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ABSTRACT

This monograph examines the career education concept. Four interrelated premises discussed include specialism, sequentialism, fundamentalism, and credentialism. Each premise is presented in light of its functional and dysfunctional role in career education. Suggestions are included which would a) enable career education to enhance the principle of maximum possibilities in education, b) obliterate the distinction between work and leisure, and c) increase career education concern with human services.

(MJM)

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CAREER EDUCATION--A HUMANISTIC VIEW
(Part 3 of the ERIC Clearinghouse
on Teacher Education Project
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by

Dr. Robert J. Nash
Dr. Russell M. Agne

College of Education
University of Vermont

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FOREWORD

This monograph is the third part of a project on career and vocational education undertaken by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education under special funding provided by the National Center for Educational Communications, U.S. Office of Education (many of whose functions are now a part of the National Institute of Education). The effort is to bring together ideas and information which can enable the nation to help its prospective citizens to gain an understanding of the economic, physiological, and social implications of work. The related activities in the project are (a) a bibliography of bibliographies on career and vocational education; (b) an in-depth survey of existing programs for teacher education in career and vocational areas; (c) proposals for future developments; (d) a paper on the theory and rationale of career education; and (e) an "anthology" of personal reactions to the concept of career education. The overall impact of the project, hopefully, can be rather strong: a better understanding of the implications of career education, identification of gaps in the idea and knowledge base to be filled, and motivation to take action on every level in education.

The activities of this project, then, are essentially to create a clearer picture of the state-of-the-art now. As always, the expectation is that needed actions can more intelligently follow. Our initial conclusion is that there is a dearth of bonafide career education material reported in the ERIC system or available elsewhere. While there are many, many documents on vocational and technical education, there appears to be little authentic documentation of the field of career education broadly conceived.

Nash and Agne present a vigorous analysis of career education. The reader who critically reviews their points will be in a position to examine other literature on the subject. The Clearinghouse is publishing their paper in the expectation that this kind of study is important for a critical topic like career education. Points of view expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Clearinghouse nor its sponsors.

You may do further research on this topic by checking issues of Research in Education (RIE) and Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE). Both RIE and CIJE use the same descriptors (index terms). Documents in RIE are listed in blocks according to the clearinghouse code letters which processed them, beginning with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Education (AC) and ending with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Vocational and Technical Education (VT). The clearinghouse code letters, which are listed at the beginning of RIE, appear opposite the ED number at the beginning of each entry. "SP" (School Personnel) designates documents processed by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education.

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For readers uncertain how to use ERIC capabilities effectively, we recommend the following materials which are available in microfiche and hardcopy through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service: (a) How To Conduct a Search Through ERIC, ED 036 499, microfiche \$.65, hardcopy \$3.29; (b) Instructional Materials on Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC). Part Two. Information Sheets on ERIC, ED 043 580, microfiche \$.65; hardcopy \$3.29. Item "b" is available as a complimentary item, while the supply lasts, from this Clearinghouse.

--Joel L. Burdin
Director

January 1973

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TOPIC: *Career Education--A Humanistic View (Part 3 of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education Project on Career Education).*

DESCRIPTORS TO USE IN CONTINUING SEARCH OF RIE AND CIJE:

- Career Choice
- *Career Education
- *Educational Needs
- *Educational Objectives
- Educational Programs
- *Occupational Guidance
- *Vocational Education

*Asterisk(s) indicate major descriptors.

CAREER EDUCATION--A HUMANISTIC VIEW

INTRODUCTION

Increasingly, pronouncements from the U.S. Office of Education declare that henceforth the tenets of career education will suffuse all formal educational experiences. Assistant Secretary of HEW, Dr. Sidney P. Marland, in a speech delivered to the National Academy of School Executives, has remarked that career education throughout the seventies will include the systematic and total inculcation of a career perspective in all pupils as early as pre-school and continue through a student's formal education.¹ HEW will spend approximately \$168 million on career education experiments in 1973 in a massive effort to orient all public curricular, instructional, administrative, and counseling experiences to the rubric that at each grade level, a pupil's interests, talents, values, and aptitudes must be directed toward career preparation.²

Similarly, Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education, Joseph P. Cosand, has produced a tentative blueprint for career education in institutions of higher learning which shifts the primary curricular and philosophical emphasis from "liberal" education to the exploration and preparation of career possibilities and the concomitant development of "saleable" skills.³ Also, Marland has stipulated that all community colleges (which collectively will have an enrollment of 3.3 million students by 1975) will begin to interpret their central educational mission as providing students with useful, marketable skills.⁴

There is benefit in the predispositions of leaders like Marland and Cosand who strive to enable each person enter and succeed in a career at whatever point he leaves the formal educational process. To provide five million unemployed Americans with the basic communication and work skills guaranteeing them at least a modicum of economic independence and a consequent sense of their own worth and dignity is an objective all educators ought to prize. While we agree that there is potential good in the transmutation and application of abstract, inert knowledge to useful, professional service, we will demonstrate that

¹Gene I. Macroff, "Career Training: Learning How To Make a Living," The Sunday New York Times, June 11, 1972, p. 9.

²U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, "Career Education," Education Briefing Paper (Washington, D.C.: the Office, May 1972).

³Joseph Cosand, "O.E. on Career Education," Change, 4:7, 60-61; June 1972.

⁴Sidney P. Marland, Jr., "Education for More Than One Career," World, 1:46-49; June 7, 1972.

the burgeoning, feverish movement toward career education, *as presently defined*, is potentially dangerous. Advocates of career education often become more the erupting symptoms of what troubles contemporary American life and education than the attending physicians with the cure.

The whole apparatus of career education, as currently conceptualized by the U.S. Office of Education and implemented by career practitioners throughout the land, is fraught with epistemological, valuational, political, and experiential assumptions which could ultimately *increase* rather than *diminish* the fragmentation and deterioration of American life. "Career Education for the Seventies" is a slogan which desperately needs reexamination and redirection; unless this reappraisal is forthcoming, career education, with its distinctive constellation of implicit values and attitudes, will contribute decisively to the impoverishment of personal meaning in the complex and already impersonal technoculture.

Because of its consummate tendency to grant normative primacy to the utilitarian, careertist aspirations of man, the career education movement could become dangerously reductive. It risks the weakening of all that could be liberating, rational, holistic, and spontaneous in human learning to that which is merely functional and adaptive to the demands of technoprofessional life. We will examine critically three of the interrelated assumptions which underlie the career education crusade;⁵ moreover, we will suggest a reconceptualization of career education that seeks to restore to the learning experience of all persons the tempting possibility that education could become the pursuit of fundamental, integral, and enduring meaning in human lives.

THE TECHNIIST REALITY PRINCIPLE

Implicit in the appeals to career education is a sociopolitical ideology that incorporates a set of distinctive assumptions about the desirable structure of a social order, man's relationships to it, and the nature and resolution of personal and societal problems. For example, Marland often reiterates his belief that the technosociety with its developing industry, technology, corporate structures, labor organizations, schools and colleges, and political institutions will soon render obsolete the halcyon vision of a social order where a person could be trained for one job which he would hold happily during his entire lifetime. Instead, students will be required to learn many different kinds of skills throughout their education in order to enter and reenter the concatenation of highly technical professions which will emerge and disappear during their lifetimes.⁶ In a revealing

⁵We do not maintain that the assumptions are held consciously or that they are the deliberate framework of a conspiratorial movement to control American education. Rather, we believe that implicit in the assumptions are biases and values which are unexamined and which could result in outcomes that are the very opposite of those intended.

⁶Loc. cit.

pronouncement, Marland admits that career education prescribes a vast "substantive social process" premised on an "organizational understanding" of a social order with all of its attendant "pragmatic, theoretical, and moral aspects."⁷

Marland's social order is characterized by what Kenneth Keniston calls a "technist reality principle." Whether consciously or not, Marland and his associates are compelling American educators at all levels to accept as an unquestioned ideal a sociopolitical ideology emphasizing high productivity; spiraling wages; automation; increasing economic growth; accelerating rates of social change; systematic administration; complex, large-scale organizations; and a fundamentally technical approach to the resolution of human problems.⁸ This technist metaphysic, legitimized by the huge capital outlays planned for career education during the seventies, is beginning to exert a pervasive pressure on educators: We are being urged constantly to transform our policies and procedures to the long-range technist objective that all young people acquire highly specialized, technological skills so that eventually they can be achievement-driven wage earners who contribute to an expanding economy. Career education is becoming the rallying cry for providing the workers, executives, systems analysts, computer programmers, para-professional personnel, managers, and scientists needed to maintain the overgrown, ever-productive technosociety.

One searches the career education literature in vain for even the slightest sign that its proponents are aware of the possible dangers consequent in their prescriptions; no proponent has ever cited the extensive critique of the technist belief and action system so ubiquitous in recent years. These critics have demonstrated that technist life has a bogus quality that overvalues expertise and performance, crushing the human drive for substance, truth, and fundamental meaning. They have warned that the technosociety often substitutes technique and style for purposeful thought; objectivity and predictability for spontaneity, radical subjective awareness and a creative openness to life's ambiguities, confusions, and paradoxes; and a pervasive political and bureaucratic manipulation for bold, risk-taking, personal autonomy.⁹

Also, career educators ignore the case advanced by the more outraged political critics that the American educational establishment has used the schools traditionally to reward students who exhibit the characteristics of compliant, technocratic workers--passive acquiescence in

⁷ Sidney P. Marland, Jr., "Career Education 300 Days Later," American Vocational Journal, 47:14-17; February 1972

⁸ Kenneth Keniston, Youth and Dissent. The Rise of a New Opposition (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), pp. 369-400.

⁹ see Charles Hampden-Turner, Radical Man. The Process of Psycho-Social Development (New York: Doubleday and Co., Anchor Books, 1971), pp. 361-410.

relation to authority, and the subordination of affective and creative modes of personal cognition to those modes which are cerebral and achievement-oriented. Furthermore, these critics have argued that the hierarchical, stratified, and tracking structure of formal education in the United States reflects the structure of industrial production--just as students cede control over their activities to adult superordinates in the classroom, so too are workers stratified within the industrial system. Both students and workers must be motivated by external rewards and status-enhancement.¹⁰

What is most disturbing, however, in the spate of articles, memoranda, and conference addresses imploring educators to become career advocates, is the tendency of many federal spokesmen to conceal their technist premises beneath a gloss of "futuristic" prediction and inevitability. Too often these representatives conclude that because technological growth is inevitable, given current trend indices, then such growth is *ipso facto* desirable.¹¹ Underlying each injunction to prepare students for the "new technological realities" is the lopsided, ideological assumption that technist systems of business, production, technology, the military, and communication--with their ever-expanding growth potential--will be (ought to be) *decisive* in shaping human behavior and values and in determining the best possible future of American culture.

Perhaps the most astringent criticism of the technist growth principle is the evidence of systemic failures it has left over the world: its inability to incorporate minorities in its general prosperity; its exploitative and imperialistic relationship to the developing nations of the world; its manipulation of technological mechanisms to intimidate persons; its neglect of fundamental human needs, values, and aspirations; transformation of persons and processes to the inputs, outputs, and components of complex systems; and the danger (as a consequence of unfettered, technological growth) that the world's minerals will soon be exhausted and the biosphere bathed in deadly pollution.¹²

Marland and others frequently assume that career education is "a way of combating apathy" in education because such a perspective teaches "the skills, the knowledge, and the attitudes necessary for our citizens to adapt to change . . . so that our society will continue not only to

¹⁰ Herbert Gintis, "Towards a Political Economy of Education: A Radical Critique of Ivan Illich's Deschooling Society," Harvard Educational Review, 42:70-96; February 1972.

¹¹ see "Tooling Up the System from Kindergarten Through Community College," Nation's Schools, 88:36-38; December 1971.

¹² see Keniston, Youth and Dissent, p. 383. Also see Donella H. Meadows and others, The Limits to Growth (New York: Universe Books, 1972).

survive but to flourish."¹³ In contrast, many young people are challenging the technist premises upon which the Marland ideology of social efflorescence is based. They question the moral validity of learning a repertoire of skills which continues only to perpetuate a laissez-faire, expansionist economy with the gross national product as the central index of achievement. Richard Flacks has observed:

The culture that is struggling to be born stresses cooperation over competition, expression over success, communalism over individualism, being over doing, making art over making money, and autonomy over obedience....All of these values are blocked by a social organization--corporate capitalism--requiring that energies be channeled into the making of money, that men work in order to secure their material well-being, and that a nation-state be militarily powerful and be based on class division and inequality.¹⁴

Frank Riessman has pointed out the tendency of some policy makers to mistakenly equate industrial growth (which is resource-depleting, technist in nature, and capital-intensive) with total economic growth. He argues that often the possibility of qualitative growth in the human services is minimized because the GNP as an evaluative economic norm legitimizes industrial-technological growth while devaluing growth in the "people services."¹⁵ By implication, the literature on career education conveys this impression that only through continuous industrial-technological growth (and the new careers created as a spin-off) will economic growth continue to flourish in the United States. The tragedy of such reasoning, however, is that unremitting, technist growth is resulting in widespread unemployment; underutilization of people's talents and interests; and the steady deterioration of the world's natural resources. Meanwhile, there is a shocking dearth of people who have the career skills necessary to resolve the crushing personal and social problems of drug abuse, alcoholism, estrangement, human despair and malaise, and pathological violence and aggression.

As long as programs for career education remain rooted in a socio-political ideology emphasizing thing-achievement over personal satisfaction; technological-industrial requirements over human needs; competition for scarce goods over cooperation for plentiful goods; concentration over distribution; production over consumption; technist skill striving over personal expression; then predictably the personal and societal outcomes of such an ideology will continue to be devastating. Only when career education programs can begin to evaluate the benefits of technology, industrialism, and capitalism in terms of

¹³Cosand, op. cit., p. 61.

¹⁴Richard Flacks, Youth and Social Change (Chicago: Markham Publishing Co., 1971), p. 129.

¹⁵Frank Riessman, "Quantum Leap or More Foreplay for the Human Services," Social Policy, 2:3-4; January/February 1972.

criteria that are genuinely independent of these systems will we ever be able to assess the ultimate human worth of a technist ideology. In a concluding section, we will suggest that the real value of any technist institution lies not in how much money it has made, or how quickly it has expanded, but how much satisfaction it has given to human beings.¹⁶

FRACTIONAL MAN

The technist social order is bolstered by a concept of man which is assiduously fractional. Relying on an ideology of achievement, career educators often make an appeal to a technist success ethic as a prescription for personal meaning. Regarding the learning motivation of people, USOE bases its prescriptions for career education on the following supposition:

It seems obvious that if you begin making students aware in kindergarten of all the [career] opportunities that lie before them in life, and teach them how to gain them, you are going to have students who are motivated--alive, alert, and working students--by the time they enter college. They are going to go to college with a purpose, with goals to achieve.¹⁷

Marland, himself, has gently scolded young people who disdain "conventional economic motivations" in favor of "an avocational interest more attractive [to them] at the moment." While professing to understand youth's alienation from the driving achievement ethic of Western culture, Marland, nevertheless, considers young people's real needs to be technist in nature.¹⁸

The philosophic rationale of career education experiments in such school districts as Mesa, Arizona; Los Angeles, California; and Atlanta, Georgia is rooted in an image of man having insatiable material and secular needs and responding positively to the educational experience *only when* it is related to occupational relevance.¹⁹ President Nixon, the ostensible progenitor of career education policy, has declared that public education will be revitalized only when educators take a "new approach." ". . . I believe the best new approach is to strengthen career education. Career education can help make education and

¹⁶ see Philip Slater, The Pursuit of Loneliness. American Culture at the Breaking Point (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 129.

¹⁷ Cosand, op. cit., p. 60.

¹⁸ Marland, "Education for More Than One Career," p. 48.

¹⁹ see "Career Education," Education Briefing Paper, P.2.

training more meaningful for the student, more rewarding for the teacher, more relevant for the disadvantaged and more productive for our country."²⁰

Aside from questioning the self-serving, but dubious assumptions of many spokesmen that there will be careers for all students when they graduate, that members of minority groups will be given equal opportunity to pursue the elitist careers traditionally reserved for middle-class whites, or that young people ought to strive for careers at all, educators must begin to challenge the fractional image of man's potentialities inherent in many federal edicts. Perhaps the most articulate defense of the power of the achievement motivation as the decisive drive in contemporary man has been made by David McClelland. Briefly, he posits a quantum of initial "n Achievement" psychological drive in all persons; he then suggests a number of ways that leaders can accelerate economic growth in their societies by increasing the "n Achievement" levels of individuals. A few of his suggestions include introducing "ideological conversions" to emphasize individualistic achievements, reorganizing people's fantasy lives so that they begin to daydream about what they have to achieve, and stimulating the emergence of a technist class having a vigorous drive for economic achievement.²¹

McClelland's vision of man, like the career educator's, is splintered. It stresses the central importance of economic achievement in human motivational systems but ignores each person's needs to be fully human. Theoretically, it is possible for students to achieve the goals of career education (i.e., the development of "saleable, marketable skills") and still be profoundly disenchanted with themselves and their society. For example, young assembly-line workers in a General Motors plant recently disrupted the work process because they felt they were becoming "nothing better than machines to turn out profits." Although highly skilled and salaried, these workers were reacting in desperation to the tedious, demeaning, and repetitive nature of their careers.²² Some workers in automobile plants have even turned to alcoholism, drugs, and high absenteeism to express their thorough resentment towards mindless unfulfilling work.²³

²⁰John G. Rogers, "Where Job Training Starts in Kindergarten," Parade Magazine, The Boston Sunday Globe, April 9, 1972, pp. 18-19. Also see "Nixon Sees U.S. 'Work Ethic' Reaffirmed," The Boston Globe, September 7, 1971, p. 9.

²¹David McClelland, The Achieving Society (New York: Free Press, 1967). Also see Lionel Rubinoff, The Pornography of Power for an interpretation of McClelland's work that has inspired our own (Chicago: Quadrangle Press, 1968), pp. 53-88.

²²Agis Salpukas, "Young Workers Disrupt Key G.M. Plant," The Sunday New York Times, January 23, 1972, pp. 1,41.

²³Agis Salpukas, "Workers Increasingly Rebel Against Boredom on Assembly Line," The Sunday New York Times, April 2, 1972, p. 40.

Similarly, in a recent study of college youths' personal and political attitudes on 50 campuses, Daniel Yankelovich discovered that 30 percent of those questioned would rather live in some country other than the United States. He found that generally students were becoming increasingly skeptical of economic well-being and achievement striving as sufficient conditions for personal happiness. Instead, many students valued friendship; privacy; freedom of opinion; the family; nature; and personal, aesthetic, and emotional expression.²⁴ Finally, a psychiatrist, Dr. Harold M. Visotsky, has found that "the accelerating rapidity of technological, social, and political change has left the young feeling powerless to change their lives." Visotsky contends that more and more cases of depression, vacuousness, and apathy are finding their way to the psychiatrist's office. He predicts that, unless dramatically curbed, youthful apathy and despair will spread to all age groups and usher in a new era of "political demagoguery."²⁵

Not only does a fractional view of man as achievement-driven diminish the pursuit of human meaning, but with its emphasis on a careerist orientation as the answer to youthful alienation it risks a total misunderstanding of the contemporary human condition. People in America are disconnected from their culture because they know that the more a person achieves and acquires, the greater the need becomes for achievement and acquisition. And the greater the need for marketable skills insuring complete, economic success, the less the likelihood that a person will ever achieve all the skills guaranteeing him total satisfaction. Because a person is being cut off from feeling and willing states inimical to the achievement drive, and because he is being conditioned to pursue (but never to catch) the chimera of complete, economic satisfaction, the career-impelled society paradoxically provokes its own demise: It converts each person's need for potency into a futile sense of impotency. What results is a personal and social estrangement so severe that the society itself is brought to the breaking point.²⁶

Career educators will fail in their efforts to restore that sense of potency so necessary for each person's need to prove himself unless they can help us to distinguish between the concept of career as a job, and as one's life-long work. Each one of us needs a "sphere of consequential action" that continually confirms his personal dignity.²⁷ Career education will have meaning only when it rejects a truncated

²⁴ M. A. Farber, "Pessimism Voiced in Student Study," The New York Times, April 11, 1972, p. 11.

²⁵ Associated Press, "Apathy Seen Threat to America," The Boston Globe, March 24, 1972, p. 17.

²⁶ see Rubinoff, op. cit., p. 73.

²⁷ see Thomas F. Green, Work, Leisure, and the American Schools (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 139.

view of man and concentrates instead on helping us to discover that all of our experiences are valuable, that as persons we really count, and that the ultimate goal of any career is finding purpose and potency in every aspect of human life.

THE IMPOVERISHMENT OF LEARNING

Reductionism of any kind (like orthodoxy) impoverishes man's life because it exhausts the totality of his experience. Inevitably, a technist view of the social order and a concept of man which is achievement-oriented result in a learning process that is circumscribed. We believe that career educators are risking the enfeeblement of their curricula and teaching-learning transactions by splintering the entire educational experience. Career educators appear to be accepting unquestioningly four epistemological fallacies: They subscribe to an epistemology of learning based on a fallacious belief in the benefits of specialism, sequentialism, fundamentalism, and credentialism.²⁸

Marland has outlined the basic rationale for all career education programs and the epistemology of learning fundamental to those programs. He believes:

A major component of the reform we seek . . . must be increased productivity--finding ways of getting more out of each dollar invested by turning away from obsolescent cottage-industry methods through a major reordering of our principal resources, including teaching talent, and wider reliance on technology, which is our principal hope for the effective development and implementation of high-quality, lower unit-cost learning.²⁹

In his speculations concerning how a "school-based model"³⁰ of career education will work, Dr. Marland maintains that throughout the first six grades, a student will be made aware of the various clusters of occupations he might be interested in entering. These would include "business and office occupations," "marketing and distribution occupations,"

²⁸Two of the terms, sequentialism and credentialism, are Judson Jerome's. The interpretation and application of the terms are our own. See "Toward an Ideal College," Humanistic Frontiers in American Education, ed. Roy P. Fairfield (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), pp. 207-15.

²⁹Sidney P. Marland, Jr., "The Endless Renaissance," American Education, 8:7,8; April 1972.

³⁰Career educators have developed four models for career education: the school-based, the employer-based, the home-based, and the institutional. We are confining our analysis to the "school-based" model. See "Tooling Up the System from Kindergarten Through Community College," Nation's Schools, 88:43-49; December 1971.

graduate schools, will be concerned with providing students with "training . . . in technical careers," and becoming "more alert to the changing realities of the job market."³⁷

The careerist perspective outlined above grants exclusive educational primacy to those subjects and procedures enabling a student to identify, pursue, and advance a career. This perspective is lodged in and perpetuates an epistemology of learning characterized by the four interrelated premises mentioned earlier. What follows is a critical overview of each, presented against the matrix of Marland's proposals for career education at all levels.

Specialism

Career education is excessively specialized. The career educator attempts to "refocus" the student's cognitive perspective toward a knowledge that is functional, i.e., knowledge that can be used to enhance success in a career, occupation, or profession. Because the technosociety is such a (specialized) career hierarchy, educators importune students constantly to cultivate one narrow sector of their potentialities in order to achieve occupational competence and future employment. As a result, American education is being converted to an extensive, career system, from the preschool to the graduate school, proclaiming the value of specialism, and compartmentalizing knowledge and skills in every grade.

Because of the *a priori* assumption that specialism is good (because it is necessary for gain^{ment}), career educators hold that the transmission of knowledge must be sorted and filed into areas, clusters, vocational programs, work-study divisions, occupational disciplines, modules, courses, classes, and specific time blocks. In order to specialize in the preparation for such occupational clusters as "marketing and distribution occupations," or "business and office occupations," students increasingly are exposed to a compartmentalized curriculum--predicated on the assumption that knowledge and skills can be broken down into constituent units, constituting an organized, ordered, and precise curriculum. Thus, the educational experience becomes a kind of specialized training or programming: After an exposure to and intensive training in any one of several occupational pigeonholes, students are expected to have honed their special skills, intelligently assessed the benefits of each occupation, and then made careful, integrated career choices.

Jerome Bruner and John Gardner have defended eloquently the compartmentalization of knowledge and the necessity for specialism in the modern world.³⁸ Bruner believes that because each of the disciplines

³⁷ Cosand, op. cit., p. 61.

³⁸ Jerome Bruner, The Process of Education (New York: Vintage Books, 1963). Also John W. Gardner, Self-Renewal. The Individual and Innovative Society (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1965), pp. 23-26.

is so complex, students need an exhaustive grounding in the rigorous, sophisticated, and self-contained principles unique to each subject. And Gardner maintains that specialism is biologically, socially, and intellectually necessary: Cell structures, insect societies, and human social organizations attest to the universality of specialism in every aspect of life on this planet. Furthermore, according to Gardner, the complex division of labor and compartmentalization of knowledge systems in modern society press certain individuals toward specialism and away from versatility.

Contrary to the insights of Bruner and to Gardner, we believe that a compartmentalized approach to knowledge and a life's work is ruthlessly one-dimensional. Joseph Royce has shown that careerism encapsulates man because it reduces his perspective to a partial view of reality. Whenever education is systematically categorized, reduced to the essentials of a discipline or occupation, and restricted to the pursuit of career rudiments, then teachers have sold their souls for a perception of life narrowly empirical, practical, and utilitarian. Royce believes that such a view is fragmented because modern man gains insight only into the nature of "outer" reality; he neglects, and often suppresses his "inner" nature--his intuitive and emotional life, dependent for its sustenance on the arts, humanities, and religion.³⁹

Aside from the cynical observation that a compartmentalized curriculum, rooted in the prerequisites of career specialism, is the best survival preparation for a person to take his place in a fractured, technist social order, we believe that specialism separates a person from the totality of his experience. Those students who look for an active integration of all knowledge (liberal, spiritual, instrumental, expressive, normative, personal, emotional, rational, etc.) in order to make coherent sense of their lives simply will be unable to find such a synthesis in the career education schema. The danger of "career overload" is that students' minds become clogged with discrete bits of occupational information that the affective and volitional needs of the human nervous system are denied or minimized.

Finally, extreme specialization is dysfunctional to the pursuit of a free society. If people are locked into a careerist mode of thinking from the pre-school to the graduate school, the likelihood is increased that they will become more preoccupied with the achievement drive and economic security, and less with constructing a vigorous, self-analytical, and self-renewing democracy. A free, inquiring society cannot be revitalized when people are excessively compartmentalized in careers, suppressing half their beings to occupational advancement. Only when the educational system challenges unnecessary specialism; disintegrates rigid categories; and helps to develop the person's inner resources to the point where he can (and desires to) learn on his own, will the society become flexible, innovating, and humane.

³⁹ Joseph R. Royce, The Encapsulated Man. An Interdisciplinary Essay on the Search for Meaning (New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1964), pp. 165-202.

Sequentialism

Career educators assume that there is one natural linear order in which occupational knowledge and skills can be learned--at each grade level there are certain essentials that must take precedence before a student can move on to the next level. Eli Ginzberg, a leading career theoretician, posits a developmental scheme of career guidance based on his supposition that occupational choice is a slow, predictable, developmental process, and not the consequence of a single, isolated event. He hypothesizes that up to the age of eleven, children make career choices based on fantasy; from eleven to seventeen, they make tentative choices; from seventeen on they make more definitive and lasting commitments.⁴⁰

An observer gets the impression that the careerist emphasis on levels, progression, advancement, and achievement in the schools is self-authenticating: Federal officials stipulate that career education will become the *sina qua non* of schooling at all levels; therefore, as an administrative convenience, training is meted out in stages, over specifically planned periods of time. And because a "major component" of the reform that career educators seek is "increased educational productivity" and the "development of lower unit-cost learning," it follows that career training is efficient, systematic, sequential, and concerned with quality control, performance criteria, precise evaluative mechanisms, and the behavioral evidence that signals the student to progress from one level to another.⁴¹

Although developmental theorists such as Piaget, Erikson, and Werner postulate cognitive growth as a progression from diffuse, global awareness to increasingly differentiated perceptions, resulting in new levels of integration, they steadfastly refuse to limit development to intractably fixed stages. Developmental theorists also maintain that growth occurs as the result of exposure to new, complex experience, active discovery, and a vital questioning and searching.⁴² Similarly, recent research in psychodynamic theory, Gestalt awareness studies, cognitive process studies, and creativity analysis demonstrates that significant learnings occur in unpredictable quantum leaps; human beings in encounter groups, Gestalt sessions, and simulation clusters often learn through waves of information, conversion, vibrations, intuition, and an unencapsulated, synergistic roaming among a variety of knowledge systems.⁴³

⁴⁰ Eli Ginzberg and others, Career Guidance: Who Needs It, Who Can Provide It, Who Can Improve It (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971).

⁴¹ see "Researchers Discuss Career Education, Performance Goals," American Vocational Journal, 47:25; February 1972.

⁴² see Barbara Biber and Patricia Minuchin, "The Changing School," The Psychology of Open Teaching and Learning, ed. Melvin L. Silberman and others (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1972), pp. 239-50.

⁴³ Eliot Aronson, The Social Animal (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1972), pp. 235-67.

In fact, one scientist, Robert Mager, discovered in an experiment that students learned a greater amount of unfamiliar, complex material over a shorter period of time when they were able to break from an instructor-imposed sequence and determine their own best learning sequences.⁴⁴

We believe that a careerist focus in the schools can actually impede learning for some students. Whenever we impose a rigid, occupational sequence of learning on all students, we risk the loss of accepting each person for who he is; what his unique style, needs, tempo of learning, and aptitudes are; and what his special, intrinsic potentialities could enable him to become. To train all children in a rigid age and grade sequence to fit into an occupation-conscious social order is to swamp and distort the special capabilities of each person in favor of some extrinsically imposed objective. Career educators must realize that what the contemporary worker needs most desperately is to comprehend the drivenness of his present, lived experience while liberating himself from the sequential modes in which he has been trained.

Fundamentalism

Career educators assume that a specific repertoire of fundamental skills and knowledge must be made compulsory for everyone. Consequently, there is a skewed priority in curricular planning for "marketable and saleable" skills which are competency-oriented and performance-based. The "occupac modules" stress fundamental vocabulary and mathematical competencies; similarly, another career curriculum, the Technology for Children program in New Jersey, emphasizes the inculcation of essential behavioral attitudes of workers in a variety of careers and "the intellectual tools and rational habits of thought to play satisfying roles" in those careers.⁴⁵ Finally, the Career Development for Children Project at Southern Illinois University builds into its curriculum such techniques as simulation and role-playing in order to illustrate certain attitudinal essentials for occupations; for example, instead of reading about manufacturing industries, students simulate "a goods-producing enterprise in which they perform various worker functions."⁴⁶

Aside from the observation that career educators still subscribe to an antiquated political philosophy based on the elitist premise that one group can decide for another group what it must learn, the fundamentalist career orthodoxy is especially vulnerable to criticism whenever it reduces the learning experience solely to reading, writing, and computational

⁴⁴ Robert F. Mager and John McCann, Learner-Controlled Instruction (Palo Alto, Calif.: Varian Associates, 1961).

⁴⁵ Albert J. Pautler, "Occupational Education in the Curriculum," Educational Leadership, 29:174-77; November 1971.

⁴⁶ Larry J. Bailey, "Facilitating Career Development and the Elementary School Level," Elementary School Guidance and Counseling, 6: 139-40; December 1971.

skills. It is becoming exceedingly difficult in the modern technosociety of designate as "essential" the transmission of any special body of knowledge or skills. The important work that is yet to be done in a "human services" society--including art, recreation, communications, group development, human potential enhancement, aesthetic experiences, rehabilitation, religious and philosophic awareness, environmental improvement--will require workers gifted in many essential areas, and possessing very different repertoires of skills.⁴⁷

Behind much of the careerist legerdemain about the need for schools to equip students with "marketable" skills is the sociopolitical bias that the technist social order must be maintained as it is. Careerist education favors skills and knowledge that facilitate a student's smooth adjustment to the technosociety. When the stated objective of careerist training is to help students understand "the characteristics of good students and workers," then career educators must be ever vigilant to attenuate the enhancement of skills which are probing, non-instrumental, clarifying, confrontative, or unconventional. Unfortunately, the ultimate function of any careerist curriculum (whether intended or not) is to effect a deadening standardization in textbooks, course structures, and teaching-learning transactions--in order to induce a technist conformity, and a marked distaste for lusty, impulsive, dreamy or deviant activity.⁴⁸

We believe that career educators must reconsider the bias that they alone know what essentials ought to be inflicted on all students. As unwitting value transmitters, career educators must start to examine the hidden ways their proposals reflect their own pet ideological and pedagogical biases. Until they understand that careerist fundamentalism is nothing more than a doctrine of programming meant to condition persons to the demands of the technosociety, then career education will never be able to realize the objectives of its real mission: simply getting students into real situations (when, where, and however students choose) where they can be helped to explore, discover, and put to the test those competencies (conventional and unconventional) usually suppressed in formal, educational settings.

Credentialism

In spite of protestations to the contrary, career educators are erecting a monolithic credentialing system as a prerequisite for entry into the technist social order. Marland often points out that the pre-technist society relied too preponderantly on the use of credentials as an initiation rite--thus establishing a vast, exclusionary class of careerists who controlled entry into the professions. Frequently, Marland refers to his own profession of teaching as an institution once

⁴⁷ see Arthur Pearl, "An Ecological Rationale for a Human Services Society," Social Policy; 2:40-41; September/October 1971.

⁴⁸ see Michael Novak, The Experience of Nothingness (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1971), p. 105.

considered impenetrable without duly authorized credentials, but now becoming more concerned with teaching *performance* than with special certificates.⁴⁹

Ironically, the whole careerist impetus in American education appears to be transforming the desired function of schooling from a performance-based, meritocratic model to a function that is quite the opposite--namely, the selection, training, sorting, and certifying of people for the technosociety. Careerism, as presently decreed, is no longer one among many educational alternatives for students; now it is the exclusive path that all must tread on their way to productive pre-eminence. Already, many educators are looking for ways to maximize their power in assuming a larger voice in social certification and selection; some have even construed career education as a *pro forma* warrant to tell all people what it is they must value, know, and do.⁵⁰

Whenever education becomes a certification process for entry into specialized occupations, the very conception of education is perverted. What matters is not the intrinsic value of the subject matter, or the felicitousness and immediacy of the learning process, but the outcome. Therefore, the danger is that teaching gets assessed only in terms of performance criteria that are product-oriented. Because education during the seventies will be "refocused" to a "career perspective," only those students who perform according to the requirements of a specific occupational cluster (i.e., who are able to convert subject matter and other educational activities to "marketable skills") will be authorized to enter a profession or to continue training at a higher level. This is a dramatic example of how the authority of career performance--assessed by adults who themselves have endorsed the system and designated the criteria for successful entry--has become indistinguishable from the tyranny of a credential.⁵¹

John Dewey believed that the most beneficial function of learning was not its long-range utility, but its immediate structural advantages to the growing human being.⁵² He perceived the value of teaching and learning to be like the value of play: It is intrinsic, immediate, spontaneous, and directly related to the characteristics of leisurely activity. In this view, the criticism of education as a certifying, credentialing activity is that learning becomes transformed from an

⁴⁹Marland, "Education for More Than One Career," p. 48.

⁵⁰see Malcolm R. Lovell, Jr., "The Time To Move Is Now," American Vocational Journal, 47:17-19; February 1972.

⁵¹see Harry S. Broudy, A Critique of Performance-Based Teacher Education (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1972).

⁵²The next two paragraphs are indebted to Thomas F. Green's insightful analysis of education, play, and leisure. See Work, Leisure, and the American Schools (New York: Random House, 1968), pp. 115-68.

activity having its own intrinsic worth, to an experience that must lead to tangible, behavioral outcomes--working, performing, producing, and achieving technical competence.

When performing and achieving technical competence become the sole objectives of the educational experience, then the school becomes a productive, credentialing institution whose vindictory function is to shape the human resources of the nation to fit the economic, technological, and military requirements of the technist social order.⁵³ Students then begin to manipulate the system in order to get the stamp of approval certifying them as acceptable products. One shivers at the circular prospect of grasping students, coming eager educational superordinates for the training and credentials empowering them to enter the most desirable careers, and the concomitant right to become the new, credentialed overclass--all the while maintaining a kind of supercilious detachment from any type of educational experience that does not guarantee long-range career success.⁵⁴

We believe that the fallacy implicit in the conversion of all educational activity to the certifying of people for entry into careers is the belief that a person can never be reduced to the functional equivalent of the services he performs, the techniques he has acquired, or the career he has gained.

Any society basing its image of man on technical criteria only risks producing moral robots who ignore all but the mechanical implications of their careers. In large areas of the technosociety, it is not the wise person who is wanted; rather, it is the function he can perform, certified by the credentials he holds. The consequence of such a technical role structure is to sever normal human sensibilities--enabling persons to be exploited as deployables, willing to pursue any career objective. The final tragedy in such an arrangement is that careerist man acquires a reflex readiness to produce things on order--as well as an unthinking willingness to submit to education only when it becomes training.

The epistemology of learning central to career education is didactic: *Fundamental* knowledge and skills are imparted to students by *specialist* superordinates in a *sequential* mode in order to *certify* workers for the technosociety. Evocative or heuristic teaching--motivating students to discover for themselves the value and content

⁵³ Robert J. Nash and Russell M. Agne, "The Ethos of Accountability--A Critique," Teachers College Record, 73:357-70; February 1972.

⁵⁴ Richard Flacks has remarked on the impact of the scramble for scarce jobs on experimental teaching and student creativity; he says, "Underemployment . . . is profoundly demoralizing, as solidarity and political energy are drained by the scramble--as experimental aspirations are suppressed because it is no longer so safe to take chances with one's future." See Youth and Social Change, p. 137.

of a body of knowledge, to determine the methods for arriving at such knowledge, and to assess the worth of it for their own personal lives-- is non-existent. Because the "career perspective" regards playfulness, critical-mindedness, expressiveness, personal insight, political involvement, and bold imagining as frivolous, students soon learn that a career is a deadly serious affair. Philip Slater has shown how young people regard the word, "career" as a stern, Calvinistic formulation, demanding a rigid, preordained life pattern, to whose goals everything is ruthlessly subordinated.⁵⁵

We agree with Ivar Berg that that most devastating outcome of the career education crusade could well be the intensification of *ennui* and banality in everyday life. His description of the fundamental vacuity in daily living, while somewhat exaggerated nevertheless makes a powerful point. He says:

Education focuses on vocational placement in a society of button-down personalities and grey-flannel mouths, competing to breathe the technicians' polluted air, to drive the engineers' beached whales on crowded cement ribbons that choke the planners' cities. Education mirrors a society. . . in which liberation is confused with "upward mobility" and in which human relationships are confounded with the ritual behavior of the polite middle class. One may conjure up an image of an educated community in which the inanities of cocktail-party regularly pass for conversation, in which clam dip serves as social cement, in which work is a job and not labor, crabgrass is the evil goddess to whom one kneels in Sunday terror, spiritual values are high-proof, neutral, and pure grain, and suburban husbands are handymen with sex privileges.⁵⁶

CAREER EDUCATION AND THE RECOVERY OF MEANING

We believe that career education, radically reconceptualized, can effect sweeping personal and social change. Action programs must consist of two parts: first, a long-range program aimed at altering motivational and attitudinal systems; second, a short-term program directed at reexamining and refocusing existing technist institutions. What follows is an initial, long-range attitudinal agenda, based on three questions, that attempts to redeem career education from the insensitivity of careerism. Implicit in our questions is the assumption that calamitous disruption and depersonalization in contemporary life will persist unless people can consider, seriously and profoundly, the ultimate human ends any career ought to realize. We begin our search for these ends with the following questions.

⁵⁵Slater, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁵⁶Ivar Berg, Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), pp. 184-85.

How Can Career Education Enhance the Principle of Maximum Possibilities in Occupations?

Career education must attempt to reduce the deep estrangement people experience throughout their working lives. Many careerists are fundamentally alienated from themselves, work, school, family, and political institutions because they are foundering in the suffocating stagnation of unrewarding careers. Human joy, hope, and creative vitality are a consequence, not of manic striving, frenzied consumption, or mindless production (modes calculated to bring about drug abuse, alcoholism, severe depression, aggression, and an ineffable boredom), but of life patterns grounded in the values of understanding, mutuality, competence, sociality, experimentation, and beauty.⁵⁷

Career educators must "refocus" their curricula away from the unilateral provision of skilled (but somnolent) workers for the technosociety, and toward the enhancement of non-technist, human possibilities. In the future, careers will have to increase personal joy and hope; this might mean, for example, a kind of vocational diversification--perhaps a four-hour work period, alternated with other forms of work, like gardening, wood-chopping, and machine-tinkering.⁵⁸ Furthermore, briefer work periods, interspersed with freely-chosen, leisure activities--as well as the possibility of multiple occupations during a person's lifetime--will reduce the stultification of lifetime specialization, only when career educators overcome a reliance on such incentives as human greed and status-climbing. In the future, a worker's reward will have to be an intensification of the lived quality of his total life, rather than power, profit or prestige. The first, most difficult step in the "refocusing" process (transforming the purpose of career preparation from greed incentives to the realization of full human potential) will be for career educators to challenge any occupation which imposes a vocational restriction to diversity because some credential hierarchy wants to maintain its special status, emoluments, and perquisites.⁵⁹

How Can Career Education Obliterate the Distinction Between Work and Leisure?

Each person's quest for potency is his attempt to demonstrate that

⁵⁷ Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being (Princeton: D. Van Nostand Co., 1962).

⁵⁸ see Lewis Mumford, The Myth of the Machine. The Pentagon of Power (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), p. 406.

⁵⁹ Lewis Mumford remarks that this entails slowing down the pace of production, therefore decreasing the supply of goods and lowering profits. He believes that a production slowdown, even a stoppage, is imperative if ever we are to gain the leisure necessary for fostering more intimate human relations. See The Myth of the Machine, p. 408.

his life has meaning and is filled with hope.⁶⁰ The quest to confirm one's dignity often takes a person into the area of his leisure life where he tries to create a "sphere of consequential action." Those who work only because they must (driven by a need for power, profit, and/or prestige), relinquish forever the possibility of realizing self-definition in their careers, and so begin to pursue meaning in their leisure activities. Unfortunately, as Jules Henry has shown, when a person's non-professional life (hobbies, family) becomes his exclusive sphere of meaning, the effects on family and leisure are often overwhelming. American family life and recreation are shaped largely by the industrial system, and are incapable of providing a person with compensatory emotional satisfactions, contentment, and challenge. What results is an image of modern man hungrily attempting to bring personal meaning from institutions much too fragile to accommodate his impossible quest.⁶¹

Career educators must begin to help each person to evaluate a career according to the possibility that it offers the contentment, joy, relaxation, and challenge he ordinarily seeks away from a job.⁶² This might necessitate a "human worth index," where an occupation is evaluated--not on the technist terms of the wealth it can produce, the economic growth it generates, or the mobility it promises--but on the total impact it has on human life.⁶³ A "human worth index" will shift the value of an occupation from what it does for the technosociety to the degree of pleasure, meaning, and hope it is capable of giving to persons. The ultimate purpose of the index is to obliterate the false distinction we have erected between work and leisure, and to enable persons to pursue competence and potency in their careers as well as in their vocational experiences. One of the more desirable advantages of the index will be the repudiation of invidious, class-conscious notions of what constitutes a so-called "good" career in favor of an assessment based on how any career facilitates the pursuit of a person's full humanity.⁶⁴

How Can Career Education Be More Concerned with Human Services?

Career education is only as valuable as the extent to which it impels human development toward a higher quality of personal,

⁶⁰This discussion owes much to Green, Work, Leisure, and the American Schools, especially pp. 115-46.

⁶¹Jules Henry, Culture Against Man (New York: Vintage Books, 1965).

⁶²Actual field experience, incorporated in a career curriculum, might help persons develop and reality test an understanding of just what it is that could help them become more contented, joyful, relaxed, and challenged.

⁶³Slater, op. cit., p. 129.

⁶⁴As in all programs that are visionary and well-meaning, checks will have to be made on those who will use the "human worth index" to keep certain groups of people suppressed.

professional, and social life. If the technist social order continues to be capital intensive and resource depleting (the industrial growth of the private sector persists at the expense of a more humane quality of life, and the predominant expenditures in the public sector are for hard services and military goods), we can only look forward to more environmental deterioration, war, racism, and poverty.⁶⁵

Career educators must begin to develop and emphasize innovative, labor-intensive "human service clusters," while deemphasizing capital-intensive clusters (such as "marketing and distributing," and construction and manufacturing") grounded in an infinitely expanding technological base.⁶⁶ We urgently require persons trained in helping us to improve the quality of our education, health services, food, leisure-time activities, air, and water.⁶⁷ Likewise, we need people possessing the skills to help us expand our appreciation for the artistic, recreational, spiritual, aesthetic, philosophic, political, and experimental facets of contemporary living. Until career educators root their programs in a commitment to maximize the quality of each person's fully lived experience, his sense of personal competence, and his affiliative relationships; and until each person is included as a decision maker in the human services process, then the technist society will continue to exacerbate the destruction of the earth's nonrestorable commodities and the deterioration of human hope and vitality.

We end our examination of career education with the hope that the educational experience never becomes an hindrance for persons, promising only an unremitting training in "marketable skills." We believe that, ultimately, career education will have meaning only when it begins to generate an excitement about life and learning that Peter Marin captured in a paragraph a few years ago.

. . . An act of learning is a meeting, and every meeting is simply the discovery in the world of a part of oneself that had previously been unacknowledged by one's being. It is the embrace of an eternal but elusive companion, the shadowy "other" in which one truly resides and which blazes, when embraced, like the sun.⁶⁸

⁶⁵Pearl, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

⁶⁶There is hope that at least one career educator understands the problem. See Cosand, op. cit., p. 61.

⁶⁷Arthur Pearl warns that what we do not need is another Health, Education and Welfare bureaucracy which defines human services needs in the interest of professionals, to the exclusion of clients. See Pearl, op. cit., p. 41.

⁶⁸Peter Marin, "The Open Truth and Fiery Vehemence of Youth," The Establishment and All That (Santa Barbara, Calif.: The Center for the Study of Democractic Institutions [n.d.]), p. 119.

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