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To meet the needs and accomplish the desirable goals of a changing society, English teachers and administrators must alter many of their traditional roles and become agents of change, providing intelligent leadership and guidance. Harbans Singh Bhola has identified four major issues which have immediate relevance to English education and which must be faced by educators: the individual versus the group, local versus state control, the common versus the elite, and the right to privacy versus public obligations. Although the role of teachers has changed over the past 25 years from that of generalists to academic specialists who guide student inquiry, teachers must constantly identify the social needs of the present and devise programs to fit the changing values of students. Furthermore, whole school curriculums need to undergo reorganization in response to new knowledge and modern developments in technology. The potential of education in society can be fully realized only if teaching practices and curriculums are continually evaluated and if socially relevant innovations are planned and instituted at a more rapid pace than in the past. (SW)

The Growing Edges of Secondary English

Essays by the Experienced Teacher Fellows at the University of Illinois 1966-1967

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PLANNING FOR CHANGE IN ENGLISH EDUCATION

by DAVID KIVES

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Change is one of the few certainties in our mass society. In fact, changing technologies, especially in the means of communication and transportation, have created the possibility of a world which is a single super society rather than a collection of fragmented national states. Such a development will, of course, both result in and result from changes within each national society. The institutions of nations change slowly but surely. These institutions—such as government agencies, churches, corporations, labor organizations, and educational institutions—are highly complex bureaucracies in a mass society. They are not only large but interdependent as well. Together they form a network of interests, values, and objectives which is in constant motion, redefining its purposes, its means of mutual cooperation, and its direction in relation to the nation; and, in turn, these changes redefine the national character and national goals.

English education is deeply involved in this process of national and worldwide change. James Squire has identified six major forces for change in the contemporary English curriculum:

1. Major national projects in the teaching of English are providing impetus for curricular change.
2. New programs of preservice and inservice education are preparing teachers to utilize new ideas and approaches.
3. New concepts and new ideas about the content of language, literature, composition, and the supporting skills are affecting much current activity in the teaching of English.
4. A new definition of English and of the relationship between content and skill is emerging from current curricular efforts.
5. Recommendations from an Anglo-American Conference at Dartmouth will provide recommendations with long-range implications.

6. New awareness of the social implications of language study has awakened concern for the education of all boys and girls.[1]

Acted upon by such forces, English teachers must change many of their traditional roles. But, more important, they must also become agents of change, and it is the scope of this new role which will be discussed in this essay.

FOUR ASPECTS OF CHANGE

Change cannot be effectively resisted, but it can be controlled and directed to ends deemed wise by influential people. Change can be cooperatively harnessed to meet the changing needs, desires, and objectives of the people in society. American society cannot survive by being reactionary and retreating from social problems. Much of the debate in our society is a contest of negatives—anti-this or anti-that—instead of a concern for a positive application of social theory to promote democratic methods and goals. Educational institutions have been justly criticized for seeking a safe solution and sitting on it until the demise of key personnel or the threat of revolution forces change. Such institutions, their administrators, and above all their teachers must provide intelligent leadership and guidance in the face of the social phenomena of change to increase each individual's capacity to choose.

To fulfill this role, English educators must apply available theory from all the disciplines bearing on English to help solve the educational problems of a changing society. Their vigorous leadership is necessary to overcome the inequities and inequalities in education caused by the static nature of many of the methods and practices of educators who in the past fearfully avoided the challenge of change. Many difficulties will arise, however, as the educator plans for intelligent change. Harbans Singh Bhola suggests four major issues which must be faced by educators:

1. The Individual versus the Group
2. Local versus State Control
3. The Common versus the Elite
4. The Right to Privacy versus Public Obligations[2]

Although these are clearly general concerns, they have immediate relevance to the problems of English education.

[1] James R. Squire, "Six Major Influences on the Secondary English Curriculum," *Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals,* LI (April 1967), 3.

[2] Harbans Singh Bhola, "The Need for Planned Change in the Curriculum," *Theory into Practice,* The Ohio State University, V:1 (February 1964).

The Individual vs. the Group

The problems raised by the conflicting influences of individuals and groups as well as the conflict between individual and group goals do not have any facile answers. Many groups play a large role in determining the policies and objectives of English education. W. Winston Young's essay on censorship in this volume outlines the role of such groups as they affect book selection and the individual's right to read. The principal difficulty raised by conflicts between the individual's right to read and the role of community groups lies in the school's dual role of preparing the individual to be a part of the community and at the same time liberating him to be himself.

Bhola argues that democracy is cooperative individualism in human society. The individual does not exist in a vacuum but is defined by the units of society with which he interacts. Educators must be wary of paying too much attention to the kinds of "grass roots" letters-to-the-editor which are often inspired by nationally circulated newsletters from political or religious groups. English teachers and administrators alike must resist capitulation to the vocal few and strive for the educational success of each of their students. It is especially dangerous when a discreet phone call to an administrator—or even the mere fear that such a phone call may come someday—can effectively censor a book and thereby defeat the efforts of teachers who have met in an open, professional manner to plan a meaningful literature program. This kind of harassment not only harms the student but can fragmentize society into small, uncooperative groups which cancel out each other's efforts and retard mutual progress.

Local vs. State Control

Bhola's second issue, local versus state (or federal) control, emphasizes the fact that government often best represents the needs of society as a whole. In a society whose population is as mobile as ours, the government has a legitimate function in upgrading local school systems for the benefit of the country as a whole. People move to find employment or education, or for military service or personal advancement, and their mobility has made the local system and its quality a matter of national concern. Often one part of the country must pay a high price for the failure of schools in another section. Large cities and industrial areas attract rural residents who not only are from a different social and cultural background but are often poorly educated as well. English teachers working with the children of these and other kinds of culturally dis-

advantaged people will inherit a variety of social and regional dialects and behavior patterns that demand a reconstruction of English methods and materials.

These kinds of problems most frequently arise because, although few can know local needs better than the local citizens themselves, they are often incapable of initiating progress, uninterested in meeting social needs, or even actively reactionary enough to selfishly deny equal educational opportunity to others. Some local power groups function to keep their communities fearful, helpless, or ignorant. Other communities, of course, do a much better job of providing for their children and of coping with change, but, to the degree that the federal government represents all of the people, its influence can be brought to bear upon a local leadership that uses the specter of federal control to preserve the status quo.

In addition, traditional school boundaries have changed through the pressures of population growth and shifts. These new groupings of divergent interests and groups have redefined the role and the goals of education in such new communities. Local leaders must determine their specific local needs and capabilities, but they can neither determine them nor meet them alone. Their willing cooperation with broader agencies at the state and local levels is vitally needed to develop a dynamic school situation. Checks and balances must be placed on federal influence to protect local options, but local groups cannot accept anyone or trying to prevent them from establishing or even funding creative school programs. It has been their general failure to do so that has necessitated government aid and influence for the social health of the entire country.

Innovations such as team teaching, independent study, and modular scheduling frequently arise from a combined effort of school agencies and personnel from several levels of government—both local and federal—as well as teachers and researchers from all levels of education. The United States Office of Education has administered funds for a wide range of projects which have helped to train and retrain English teachers and, through Project English, to help revamp the English curriculum. Federal funds have enabled teachers to update their knowledge and skills through summer institutes in literature, composition, language, and other areas as well as year-long programs such as the one which has enabled the members of the English Experienced Teacher Fellowship Program to write these essays. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act has provided direct aid to local school systems as well as to regional projects to upgrade the teaching and learning of English. Under this program, local school systems have the opportunity to use creatively the

expertise which can be obtained through federal funds and can thereby provide a valuable experience for their children without sacrificing local control and initiative.

The Common vs. the Elite

Bhola believes that the major issue here is the fear that in education an elite few will control the destinies of the many. But specialization and professionalization are both necessary and inevitable in a complex social order. My feeling is that English education has been under the administrative influence and control of everyone but the trained English teacher for too long. By giving him time and the opportunity to plan educational programs based on his intimate knowledge of students and subject matter, English education could better represent the vital issues and the real concerns of the disciplines which compose it. Instead, school systems multiply administrative and curricular staff—often at twice the salary of teachers—and have the effect of perpetuating the situation which keeps the teacher buried in students and paperwork.

By releasing English teachers to attend professional meetings, to visit other classes and schools, to read widely and deeply, and to attend in-service and university classes, an entire new creative force for growth could be unleashed on education. Teachers should be given time and encouragement so that they can be the leaders of their profession and provide leadership in educational decisions affecting English, the school program, and the broader issues of social change. To accomplish this, the role of the teacher itself needs professionalizing. Levels of achievement and of minimum competence must be raised, and English teachers must become self-confident as well as self-critical. Eleanor Fitburni's paper on student teaching in this section suggests some ways in which professionalization can be fostered by increases in cooperatively planned and supervised teacher training programs in which both university staff and local school teachers play an active role.

If there is now an elite in education, it is not the teachers but the administrators. Too often the latter do not really represent either the community or the teachers, but rather they strive to promote a self-image that may only incidentally relate to the best interests of public education. The promotion of the English teacher (or the collective group of English teachers which form the department in any school) into significant decision-making roles in *English* education would materially benefit the program for the student and greatly enhance the morale and status of the English teacher.

The Right to Privacy vs. Public Obligations

This conflict between the teacher's right to run his own program and his obligation to let the public know what he is doing further qualifies approaches to planned change. Some teachers have misinterpreted academic freedom to mean that they have a license for a closed door policy of "anything goes" in the classroom. If the teacher is to achieve truly professional status, he cannot hide. The classroom teacher must be responsive to the help which his colleagues and the profession can provide. He must be available for the *best* in professional expertise and evaluation of his work. Much of the conflict over changes for the better in education is fought with the isolated teacher who will not or cannot face comparison and who will not even consider new programs and methods.

But this coin also has two sides. Many teachers, especially in English, have been handicapped by poor preparation, worse supervision, impossible conditions, pathetic local leadership, few materials, antiquated texts, and three times the number of students any educational theorist would call possible to teach meaningfully. Until the administration and the board insist upon improving the teacher's role and basic condition, the least they can do is leave him some privacy to handle his own problems.

For an interesting experiment (which would surely fail to get federal funds), I would propose a school system in which one-tenth of the teachers were given three classes, seventy-five students, three free hours for curriculum and preparations work, highly placed committee positions, support for advanced professional degrees, and a minimum of twelve thousand dollars per year. Let these be three-year elective positions chosen by representatives of the community, administrators, and their peers. I think I could promise a revolution in such a system in terms of a significant increase in professional leadership responsible to society, students, and the academic disciplines.

Until major effort is made to improve adequately the teacher's condition—not just substituting a study hall or hiring another expert—educational ills should not be wholly blamed on him. My belief is that the public is not now paying nearly enough for what it is getting daily out of overworked and harassed teachers, much less paying for the extensive and expensive necessary improvements. This situation can be most directly affected by strong, cohesive groups of teachers working together to improve the teaching of their own disciplines. Bryant Fillion's sound and subtle analysis (following this paper) of the internal power structure and organization possible for English departments discusses how well-organized groups of English teachers can powerfully affect the teaching of their subject and thereby improve the status of those doing the teaching.

CHANGE CAN AND MUST BE PLANNED

Bhola concludes that education is not operating up to its capacity. Development will mean change. For its potential to be realized, English educators must plan for change even if mistakes are made. Traditional status quo thinking and planning in a changing society are intolerable mistakes, and few innovations could fail as drastically in meeting today's problems. The attractiveness of deliberate and thoughtful innovation and the boost in morale given to students and teachers in innovative schools are themselves enriching educational experiences well worth the price tag. Some semisacred traditional programs which have lost their relevance did deal effectively with the problems they were designed to meet and were often innovations themselves. Their excellence was determined by the way they met society's needs when they were instituted. To stop now or to return to the past is to violate even the traditional standards of excellence. Rather, the problem is to identify the real social needs of the present and creatively devise programs for today's students. I believe that if students are given a modern, critical, and comprehensive education they cannot do any worse than previous generations. My confidence is that they will do much better, given honest and meaningful choices by teachers who have professional training and standards and full public and administrative support.

But the role of the teacher is not static; it always reflects changes in society. Gordon Lee sees three crucial ways in which the goals of education—and therefore the status of teachers—have changed over the past twenty-five years in response to social changes. (1) The recent emphasis has been away from individual needs and toward national needs. Political and national security demands have changed the climate of education and created support for improvement. (2) The second change in emphasis has been the shift away from concern with the psychological-social development of the student toward concern with excellence in the disciplines. This academic orientation is increasingly seen in the elementary schools, especially in math and science, but more recently in foreign language and the language arts. Increasingly stringent admission policies of colleges have been a major influence upon this emphasis on academic excellence throughout the grades. (3) The modern idea of education rejects the notion of tidy little subject units that when brought together equal a closed area of knowledge gained. It is held rather that education is open-ended and continuous. Lee feels the present focus on the school child is on his capacity as a student and not as a whole person. Promoting his intellectual development is conceived as the primary role of the school, and other matters are principally relegated to the social agencies.

As knowledge increases in range and in complexity, the demands of the curriculum on the student further narrow the educative process to primarily intellectual and formally academic concerns.[3]

Consequently, the role of the teacher has changed from that of a generalist to a specialist in some academic area. Similarly, Lee points out that many of the functions and roles formerly performed by the generalist teacher such as those of counseling, socializing, and just plain playing are now performed by new specialists. That this kind of specialization can be carried to extremes can be seen in the example of an English teacher who is criticized by his colleagues for departing from strictly "English" concerns in the study of literature. In their overly restricted view, the historical and social context of a book should be relegated to the social studies department, the personal values of fiction shuttled to the counselor, and the oral aspects of literature detoured to the speech department.

This last is a particularly naive view, however, for today's teacher no longer serves merely as a dispenser of information but as a guide to inquiry and independent study. By guiding self-learning and self-evaluation, a teacher can promote a lifelong commitment to education and personal growth. He thus ceases to be the only source of learning and becomes a resource. The recent book by Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, *Linguistics: A Revolution in Teaching* (New York: Dell, 1967), describes how such a method of inquiry with the teacher in the role of resource person can be effectively used to develop student interest and knowledge concerning language study. In such a role, the English teacher is a catalyst and arranger of student learning. He is an English specialist with his own commitment to both his subject and to pedagogy. Such an English teacher will also continually involve himself in advanced study in the disciplines bearing on his teaching. Such a teacher will be in a position to direct desirable change because he understands the forces at work on the school as a whole and the role of teachers within it.

Some of the societal pressures forcing change in the curriculum were recently sketched by John Goodlad. He found that World War II and the cold war revealed a general ignorance of American youth about math and science which prompted university mathematicians and scientists to get involved in elementary and secondary school curricula. Sputnik spectacularly emphasized the need for technological skills, stimulated criticism of the schools by academicians, and led to increased support for

[3] Gordon Lee, "The Changing Role of the Teacher," *The Changing American School*, NSSE Yearbook, LXV, Part II (1966).

research in newly discovered problems. The anticipated depression of the late fifties did not develop; instead, prosperity and a growing population created increased pressures for broad-scale college education. These changes and others brought changes of values and, especially for the young, a sense of uncertainty and consciousness of change. Students have developed their own values to fit life as they see it, and this means we do not have the same kind of student this year that we had ten years ago. As values change so do the amount and shape of available knowledge, and bits and pieces can no longer be easily selected to "educate" with. Similarly, we find out more and more how children learn and discover that they learn in a different way and for different reasons than most educators have believed. All of these changes have demanded similar changes in the educational structure of our society.[4]

These changes bring new elements into the roles of both English teacher and administrator. Genuine educational leaders will not fight a rear guard action against change. Therefore, the English teacher and the administrators he works with who want to lead students, staff, and community into a literate future in a dynamic society will be those who understand and use the factors of change to promote valid educational objectives. He will organize his resources and those of his colleagues to encourage new ideas and novel methods of teaching to assist goals both of English education and of democratic education as a whole. Only by so doing can he encourage his students to understand their place in a rapidly changing social and technological order and enable them to build a happy and successful life within it.

ORGANIZING SCHOOLS FOR CHANGE

The school must be organized to lead toward the accomplishment of the desirable social goals of the present social revolution. Research into the problems of the culturally deprived, concern for genuine integration in both North and South, movements for more equitable political representation, new understanding about the role of work in an automating society, and the pervasive changes wrought by the new electronic media all affect the schools. Students are the chief receptors of and participators in the mass culture, and their schools must meet their needs for social and self-analysis, useful knowledge, and general direction for maturity and preparation for life. The available talents of teachers must be mobilized to accomplish these broad educational objectives.

Frank Brown's leadership at Melbourne High School in Florida offers one model for reorganization and the introduction of new and restructured ideas for adaptability and independence. His nongraded school

[4] John Goodlad, "The Curriculum," in *The Changing American School*

aims at student self-instruction. The various groupings are designed to promote the capabilities of the students and to use effectively the talents of teachers and staff. Some other new organizational strategies in schools accommodate team teaching, electronic teaching aids, classes of different sizes, and independent study units. The newer tools and methods demand changed patterns of teaching. The egg-crate school house will give way to schools without walls. Educational parks, like Evanston (Illinois) Township High School's new four-school complex, are being built to better serve modern educational needs. Classrooms are giving way to learning zones that take advantage of computer-assisted scheduling, new instructional groupings, flexible time periods, and increased use of libraries and instructional aids.

Francis Chase discusses the response of schools to the radical transformations of the culture which he believes have been primarily affected by the knowledge explosion and the technological revolution.[5] Schools are very stable institutions; consequently, they resist change longer than most other more flexible social organizations. This social lag builds up challenges without appropriate responses until the pressure is overwhelming and threatens to overhaul the institutions. The major difficulty of formulating an adequate response comes from the highly specialized nature of modern knowledge and the rapid acceleration of discovery as well as from the indecision caused by the concomitant redefinition of our culture.

Chase describes several steps which can be taken to incorporate new knowledge: (1) Either it must be fitted into the old formulations or they must be reformulated. (2) These new relationships must be incorporated into the system by local interests and the larger academic world. For example, it has been and will be a struggle to get schools and colleges to teach English in light of the many developments in linguistics during the last ten years. (3) These new relationships must be explained to the culture—the new English needs more articles and paperbacks aimed at educating the general public as well as the non-English teachers. (4) Instructional materials must be developed for all types of learners. This is a major defect in many of the current efforts to incorporate linguistics into existing English programs. At the same time it seems that in teaching really new materials the teacher is the major learner, since the materials must first "teach him" before they can be used in the classroom. I would suggest that teachers' editions of such texts will need to increase their instruction of the teacher both in content and in methods.

Similarly, (5) teachers need to learn the information and the sup-

[5] Francis Chase, "School Change in Perspective," in *The Changing American School*.

porting evidence so that they can replace traditional grammars by more recent models that reflect new insights into language. The public also will have to be convinced that they are responsible for the continuing education of teachers. Presently few school systems pay enough so that the teacher can afford to train himself to the degree that his ever more complex subject matter requires. (6) Teachers must learn to teach all ages and types of learners. New knowledge will only serve to separate the teacher from his students if he does not know enough about the learning process to be able to teach it. Methods courses presently have such a poor connotation in the minds of both beginning and experienced teachers that I hesitate to argue for more of them. But some incompetent teaching of methods courses in the past must not blind English teachers to the present need for the consideration of special problems in teaching new knowledge to students. That paragon, the scholar-teacher, is needed more in the secondary school than ever before. His training is the joint responsibility of the universities and the public schools. A hard-nosed approach to the reeducation of teachers is vitally needed and will cost the teachers and the public much agonizing self-appraisal, increased personal commitment, and much more money.

Finally, (7) teachers must adapt their behavior to the new ideas they are presenting and the new students who are learning. Too little sound educational theory has found its way into the practical workings of the English classroom. One method, inductive teaching, is actually seldom found in the classroom although it has a long respectable history and many modern refinements in present theory.

In the past it has taken many years to accomplish the incorporation of new knowledge into the school curriculum, but the current imperatives of social and technological change make such incorporation necessary at a much faster pace. Print technology took three hundred years to produce the present situation, in which paperbacks are available in quantity and quality, but the schools have been slow to adopt them. Now the electric age is having the dual effect of vastly expanding publishing and of providing other sources of finding information rapidly. The schools cannot afford to lose the educational advantage of keeping abreast of knowledge and of employing the new technologies. If English teachers and their administrators fail to provide leadership that confronts change and utilizes new knowledge and new technology, their decision-making capacity will be usurped by technicians who will operate the schools on a systems-analysis technological model which could destroy the very rationale of liberal education. If there is an educational establishment, it is about time for it and all those interested in education to provide intelligent direction for the changing social order.