relationships at school, at home, among peers, and in relation to the majority society. Practical vehicles for this kind of theoretical preparation are interdisciplinary courses and seminars.

Student Teacher — New Orleans

"The student has to supplement the guidance counselors in the school because there aren't enough to go around, and because, many times, the kids are not taking advantage of the counseling."

Training in guidance and counseling which enables the teacher to take up the slack in presently understaffed guidance programs.

School Administrator — Boston

"We all know there are disturbed children in the classroom. They are often difficult to handle, and they are sometimes easily provoked. I think that all teachers-to-be should be required to spend some time working in institutions for the mentally ill. Actual work with problem children might better prepare one for handling problem children in the class."

Experience with children with a variety of handicaps in learning—the emotionally disturbed, the slow learner—to give range to the repertoire of teaching approaches and materials.

Upward Bound Director — Boston

"What I now hear my revolutionary friends saying is that you can't introduce teachers to new ways of teaching kids by using the old ways of teaching teachers. Teachers tend to perpetuate in their classrooms the way in which

Training in curriculum building which would engender a sense of continuing involvement with the "material."

they themselves have been taught. Therefore it is necessary to teach the teacher about the materials in the same way that you would have him teach the materials to the kids. This means that the role of the teacher trainer must be redefined, that the trainee must play a far more active role in his own training, and that he must learn by the discovery method if he is to teach by the discovery method. Some new ways must be found to introduce the content of the new materials to teachers in the same manner by which they will later teach them to their students, without insulting the teacher by treating him like a child."

Teacher Educator — Detroit

"The course work of the program should be devoted to the realities of the disadvantaged and of teaching the disadvantaged; to the knowledge, understandings, and skills needed to teach the disadvantaged. 'How-to' course work is important but it should be devoted to such things as: how to gather, analyze, and synthesize information; how to evaluate and make decisions based on the students, the school, and the teacher's style. By this means the teacher can plan his curriculum, choose and evaluate materials, analyze his teaching, know how and when to get or use other people, and how to see himself as, and be, an agent of change."

Experience in developing basic analytic tools for diagnosing the requirements of each teaching-learning episode and assessing the effectiveness of the instructional strategies selected.

Beginning Teacher — Detroit

"There should be greater emphasis on management skills for teachers who must increasingly deal with professional and paraprofessional assistance and supportive services."

Training in the use of resources —consultants, auxiliary personnel, materials.

Beginning Teacher — Los Angeles

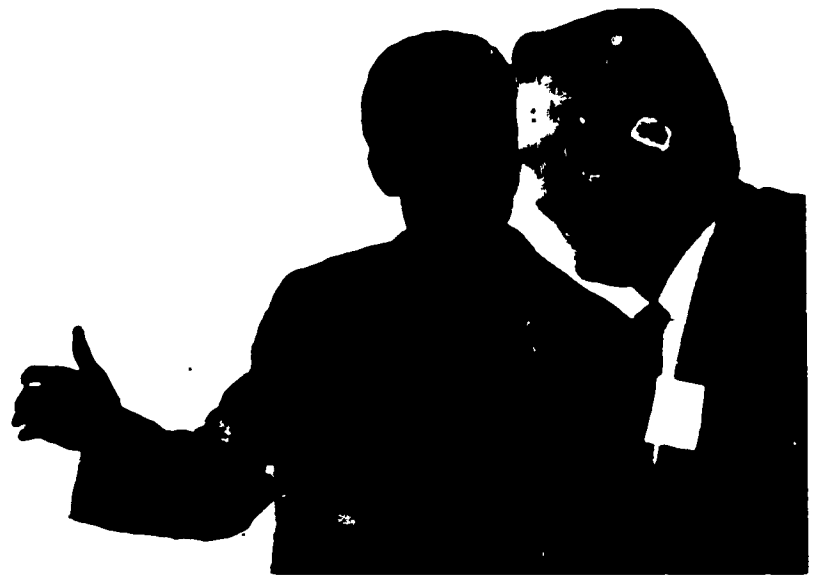
"In addition, the teacher must be taught not to place undue reliance on the text, either in the original or adapted forms. A book is not the only way to teach appreciation, information, values, or skill development. The field of audiovisual aids offers limitless possibilities for the improved teaching of any subject, and all teachers (but especially those in disadvantaged areas) need to be alerted to these important teaching opportunities. An advanced course which explores not only the conventional, but also the creative use of audiovisual aids should, in my opinion, be mandatory for the beginning teacher of the disadvantaged."

Instruction in the use of the new educational technology.

Beginning Teacher — New Orleans

"I'm not talking about the course in ethics or philosophy that teaches you about the great works, you take a comprehensive exam, and you can name a few great works. We don't need that. We need a philosophy course geared toward teachers, not a course of liberal arts education with the purpose of knowledge for its own sake, but one that is going to teach us that when we become teachers we have to develop an interest, and this interest is going to show in the philosophy we develop as a teacher—A teacher's philosophy course."

A philosophy of education that looks at the contemporary problems and issues of education in terms of inquiry by way of defining questions and issues.



How is such a professional training program to be developed? The young conference participants were not ready to produce new program models, but on one point they were clear and unanimous. A relevant teacher education, according to them, will be attained only when it takes root in actual classroom experience in a community context with a full complement aboard—the college professor, the experienced teacher, the student, the children, and community spokesmen. The task is not a simple affair, since it is not at all obvious what is the most relevant behavioral and social science knowledge that would provide even the theoretical skeletons of theories of learning and teaching germane to the school situation. The rich lodes of the basic disciplines will have to be mined carefully for that content which is most relevant in terms of the actual needs of the teaching-learning transaction.

Despite the possibility that all of us may not fully appreciate all that is involved in such an undertaking, the fact that young teachers have arrived at a point which has been reached only recently by a few teacher educators is indeed impressive. As a case in point, the Center for Research and Development on Educational Differences at Harvard University recently described the deliberations of the "Shadow Faculty" as having a revolutionary ring. One principle of their radical position is that "education should take place in a community of learning where students, faculty, and administration act as joint participants in the learning process."* In short, these young teachers seem to be saying, implicitly if not always explicitly, that teacher education should not consist of a set of *givens*. If this be the case, then professional training should take the form of an apprenticeship by which a finite repertoire of skills can be acquired.

But this is not the way young teachers view teacher education. They speak in terms which describe an education, dynamic in nature, which will equip the beginning professional with the ability to sustain a lifetime of learning both formally and informally. Essentially, this is the challenge to American education today—how to educate this generation of children so that they can keep pace with the ever-increasing momentum of social and technological change. It would not make very much sense, according to the young teachers, to expect them to teach children dynamically unless they themselves have been dynamically taught. Why "discovery" learning for children and "information storage" for their teachers?

As to specific recommendations for teacher education, they point to concerns both for teaching in general and for teaching disadvantaged youth in particular. In a general sense, teaching is teaching, no matter what the context. Such a point was implied in the following comment from a student teacher in New Orleans: "I don't think that you can really divorce teacher education from teacher education of the disadvantaged. Any suggestions that we can make for the improvement of teacher education necessarily includes improvements in teaching the disadvantaged."

Yet in focusing on a particular context—disadvantaged youth—sharp differences in strategies to be employed are revealed. Focusing still closer on specific and distinct groups of disadvantaged—Mexican-American, Negro, Puerto Rican—still more differences are detected. What appears to be needed is a teacher recruit—intelligent, committed, mature—who has the capacity to undergo a professional training program which enables him to diagnose competently the particular educational setting in which he is working and to adjust his practice accordingly. Thus the real differences between children of the majority culture and the children of various subcultures are recognized in terms of values, learning styles, and life alternatives which are apparent enough that young teachers immediately sense their presence.

The confrontation with such cultural differences precipitated a clear demand by young teachers that they be provided with practical strategies for dealing with such differences, here and now, without regard for theoretical analysis, at least for the time being. Until there are relevant theories of learning which can clearly account for the alternative forms of response noted in disadvantaged youth, there will be difficulty in developing and evaluating sound programs for differentiated instruction. From the conference experience, the prospect of developing at least a beginning theory is bright. The young teacher is seeking an involvement, through action and reflection, in professional preparation and practice.

* *Ideas in Practice*, Center for Research and Development on Educational Differences, Harvard University 5:1; February 1967.

PLANNING FOR CHANGE:

SOME BEGINNINGS

If the young teachers attending the conferences were at all representative, the new wave of teachers is beginning to present a new image. From their articulate and vigorous expressions of ideas and feelings about children, about teaching, about their own education, about social problems, these teachers may be the first to innovate, not the last. It is clear that many of these young teachers are committed to the role of the teacher as an agent of change. No longer, so they say, will they be merely reflectors of society. They too have a stake in shaping society towards goals that they have a right and obligation to set.

This presents still another demand on teacher education: preparation for effective participation in social change. Despite the time limitations of a three-day conference devoted primarily to discussion of central problems and issues, action programs were proposed during the discussions to implement conference ideas. The conference was not a terminal point; for many, it was the prelude to efforts to bring about meaningful change.

ACTION PROGRAMS

Los Angeles

1. A core group consisting of beginning teachers, student teachers teaching in Watts, community workers, and professors of education planned to hold regular meetings in Watts to review curriculum needs at the elementary and secondary level and to assist teachers, particularly, in their efforts to meet these needs.
2. The National Student Association planned to set up a tutorial program using students from California State College at Los Angeles to work with the Westminster Association (the neighborhood association in Watts) to tutor youngsters in the elementary and secondary schools. They also hoped to plan extracurricular programs for the young people.

New Orleans

1. A meeting at Xavier University, New Orleans, was suggested for all conference participants as well as representatives from other colleges and universities, to discuss reports to be made to faculty members of departments of education at home universities.
2. A new organization, Community Action Council for Tulane University Students (CACTUS) would be asked to assist in coordinating other university student groups along program lines suggested at the conference.

Detroit

1. The possibility of placing students in the summer of their junior year as recreation workers in OEO programs would be investigated.
   The advantages of such an arrangement would be—
   provision for a trained staff member for OEO summer programs;
   provision for paid summer jobs for college students who will practice-teach during their senior year in the inner-city;
   opportunity to become informally involved and acquainted with the children and the community in which they will teach.
2. Saturday classes for children and their parents were to be formed involving parents in school activities, providing extra remedial work for the children, and increasing the communication between the teachers and the community.

Northeastern Region

1. A conference for beginning teachers, to be held in New York, was planned.
2. The SNEA in various states was to be invited to work in a cooperative program to implement the recommendations of the conference.

EPILOGUE

Did the conference achieve its aims and objectives? From the standpoint of its formal aims, the answer is a qualified yes. In a three-day meeting, there are obvious limitations to what can be done specifically towards the definitions of central problems and issues in an enterprise as complex as teacher education, as well as toward recommendation of substantive changes.

Regarding its more informal aim to actively involve young teachers in revising and redefining professional education and practice—the yes is much more positive. The teacher activist is definitely on the scene and a new era in the profession of teaching seems to be emerging.

It is hoped that these conferences helped to marshal constructively the resources of many young teachers who may be able to make a difference in the lives of the present generation of children in school. Whether they are able to make this difference depends upon the extent to which senior professionals admit the "junior partner" into a meaningful collaboration. But it remains for all of the nation's education students to take action now in order to become a telling voice in the academic and professional communities and in the real world of the beginning teacher. Through this professional reform, all our children and youth can obtain the education they deserve.

APPENDIX

(Professional positions as of the dates of the Conferences.)

Los Angeles Conference — January 27, 28, 29, 1967

Liaison — Dr. Donald Thomas
San Fernando Valley State College
Northridge, California

Papers from the Conference:

Assumptions, Purposes of the Conference ..... Gloria Bray, Los Angeles

The Realities of Mexican-American Education ..... Irene Tovar, Latin-American Civic Association

Teacher, Am I Really Stupid? ... Billy Tidwell, president, Sons of Watts, Los Angeles

The Unfortunate Realities of Teacher Education ..... Robert Reynolds, president, Student California Teachers Association

Educating the Culturally Disadvantaged . Wendy Chapple

NOTE: An account of the Los Angeles Conference may be found in *Student NEA News*, Volume Ten, Number Two, April, 1967, under the title of "Consumers of Teacher Education Seek Better Product for Disadvantaged."

New Orleans Conference — March 2, 3, 4, 1967

Liaison — Dr. Glen Hontz
Tulane University
New Orleans, Louisiana

Papers from the Conference:

The Central Issues in Educating the Disadvantaged ..... Dr. Samuel Proctor
President, the Institute for Services to Education
Washington, D. C.

NOTE: A related article by Dr. Proctor may be found in *Student NEA News*, Volume Ten, Number Three, May, 1967, under the title of "The Central Issue in Educating the Disadvantaged."

Detroit Conference — March 31, April 1, 2, 1967

Liaison — Dr. Charles Stewart
School Center Building, Detroit Public Schools
Detroit, Michigan

Boston Conference — April 28, 29, 30, 1967

Liaison — Dr. Helen Kenney
Northeastern University
Boston, Massachusetts
Dr. William Kvaraceus
Lincoln Filene Center, Tufts University
Medford, Massachusetts

Papers from the Conference:

Outside the Ivy ..... Signe Eklund, Ann Foley
Boston, Massachusetts

Postmortem of Our Dreams:
New Teachers' Retrospective View of Training for Teaching Disadvantaged Youth ..... James J. Buckley
Solomon Lewenberg High School
Boston, Massachusetts

Training Inner-City Teachers:
Explorations of Some Newer Directions ..... Harvey Pressman
Lincoln Filene Center, Tufts University
Medford, Massachusetts

Toward the Improvement of Teacher Education:
Souping Up the Old Model ..... Daniel Marshall
Department of Education
Tufts University
Medford, Massachusetts