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ABSTRACT

Addressing the current employment crisis in the humanities fields, this paper examines employment opportunities for Ph.D. graduates outside the university environment. The report notes that humanities graduates have learned skills of research, problem solving, and writing, and that graduate training emphasizes the ability to penetrate underlying assumptions beyond the immediate situation. These skills may be easily transferred to non-academic pursuits. Hypothetical projects are outlined for humanities specialists and the American Studies Internship Program designed to place its graduates in business and government. Suggested areas in which Ph.D. graduates would make effective contributions include organizational development, human resource programs, career development, and public affairs. Recommendations are that humanists realize that non-academic jobs are not second rate and that interdisciplinary studies, career counseling services, and internships be established. Sections of the paper discuss the current crisis, provide unemployment statistics, and examine academic and institutional stereotypes. A list of associations and a bibliography relevant to humanists seeking non-academic jobs are provided. (KC)

THE USEFUL HUMANISTS:

Alternative Careers for Ph.D.'s in the Humanities

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The Rockefeller Foundation

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PREFACE

This Working Paper grows out of two years' research by Dr. Rita Jacobs, undertaken with the aid of The Rockefeller Foundation, on the relationship of the humanist to the surrounding society and the ways in which humanists can be of service outside the traditional university environment. Work on this topic was stimulated by the employment crisis which struck the academic world in the early 1970's, but ultimately Dr. Jacobs' work may have broader importance. Scholars in the twentieth century have periodically tried to justify to the public the methods and functions of the humanities. The current job shortage of teaching positions may be a rich opportunity to come to terms with what humanistic training is and to describe more forcefully the dimensions that the humanities can contribute to human awareness.

In May and October of 1974, two conferences were held at The Rockefeller Foundation on the issues raised by the fact that for several years substantial numbers of new Ph.D. graduates in humanities fields had been unable to obtain college and university teaching positions. Representatives of disciplinary associations and other scholars met to consider causative factors and possible courses of action. Though no immediate, wholesale solution was expected, many individual projects were encouraged by these discussions which eventually will have some impact on the situation as a whole.

The humanities are not divorced from the concerns of everyday human life. In addition to the body of information mastered, the graduate student in a humanities program learns useful and identifiable skills which can be transferred to other kinds of intellectual and professional activity. It is largely circumstantial that humanists in this country have traditionally sought to follow in the footsteps of their professors instead of gravitating also toward positions in business, public service, and the professions. In delineating the skills taught and learned in humanities programs and their potential application to nonacademic work, Dr. Jacobs has pointed out new ways in which humanists can use what they know for the benefit of our society.

September 1977

D. Lydia Bronte
Associate Director
for the Humanities

Introduction: Graduate Education in the Humanities and Vocationalism

Graduate students in the humanities have traditionally been educated in the methodology of research, required to prepare a hefty dissertation which makes an original contribution to knowledge, granted the Ph.D. degree, and sent forth to teach on the college or university level. This paradigm for humanities graduate education has undergone no marked change in the past one hundred years. Research methods have changed and styles come and go, but the bedrock pattern was established, consecrated, and ever after revered.

Although inner turmoil and self-scrutiny have long existed within the university, massive or radical change only occurs when an institution's intermittent, meandering self-criticism is focused or corroborated by real, extra-institutional considerations. Today these exist for graduate programs in the form of the marketplace issue - supply and demand.

The dilemma is comparable to that of a manufacturer who, finding his product is no longer selling, is faced with an either/or decision: stop production or improve and change the product. For humanist scholars this example is too simplistic, but it bears examining in light of the current academic market. The production of Ph.D.'s in the United States has progressed at an extraordinary rate. From 1861 to 1970, American universities granted more than half a million doctoral degrees. Half of these were awarded in the last nine years of that period. In 1975 alone 32,913 Ph.D.'s were granted and 5,046 of the degrees were in the Arts and Humanities (a more detailed discussion of statistical information follows). The most optimistic predictions about future academic employment of Ph.D.'s in the humanities indicate that one in three will obtain teaching jobs; the most pessimistic figures indicate that one in ten will be fortunate enough to achieve the traditional goal.

Since traditionally the only vocational future for these Ph.D.'s has been in teaching and scholarly research, and since the job crisis is of relatively recent origin (or at least the impact has only recently been noted), graduate schools are now faced with two alternatives:

1. cutting back the number of Ph.D.'s drastically to accommodate production to demand; or

2. reenvisioning the vocational goals of graduate humanities education.

Cutting Back

At most of the major graduate institutions in the country cutbacks in humanities graduate admissions have been initiated. As a further concession to the realities of the marketplace, entering graduate students are also informed that their prospects of finding an academic job, even with a degree from a prestigious university, are dim. Even taking these measures into account, there is still the likelihood that we will be producing too many humanities Ph.D.'s for the existing job market.

Also to be considered is the risk that in cutting back we impair the future of the humanities. Cutting back on humanities admissions at the graduate level means that fewer undergraduates will see a concentration in the humanities as a viable choice for future employment. Humanities enrollments are down across the country already as the push for career-oriented courses grows. Additional broad cutbacks may point to the future of the humanities: a mandarin culture, available and attractive only to a small number of people. Who can afford, financially or emotionally, to ignore vocational prospects? This means that the best students, the most alive, creative, and fertile minds, will not necessarily opt for the humanities. Cutting back is a partial remedy, but by no means a solution.

Reenvisioning the Humanities

If we cut back to maintain a tradition that Louis Kampf has caricatured as "training people like themselves to train people like themselves,"[1] graduate programs will land strongly on the side of advancing the state of learning, but it will be a very particular and mandarin kind of learning. Rather than serving the root meaning of education - to lead out - such a movement in the humanities would lead back to a prior time, a time where the university was a sanctuary for people who believed in knowledge only for knowledge's sake. This time has passed, a change has taken place, and the university is now an integral part of society. In reevaluating the state of the humanities and of education, Steven Marcus, the planning director for

the National Humanities Center, makes a trenchant comment on the nature of this change:

> The university and higher education as a whole have become auxiliary institutions of production. However, the humanities normally do not produce exchange values or commodities, nor do they produce human beings to produce them in turn. What they actually do in terms of this newly emerging context of the university as part of the system of production is precisely a project upon which self-clarification and working through are required.[2]

It is important here to note that the urge toward a reexamination of the function of the humanities cannot be undertaken as a massive attempt either to politicize or categorize the human spirit. O. B. Hardison warns, eloquently, that any attempt to do so denies "the basic values of humanistic experience - the free play of the mind and its corollary, an expanded sense of the self and its relation to the world."[3]

There is no doubt that advancing the state of learning is a necessary function of the university and that this function requires the production of scholars. It is also true that teaching and research scholars have been well served by our humanities graduate programs. The problem now is how to allow that humanistic mind free play in the functioning world, to contribute to the state of culture and to the functioning of society. Are the great traditions of literature and history and philosophy only to be followed in the university? Can persons trained in these traditional fields function outside of the academy? In what way? To what end?

Let us assume we read Macbeth because the experience is inherently worthwhile, and not, as Hardison cautions us, "to learn about the evils of ambition and hence become a better committeeman or a less pushy second vice president."[4] But as we consider the motivation of Shakespeare's fictional characters, do we not also assess ourselves in the light of the author's vision? Isn't it necessary to incorporate into our history lessons, philosophy lessons, literature lessons, the pragmatic human element along with the aesthetic appreciation of structures and patterns? And what if these lessons become useful in a "vocational" sense - are the humanities any the less for it?

If the humanities are to survive in this country, indeed if the country is going to survive, the employment of humanists outside of the academy is essential. It should not be seen as a stopgap measure until the university positions are once more available. This means that the concept of humanities education needs redefinition.

Because even a definition of the humanities is difficult (there are many fields and many points of view), redefinition is a problem of monumental proportions, one that will not be solved in a single experiment or by a single voice proposing answers. But there is apparent agreement on a new, productive focus for the humanities, one which combines gnosis with praxis - a move toward the once and future ideal of the humanities: the reintegration of action with contemplation.

There are problems to be sure! Humanities disciplines have been seen as thought, not as action, disciplines. Can we change curricula and yet retain the integrity of the humanities? Can we avoid rendering the disciplines vocational in the frightening and limiting square-peg, square-hole sense of the word?

In one sense humanities training at the Ph.D. level has always been vocational - the vocation being research and teaching. Recently much ink has been expended on how little attention has been paid in graduate schools to the day-to-day work of the humanist - teaching - and movements are afoot to remedy this. These changes have already been accomplished in medical schools around the country: medical educators, in reviewing their concerns and constituencies, found that not enough attention was paid to the clinical aspects of medicine. If this line of thinking is followed, and if humanities graduate programs are really to be concerned with the future of graduates in nonacademic careers (a matter of their own future existence as well), then a reasonable demonstration of alternative careers would mean that humanities programs could become involved with restructuring graduate training. Attention would be paid to preparing certain students to teach; others could be prepared to function on industrial-research teams, in corporate responsibility and planning departments, in public policy areas, in health-care delivery services, etc. It is with these questions that we have to grapple when it comes to reenvisioning a future for the humanities.

The purpose of this working paper is to set forth some thoughts on the relationship of the humanities to nonacademic endeavor, in particular focusing on the possible future functions of trained humanists.

Notes

[1]Louis Kampf, "The Humanities and Inhumanities," The Nation (September 30, 1968), p. 310.

[2]Steven Marcus, "The Demoralized Humanists," The Chronicle of Higher Education (October 28, 1975), p. 24.

[3]O. B. Hardison, Toward Freedom and Dignity: The Humanities and the Idea of Humanity (Baltimore, 1972), p. 26.

[4]Hardison, p. 17.

What the Numbers Say

> The very notion of a non-academic practice of history, philosophy, or humane letters has nearly vanished - whether in statecraft, serious publishing criticism, the pastorate. There is no humanistic attempt to improve the public tone. History and philosophy do not exist except as school subjects: there are certainly no paying jobs.
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> Paul Goodman, Community of Scholars

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John K. Folger,[2] writing in the same journal the following spring, also recognized that there was an oversupply problem for Ph.D.'s. But he concentrated on the lack of research jobs for Ph.D.'s and suggested that a solution may lie in producing doctorates who are "oriented toward teaching or professional service." One of his alternative solutions was to let the market work it out: "If more graduates are produced than are needed for research jobs, this will give greater selectivity to employers; the remainder who don't get research jobs will find other jobs (unemployed Ph.D.'s are not going to exist, in any event)."[3]

The thrust of Folger's remarks pointed to some long-held general assumptions about graduate education:

1. That even with contracting needs and space for researchers, teachers, especially well-trained teachers, would always be needed.

2. That the imperatives of the marketplace, which affect employers and students, should not concern the graduate educational system, which merely provides a training ground from which the best emerge with jobs.

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But today, only ten years later, teaching jobs have dwindled to the point where the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that between 1972 and

1985, 563,000 new Ph.D.'s will be available for 187,000 new jobs. If all fields faced the same oversupply, this would mean three persons for every job. But it is clear that the oversupply of Ph.D.'s has greater impact in some fields than others.

The indicated 3:1 ratio of job seekers to jobs increases dramatically in those fields where teaching is the traditional and major source of employment. In the past few years, humanities departments across the country have been known to receive three hundred, five hundred, up to one thousand letters of application for one advertised position.

According to the most recent published statistics (in the summary report on doctorate recipients from United States universities in 1975), the unemployment statistics for humanities Ph.D.'s are disheartening, to say the least:

History	38.8 percent unemployed
English and American Literature	38.7 percent unemployed
Foreign Language and Literature	41.5 percent unemployed
Other Arts and Humanities (including Art History, Philosophy, Religion, Linguistics)	29.1 percent unemployed
All Arts and Humanities fields	36.1 percent unemployed

In 1968, 3.9 percent of the Ph.D.'s in English were unemployed. This was considered unfortunate and somewhat disturbing, but the statistic caused no great activity on the part of graduate institutions or professional organizations. It was not until 1970-1971 that four of the major professional associations for humanists - the Modern Language Association (MLA), the American Historical Association (AHA), the American Philosophical Association (APA), and the American Studies Association (ASA) - began to show concern about the mounting numbers of unemployed Ph.D.'s. Their concern emerged in the reorganization of job-placement activities. Up until that time each organization had gathered vitae of potential job candidates and made these available to departmental chairpersons or search committees.

By 1970, the overwhelming numbers of job seekers had made this process of collecting vitae impossible. Chairpeople had neither the time nor energy to sift through piles of vitae. It appeared to be easier to list specific

openings and then ask qualified candidates to apply. In the past five years the organizations have been mailing out lists of positions to prospective candidates. As previously mentioned, it is now not unusual for a chairperson who advertises one position to receive up to and over five hundred letters of application for that position. The predictions of the mid-sixties had little effect in making tangible the job crisis; the problem of coping with the multitude of applications for each opening brought the crisis right into each departmental office. Even those departments that had succeeded in placing graduate students in jobs in the past were now confronted with the problem of placing people in second jobs.

For the job candidates the crisis was equally if not more demoralizing. One could compose and send out one hundred letters and receive the same number of negative replies. Even the traditional old boy network, through which a professor would make contacts for a promising graduate student, was no longer effective. There are just not enough jobs and too many qualified professionals. And the data now being gathered suggests that, at least until 1985, the situation will get worse.

At approximately the same time that the professional associations began to respond to the buyers market in academia by publishing job listings, they also began to look at the long-range problems of a contracting market.

The realization that Cartter's predictions were not only coming true, but coming true on schedule brought about two vastly different suggestions of <u>modus operandi</u> for the future:

1. <u>The cutback philosophy</u> - cutback graduate enrollment and begin to weed out the less successful graduate programs, thereby producing fewer and fewer Ph.D.'s.

2. <u>The alternative-careers philosophy</u> - investigate the possibility of alternative careers for the Ph.D.'s we are already producing and, while not expanding programs, maintain them in good faith with the prospect of alternative modes of employment for graduates.

There are, of course, multitudinous problems associated with either of these tacks and the two approaches are certainly not mutually exclusive. In fact the two may have to be combined:

The national need for traditional Ph.D. programs in all fields will, of course, continue but not for the number of programs

that currently exist. What will be needed are expanded opportunities for "non-traditional" forms of graduate education, serving "non-traditional" graduate students. During the next decade, graduate education must make the transition from a system that has tended to follow a single model of advanced education to the increasing diversity required by changing demographic, economic, and social circumstances.[4]

Humanities departments in institutions around the country have already limited the number of graduate students admitted to Ph.D. programs, and there have been moves to evaluate, and possibly eliminate, certain Ph.D. programs (New York State has been actively engaged in a doctoral evaluation study). But even with these cutback efforts, the National Board on Graduate Education and other observers of graduate education stress that cutbacks alone will not solve the problems confronting graduate education today.

Therefore, the professional organizations and others (faculty, graduate students, private foundations) have begun to investigate in earnest the prospect of alternative careers for professional humanists. The MLA since 1973, the AHA since 1971, the APA since 1975, and the ASA since 1973, have incorporated into their professional meetings sessions on alternative careers. Ph.D.'s now working in nonacademic fields have been brought in to present their experiences and ideas.

Cartter's original statistics, which he followed up and expanded in his recent Carnegie Commission study, Ph.D.'s and the Academic Labor Market (1976), were on target (see chart on page 10).[5] Unemployment among Ph.D.'s in the humanities is on the rise and there is no clear or easy solution in sight.

Notes

[1]Allan Cartter, "The Supply and Demand for College Teachers," Journal of Human Resources, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Summer, 1966), pp. 22-38.

[2]John K. Folger, "The Balance Between Supply and Demand for College Graduates," Journal of Human Resources, Vol. II, No. 2 (Spring, 1967), pp. 143-169.

[3]Folger, p. 168.

[4]National Board on Graduate Education, Outlook and Opportunities for Graduate Education (Washington, December 1975), p. 49.

[5]Allan Cartter, Ph.D.'s and the Academic Labor Market (New York, 1976), p. 129.

Stereotypes: The Absent-Minded Professor Meets the Robber Baron

The images that flicker on our mental screens when the term "humanist" is mentioned are fashioned by a combination of historical fact, personal educational experience, and literary or media manipulation. Humanities Ph.D.'s have long been associated with impracticality, frayed, chalk-coated tweed jackets dusty with pipe ashes, and distracted but erudite mutterings. The professional humanist is seen as being removed from the economic order of things and dedicated mainly to so-called "higher orders of concern": the meaning of human existence for the philosopher, the modes of human expression for the language or literature scholar, and the pattern of human events for the historian. Public stereotyping of the humanist finds its parallel within the university itself. Charles Frankel tells us that:

> The dominant self image within the humanities camp is still that of the underpaid scholar who is condescended to by a materialistic society, put off in a corner of the university, and yet remains the only true intellectual afoot in the world.[1]

Both public and self-definitions tell us how dependent the humanist actually is upon the external, nonacademic world. In self-aggrandizement we find the last refuge of the professional who is viewed as impractical or, even worse in America, economically unproductive. It is in part because of this exclusion from the economic sector that the humanist is forced to preserve as his or her sole dignity the distinction of being intellectual, denying that achievement to the economically successful.

Frankel's key phrases are "underpaid scholar," "materialistic society," and "true intellectual"; phrases which describe the crucial and stark dichotomy drawn, in our society, between the economic and the intellectual. This gives rise to a stereotyping of the business realm that is as simplistic and as damaging as that which describes the intellectual.

To observers of American culture the tensions between material getting and spending and the intellectual concerns of the humanities are traceable to the origins of our society:

> So it is that from the beginning we find two main currents in the American mind running side by side but rarely mingling -

a current of overtones and a current of undertones - and both equally unsocial: on the one hand, the transcendental current, originating in the piety of the Puritans, becoming a philosophy in Jonathan Edwards, passing through Emerson, producing the fastidious refinement and aloofness of the chief American writers, and resulting in the final unreality of most contemporary American culture; on the other hand, the current of catchpenny opportunism, originating in the practical shifts of Puritan life, becoming a philosophy in Franklin, passing through the American humorists, and resulting in the atmosphere of our contemporary business life.[3]

Brooks's choice of phrases to describe his currents are even more interesting today than in 1915. As humanists are finding themselves at the center of controversies about graduate education and its practical uses, the hostility between transcendentalists (aloof, fastidious, unreal) and catchpenny opportunists (practical, humorous, business-oriented) becomes more overt.

In the past, the student who chose to do graduate work in the humanities had one acceptable goal: to become a college professor. Now that there are too many Ph.D.'s in the humanities for a shrinking number of college teaching positions, that long-adhered-to single goal needs reexamining.

Questions about what is graduate work, training, or education and what are the results of this work - proficiency in methodology of research or proficiency in modes of inquiry - are raised by the need to consider the marketplace. The spirit of the catchpenny opportunists is making its way into the ivory tower. If this were a one-way street, we would be in danger of being forced to narrow our focus to the potential vocationalization of the humanities. But the plight of the humanities is matched with a crisis in the marketplace. The business sector of society is becoming aware of their own stake in the culture. As the public demands accountability, credibility, ethics, and public responsibility, the large economic institutions of our society are searching for ways to become more responsive and responsible to the society in the short run and to the culture in the long run.

The business involvement with culture no longer stops with money for the arts, but is increasing to include a reconsideration of the past and future role of business as an integral, even trend-setting force in the society. Business, like the university and the government, is in a broad

sense a cultural institution. Questions of human expression and human need, cultural identity and deprivation, the human as well as economic ramifications of wealth and poverty, the meaning of work, behavioral patterns of individuals and groups, are all considerations that overwhelm the specifics of particular institutions, and are instrumental to the effective operation of all institutions.

If we stay with Brooks's currents a moment longer we can see that each current defines opposing aspects of the human whole: wisdom vs. riches equals mind vs. body or, more abstractly, thought vs. action. But when applied to human beings, a separation between transcendentalist and pragmatist is not a matter of kind, but a question of the degree to which each person chooses to emphasize one or the other aspect of being. Even Emerson, Brooks's standard-bearer for the transcendental strain, noted in 1837 that "the state of society" suffered gravely from just such dichotomies:

> The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk and strut about so many walking monsters - a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.

And to those who would believe that mind alone could solve the problem of dismemberment, he said:

> Action is with the scholar subordinate, but it is essential. Without it, he is not yet man. Without it, thought can never ripen into truth.

Franklin, Brooks's standard-bearer for the catchpenny opportunists, along with his pragmatic exhortations in Poor Richard's Almanac, had a true reverence for the powers of the mind: "if you will not hear reason, she'll surely rap your knuckles."

So it is clear that mind and body, wisdom and riches, the visionary and the pragmatist have always existed, sometimes in conflict and sometimes in complement, as two facets of each individual, and, consequently, of every societal institution.

It is with the balance between conflict and complementarity that we have our problem. Some have indeed forsaken one facet in pursuit of the other. Caricatures and stereotypes arise from a basis of truth: they are

created by exaggerating the prominent characteristic and letting it stand for the whole. There are absent-minded professors who may have trouble with everyday life. And there are rapacious landlords who foreclose mortgages in spite of future perils that may visit upon Pauline.

Our task today is not to adhere to stereotypes or to prove them false. It is to look to the needs of our society to understand how people who differ instinctually and by training may contribute to a future course which acknowledges both the economic and the intellectual needs of society.

Notes

[1]Charles Frankel, "The Plight of the Humanist Intellectual," Encounter (August, 1974), p. 11

[2]Van Wyck Brooks, America's Coming of Age (New York, 1915), p. 10.

Postscript: Institutions and Stereotypes in a Post-Industrial Society

As American institutions become more specialized, each becomes a microcosm of the society as a whole and must answer to the needs of its individual constituents as well as to the society at large. A university sees to the needs of its students, professors, staff, and administration, but it must also be cognizant of its role in various other communities: town and region, the community of scholars, and the field of higher education. The same is true for a business corporation, a government agency, a hospital, and so forth.

As an institution strives to answer to each of these constituencies, the separate constituents become aware of the existence of others in one of two ways: as competitors for the same piece of pie, or as cooperative elements sharing in the whole. If we persist in stereotyping, we create competitors. If the professor is seen as living in an ivory tower with the protection of the institution, and if the institution sees this protection as its primary responsibility, then the university may become a defendant against the rest of society, protecting its ramparts against the encroachment of what, in this case, is seen as the real world. Such action contributed to the campus revolts of the sixties where tension arose because those in favor of engaging in government-supported scientific research (which may or may not have contributed to our undeclared war effort) rejected the moral imperatives raised by certain numbers of students and other constituents of the university, including community groups.

This case exemplarizes the kind of tension which can arise when the moral or social considerations of one constituency are not viewed as pertinent to the business at hand. The same situation can come up in a business organization that sees its main function as maximizing profits. If the organization does this at the expense of explicit moral or social considerations, the backlash may be formidable. The reaction against this business-as-usual mode of operation can be seen in recent ecologically-oriented protests and legislation, and in the kind of investigative actions typified by the Nader groups.

Society is no longer geared purely toward industrial efficiency and hierarchical decisions; priorities are questioned closely; recognized constituencies are diffuse and diverse.

As we become what Daniel Bell calls a post-industrial society, we move away from strict hierarchies toward a more cooperative mode. And as Bell says, "Cooperation between men is more difficult than the management of things." The rules and underlying moral concepts of our post-industrial society are just now being tested. Social eruptions such as campus revolts, anti-pollution movements, or controversies about nuclear energy are part of the process of testing. We are just now muddling through the pains of coming to terms with institutional life in a human service oriented society.[1]

Lest this be seen as an abstract, sociological problem, having no real or lasting consequence, it is wise to look at Peter Drucker's concepts of the changing nature of the work force, where cooperation between men becomes the chief objective. Drucker sees our future resting with the "knowledge worker," and the prime question of management will be, in fact already is, the question of how to manage this new worker. "The productivity, indeed the social cohesion, of every developed society rests increasingly on the ability to make knowledge work productive and the knowledge worker achieving. This may be the central social problem of the new, knowledge society."[2] The achievement requirements of the knowledge worker are (1) productive work, (2) feedback information, and (3) continuous learning.[3]

The knowledge worker must be aware of the institution as a whole, must feel a sense of personal motivation in getting work done. Reward doesn't come alone from seeing a finished product (e.g., the perfectly alphabetized file cabinet), but from recognizing its contribution to the work of the institution as a whole. Therefore, the function of the institution as a whole is important to this new worker. Productivity becomes more and more dependent on the job being big enough for the spirit, and since most jobs do not meet this requirement, satisfaction comes from understanding and participating in the institution's role in the society.

Hence the changing nature of institutions in a human service oriented post-industrial society raises major questions about the future of work, of the uses of education, and of anachronistic yet not extinct stereotypes.

Notes

[1]Daniel Bell, The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism (New York, 1976).

[2]Peter Drucker, Management (New York, 1973), p. 177.

[3]Drucker, p. 267.

The Useful Humanists: The Past

There has not been much call until very recently to detail the kinds of nonacademic pursuits scholars in the humanities have followed, but one such document does exist. In 1949, Percy Long, then president of the Modern Language Association, gathered information on the different functions performed by members of the Association during World War II.

A great many humanities professors were asked to use their civilian skills for the war effort. Many of them taught, but the range of subjects was unlike that of any college curriculum. The rudiments of language, both English and modern foreign languages, were part of their nonmilitary duties and could be transferred to the military teaching environment quite easily. But the sample of nonacademic subjects is much more instructive in the search for alternative applications of humanists' skills. A partial list of humanists' wartime teaching includes:

air-combat intelligence
army organization
communications
company administration
cryptography
geopolitics
international law
labor relations
military correspondence
naval tactics
ordinance
origins of the war
public relations
security
staff functioning

Nonteaching functions of the Association members cover an even wider range of functions including:

editing
personnel
interviewing and classifying
research
relocation directions
public relations
labor disputes arbitration
recruitment

The point being made by Long, and indeed the thrust of any argument for the nonacademic application of humanities skills, is that we need to realize "that the command of the techniques of research enables scholars to solve problems in fields remote from their specialties, that command over new data is swiftly achieved by those who have the 'know how.'"[1] In support of this idea Long culled from illustrative reports filed by members of the Association comments about the relationship of the scholar to the war effort. One of these comments is particularly enlightening:

> The particular advantage of the professional scholar is that he has, like the lawyer, been trained in the handling of evidence, and, unlike the lawyer, has learned to take into account human as well as legalistic factors. Thus for a person like myself who found himself suddenly involved in intelligence work the step from the library to the War Office was little more than the shift from the use of past evidence to the present....No one I ever met in my official capacity doubted for a moment that a professional training in scholarship enabled one to solve problems. The British have always taken it for granted, in drawing so liberally upon the academic world for staffing their own war effort.[2]

In one sense this detailing of nonacademic functions performed by scholars is very valuable. The humanist has usually been described in terms of what he studies - literature, language, philosophy, history - and these studies are then further narrowed and focused in terms of specific fields, genres, or periods. When asked what he does, the humanist scholar will invariably answer, "I teach," and if pressed further will probably give the course titles and contents. Rarely will he speak in terms of solving problems. This functional perspective is a new way of looking at the scholar's task and, for our purposes, supplies a valuable and exciting point of view.

The Future

Harlan Cleveland outlines the future of American decision-making as becoming more horizontal. Gone are the days of one man taking total responsibility and issuing an order that all others will follow without question. There are too many factors to be considered in decision-making and too many future-oriented considerations. Cleveland sees the emergence of a new executive, "the public executive." These are the men and women who will be

able to handle not only the matter at hand, but who will, in tackling immediate problems, take into consideration the ramifications of present decisions for a future of even more complex systems. In analyzing the qualities that will characterize this new model executive, Cleveland notes certain essential attributes. The public executive will be:

1. more intellectual, capable of analyzing complex options themselves instead of merely presiding while others decide;
2. capable of coordinating action by consensus;
3. have a taste for ambiguity and be able to utilize constructive ambiguity to strengthen the outcomes of decision-making;
4. be oriented toward an optimistic future and be aware of the public's purposes and interests;
5. be strong enough to establish a personal sense of purpose.[3]

The qualities outlined by Cleveland, who has made decisions in both the governmental and academic worlds, can by no means be considered to describe professional humanists. But the qualities he outlines, which coincide with other envisioned needs for a post-industrial or knowledge society, are those skills and casts of mind available from a humanistic education. The ability to make a decision and to tolerate, or even employ for best results, ambiguity are talents and skills sharpened by the study of human culture, human past actions, and human expression. His categories one, three, and five are demonstrably those belonging to people who embark on graduate careers in the humanities. His fourth category is one which future-oriented and socially-oriented humanists have been espousing for quite some time.

Graduate training in the humanities emphasizes the ability to get beyond immediate experience, to penetrate to the underlying assumptions or causes which make the immediate experience possible. Along with this skill goes the concomitant ability to see that the immediate, concrete experience is perceived differently by different experiencers/observers. The kinds of questions asked by persons so trained encompass a notion of events and experiences that can take into account group or individual reaction as well as the cultural, historical, and sociological factors that create responses or

reactions. This ability to analyze and then make coherent report of such analysis is the true functional intelligence of the humanist, if we differentiate between abilities and specialized application of skills according to the constraints of subject matter.

The second quality, which is, in essence, the ability to be a good administrator, is not one which is taught but one which is learned by observing those who have it and by employing the sensitivities of one's own self-knowledge and knowledge of human currents to deal with others in a cooperative and mutually respectful manner.

The humanist in the modern university is no longer Thales walking along the shore so absorbed in thought that he falls into a ditch. The professional humanist applies techniques of research, problem-solving, and writing in his scholarly projects and these skills may well be applied to nonacademic pursuits. The following examples will briefly illustrate this point.

The Literature Specialist

Project: A literary scholar is working on garden imagery in Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Marble Faun.

Process: A careful reading of the novel annotating for garden images. Research on any other work done on the specific topic and on garden imagery in general. Research on the meaning of the wild garden and the tended garden in the works of writers of Hawthorne's time and other authors Hawthorne may have read. Research in the underlying assumptions about a garden and the control of nature. Research into what nature means in Hawthorne's culture and to the European culture which is the setting for the novel.

The scholar then narrows the scope of the project by formulating specific questions, processing the material gathered to answer those questions, and writing up the results.

Skills: The obvious skills entailed are the ability to research and gather information from a variety of sources, organizational ability, winnowing out unnecessary information, identifying priorities, and the construction of a coherent overview utilizing background information and emerging with fresh perspectives. The trained humanist is, needless to say,

sensitive to the use of the language and has the ability to communicate clearly in writing.

All of the above skills may be applied to a modern area of research, such as the question of ecological imperatives in the operation of a plant or industry. Questions must be asked and information gathered about the society's view of nature and natural resources, and the answers to these questions must be balanced against a consideration of the particular needs of the industry. The gathering of this information, categorizing and analyzing it, and presenting conclusions in a coherent fashion are the basis for an intelligent industrial decision. The parameters of the research question are different in industry from those in academia but the talents and skills, especially the ability to extrapolate from details to a coherent overview, are essentially the same.

The Social History Specialist

Project: An investigation of ethnic immigration to the United States.

Process: Questions must be asked involving the meaning of relocation to a group identity, the idea of community, the mechanics of transportation and finances, the feelings about changing environments, and the manner in which the choice to change environments is made. Research would involve printed materials (books and newspapers), statistical information, and personal oral interviews. The researcher would need to be familiar with a variety of fields, such as sociology and psychology as well as history.

It is easy to see that a corporation seeking to relocate employees or develop a new site would need to ask many of the same questions that the historian has asked.

These examples, and others that could be developed, are not cited to prove that all humanists are fit to enter corporations. The point is that the capacities the graduate student must have to succeed in the academy - organized inquiry and coherent analysis - are the very same that an intelligent and effective corporate manager must have to succeed in the corporation. One corporate manager stated this succinctly when he said, "Being able to clearly identify the problem is probably the most difficult task for a corporate manager. It involves knowing what the right questions are."

In interviews conducted with corporate managers, government personnel, and humanists currently working outside the academy, the following were most often mentioned as the areas where humanists could make effective contributions:

1. Organizational development - reviewing past patterns of goal setting and implementation and planning for the future.

2. Management appraisal - evaluating workers' attitudes, through surveys and interviews, and in approaching a corporation or agency in a historical sense, compiling a corporate history and evaluating current practices in light of established performance.

3. Community-oriented programs - investigating community expectations, evaluating the goals of the institution and the needs of its constituent communities, and establishing models for projects that attempt to correlate the corporation's or agency's goals with those of its constituent communities.[4]

4. Human resources - working on programs that attempt to use human resources for the long-range efficacy of the corporation and the society.

5. Career development - setting goals for employees, developing training programs, establishing these programs and implementing them throughout the corporations or agency, monitoring the establishment of in-service learning environments, and coordinating continuing education programs for employees.

6. Establishing guidelines - for codes of conduct based upon past performance, future goals, legislative issues, and social pressures.

7. Research - working on research teams investigating new sites or environments for investment, plant expansion, and location, and on project areas in terms of cultural, ethnic, and historical factors. In fact, research of almost any kind is a special talent of the trained humanist. A Ph.D. in history who is now working in local government and who has worked as a legislative analyst and in Human Resources illustrates the benefits of his graduate training as follows:

> The best skill I got out of graduate school was the ability to do research. In my job at Human Resources, for example, I was responsible for writing up various grants for governmental funding. Writing up a grant is not all that different from doing a research paper; it involves getting information, knowing where to get it, how to organize it and present it in a coherent fashion.

Not a day goes by that I do not have to write technical reports and memos and I feel quite strongly that my ability to write has been a great help to me.

8. Public affairs, public relations - using the ability to understand an audience and communicate to that audience in appropriate language, acting as a liaison between the corporation or agency and its many publics.[5]

9. Corporate social responsibility - working in corporate foundations, evaluating social and cultural issues as they relate to the institutional environment in terms of working conditions, labor relations, etc., working on corporate charity giving, working on transnational problems such as investments in foreign nations, and on domestic issues such as racism and sexism.

10. Staff assistant-troubleshooter - working with a manager or director of the institution to develop an overview of institutional activities and pinpoint possible troubled areas for the future.

Notes

[1]Percy W. Long, "The Modern Language Association of America in World War II," Publications of the Modern Language Association, 64 (1949), p. 50.

[2]Long, p. 70-71.

[3]Harlan Cleveland, "The Decision Makers," Center Magazine, September/October 1973, pp. 9-18.

[4]One of the humanists interviewed is now working as a community action planner for a large corporation that has branches and plants in small towns. His basic goal is to determine what the role of a large wealthy corporation is in small working-class communities regarding:

a. vocational and economic education;
b. community attitudes toward big business;
c. social patterns, such as family structure (single-parent families needing day care, etc.), drug and alcohol abuse, the effect of swing shifts on family and community life;
d. political issues and political leadership.

The skills he perceives as most important are:

a. interviewing skills - what is really being said, how to ask probing yet nonthreatening questions to bring forth authentic feelings and thoughts rather than the rote responses which are geared toward pleasing the employer;

b. the ability to analyze social policy - what is a problem, what are its component parts;
c. group interaction skills - leadership, the ability to lead a discussion without being overly directive, the ability to gather pertinent background information, and the ability to forestall evasive digressions in a group (many of these skills are congruent with those of a good teacher);
d. the ability to analyze information determining pertinent data and the ability to present results in a coherent, articulate written report.

This is one brief example of the kind of work a trained humanist is equipped to undertake in a nonacademic setting.

[5]A specific example of a humanist in a research position for a multinational corporation might be the Ph.D. in French language and literature. This person is an expert in assimilating materials quickly and has a knowledge of French culture and language. For a company intending to invest or increase investments in developing countries, especially African nations once colonized by the French or Middle Eastern nations where the French influence has been particularly strong, a person who understands French culture and value systems and the ways in which these values have been transmitted and currently affect the social, political, and cultural environments is invaluable. The culture of a new nation has been influenced either to accept or rebel against the colonizer. Hence a sensitivity to the culture of the colonizer is imperative for a corporation wishing to establish a working relationship with that country.

This humanist may be involved in training employees who may be transferred to a foreign environment and in working with an industrial psychologist, counselor, etc., in establishing the needs of the transferred employee. Another work area may be in researching and developing a profile of the nation's cultural thrusts and outlining what the parameters of industrial and corporate relationships are with respect to the culture as a whole. The humanist has the capacity to deal with ambiguities in a foreign culture - on the simplest level with customs, whether the proffered handshake is an insult, on a more complex level, with cultural attitudes toward negotiating about work and payment, attitudes about leisure, success, organizational structures, etc. Such skills are needed by the growing multinational corporate sector.

An Experiment: The American Studies Internships

In March 1973, the National American Studies Faculty sponsored a meeting at Stetson University to discuss graduate education in American studies. The late sixties and early seventies had seen a proliferation of American studies programs and departments, both undergraduate and graduate, across the country, and it was time to make some plans for the future of this fast growing interdisciplinary area. Workshops were conducted on new developments in pedagogy and research, the relationship of American studies to other interdisciplinary fields, the graduate admission process, and the job market. As director of the American Studies Association's job placement service, I chaired the session on the job market and found that quite a few of the participants were for the first time seriously worried about the job prospects for their graduate students. Many had felt that with the growth of undergraduate programs the job crisis would not hit the newly emerging American studies Ph.D.'s quite as drastically as it had those in the more established humanities. But, by March 1973, there were quite a few new Ph.D.'s with nowhere to go.

It was apparent that not only were there no answers, but there were no models for approaching a solution. In the past when there had been a job crisis, as there was shortly after World War II, the prospects for the future were much brighter. In the early seventies, predictions were dim. It was clear that the academic establishment was unprepared to handle the realities of the marketplace.

In the course of the next year, after speaking with many graduate students in American studies, I began to draw up a preliminary plan for exploring the alternatives to academic employment for American studies Ph.D.'s. There were a number of reasons for choosing American studies humanists for this projected study. The first was that I knew the training and employment patterns in this field and the number of graduates were small enough for me to be able to communicate with most, if not all, the graduate programs and graduate students. Another was that the field of American studies is interdisciplinary and strongly oriented toward culture studies and cultural analysis; a case could be made for the usefulness of these scholars to societal

institutions that were concerned with the quality of life in America. Finally, the American studies curriculum touches on all aspects of the humanities - history, literature, philosophy - so that if a case could be made for the nonacademic employment of these humanists, it might serve as a model for humanists in other fields. There is, of course, a problem here in that the interdisciplinary scholar may be seen as having a wider scope than a scholar who has concentrated in a specific discipline, but in order to develop a working model I was willing to risk skewing my sample of humanists to those who might be immediately more attractive to nonacademic employers.

The internships project was designed to place American studies Ph.D.'s in business and government. The planning year, funded by The Rockefeller Foundation, had two audiences: the graduate students and the business and government communities (see project descriptions which follow).

Brochures were sent to American studies graduate programs across the country, to selected government agencies, and to selected corporations. The selection of corporations was not conducted as a scattershot affair. Corporations that had shown interest in community relations, corporate social responsibility, and public affairs were identified, and brochures were sent to them as well as to corporations that had participated in humanistic or socially oriented activities such as Conference Board activities, Aspen Institute for Humanistic Study seminars, Business Tomorrow conferences, and corporate educational programs. Positive or interested responses were followed up by further explanation of the program by letter, phone, or personal visits. (See samples of letters appended to this chapter.)

The purposes of the internship were clearly defined for the potential interns and graduate programs and for the potential business and government participants as:

1. demonstrating by example the humanities professionals' performance outside of an academic setting;
2. aiding business and government in preparing new approaches to problems resulting from (a) increased public concern about corporate activities, (b) a lack of balanced perspective on the uses of technology and its impact on American society, and (c) the new role thrust upon large institutions as they increasingly become the social architects of the future;

3. communicating back to the academic environment information about (a) the function of the humanist outside the academy, and (b) necessary changes in graduate curriculum if humanists were to be prepared to seek nonacademic positions;

4. establishing models to encourage nonacademic employers to look upon graduate programs in the humanities as potential providers of a valuable talent pool.

In order for the internship experiment to fulfill the above goals, it was determined that the following four priorities would have to be established and carried out:

1. A training program to expose the intern to nonacademic systems and give the intern (a) a sense of the ways in which organizations and institutions are structured, e.g., the difference between line and staff functions, various ways in which organizational hierarchies are charted, (b) a brief introduction to theories of organizational behavior, and (c) a refresher course in basic economics.

2. A direct supervisory relationship with a member of the organization that was accepting the intern.

3. Commitment from the intern to both evaluate his/her skills as compared to the required job skills and to write a report on the skills acquired through graduate training and their application to the intern assignment.

4. Commitment from the supervisor to do an evaluation of the intern regarding duties performed, and the additional perspectives, if any, supplied by an intern with humanities training.

Over two hundred corporations and government agencies were contacted about the program and thirty-seven were interested in the project. Of those who were not actively interested, many gave as their reason the sorry state of the economy and said that their energies were being directed toward dealing with cutbacks in their own organizations.

At the time that the project was terminated due to lack of sufficient funding, the following internship positions had been discussed and were in various stages of planning.

United States Information Agency

Project: to investigate and recommend appropriate audio-visual methods and materials to be used by a foreign educational system for training in American language and cultural studies.

A problem involving huge, unassimilated amounts of information and materials was presented to the intern. It was his job to establish guidelines for using the materials, and to evaluate the materials according to two criteria he established: the effectiveness of the materials and the context in which they would be used.

The intern identified and researched resources, organized and presented them with recommendations for use to a foreign educational establishment. He also wrote a handbook guide for the evaluation of audio-visual materials to be used by USIA personnel.

Large Bank

Project: an assessment of how the questions of quality of work experience will affect the bank during the next ten years.

The project was to begin with a survey of employee needs, and it was expected that certain concrete suggestions would surface quickly, like needing day-care facilities or a better explanation of the benefits program. The intern would be charged with probing for some more inchoate concerns about opportunities for fulfillment and growth.

The basic characteristics the bank was looking for in an intern were a strong tolerance for ambiguity and the ability to weigh needs of employees against the capabilities of the institution.

Large Retail Department Store Chain

Project: to work with the vice president for consumer affairs.

Projects would involve surveys on consumer attitudes, investigating the impact of the store on the community and possible corporate contributions to the community, such as development of recycling centers, consumer seminars for employees and customers, etc.

State Commission for the Humanities

Project: to work with the state committee to evaluate the planning, execution, and evaluation of all humanities programs in the state.

The project would involve consulting with both academic humanists and representatives of the public sector in determining and planning for humanistic content of programs. One of the aims of this intern's placement would be to investigate the value orientations of metropolitan service organizations, and to aid in providing support services to these organizations in terms of consultation and implementation of programs.

State Council on Human Services

Project: to coordinate planning, resources utilization, and policy development where two or more human service agencies were involved.

The intern would be involved with surveying and cross-referencing human-service programs, and searching for appropriate interfaces between programs, so that improved coordination and cost-effective programming could be funded.

The intern would be required to analyze and become knowledgeable about a broad scope of federal laws and regulations as they affect human-service programs.

State Department of Children and Youth Services

Project: to work with the Commissioner of Children and Youth Services to perform the following functions:

1. to serve as liaison between the department, the public, and individuals served, in order to assess the impact of specific programs in providing essential services;
2. to identify needed services by careful study and research of community needs;
3. to assist the commissioner in the determination of important policymaking decisions affecting children, youth, and their families;
4. to provide department heads and other policymaking individuals with information relative to changes which have taken place and are now taking place in the field of human services.

Large Corporation

Project: to work with the vice president for public affairs to analyze (1) current public attitudes toward corporate behavior, and (2) legislation being considered by local, state, and federal governments.

The intern would be involved with researching primary and secondary sources and would report directly to the vice president for public affairs. A possible joint project between public affairs and other corporate offices, such as public relations and employee relations, might be considered.

Large Corporation

Projects: (1) to work on a Bicentennial project - the making of a film or series of films on American values, and (2) to work with the vice president

for corporate relations on a project to investigate employee attitudes toward relocation and toward quality of work life.

Large Public Utility

Project: to work on community issues, monitoring community groups for their needs, and reporting back to the corporation.

Large Corporation Providing Food Services

Project: to work on a study of corporate employees, involving such issues as relocation - the executive nomad - and its effect on the individual employee and on the community.

Community Hospital

Project: to work with several small hospitals on planning programs in terms of the institution's role in the community and the effects of the changing community on health-care facilities.

* * *

Graduate students who applied for the internships listed the following as some of their interests and reasons in seeking nonacademic work:

- the role of the individual in community life
- public-service administration
- interaction of society and education
- the social environment of institutions
- work in natural resources - concern for the land and its development
- technology and its role in shaping the environment of individuals and communities
- assisting public and private agencies in dealing with oppressed minorities
- long-range research on topics such as corporate charity-giving, engineer shortages, and government regulation of industry
- the historic role and impact of law upon American culture
- seeking to apply experience in domestic politics, trans-cultural relations (Asian-American), developmental activities, and mechanized agriculture
- how are communal values achieved and what is the nature and meaning of community?
- working on a realization of self-image for use in advertising and public relations and on an understanding of a corporation's historic relationship to a community or region

- management theories and their application to modern business and industry
- field research on how aspects of American society and culture are understood by people with non-American backgrounds
- in-plant educational programs - seminars on the social science view of technology

Although the American Studies Internships were ultimately not established for the year 1976-1977 because of lack of funds, the planning year proved that there was interest in the corporate and government sectors in examining the potential roles for humanists in the nonacademic realm. Such an experimental internship program could be established in the future with the cooperation of graduate programs and a national funding source.

AMERICAN STUDIES IN

Rita D. Jacobs
Project Director

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researchers to investigate social, cultural, and environmental conditions before making a viable decision to expand, relocate, or invest. The Intern's interdisciplinary background provides research capabilities that will add extra dimensions to corporate problem solving.

2. Corporations cognizant of their social responsibilities need people to develop methods of social cost accounting.

3. The American Studies Intern, trained as a cultural analyst, can work on projecting the concerns of our society in the future. These skills are invaluable to corporations aware that they must be adaptable to changing conditions.

There are many other examples of Interns' skills and uses in terms of community relations, in-service education, etc. A corporation hiring an Intern is not getting a token humanist, but a truly valuable addition to corporate planning. In order to insure that this is so, the Interns will be given an intensive training program, similar to an Executive Seminar, at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, in cooperation with William Gomberg, Professor of Management and Industrial Relations. As a result, these Interns will bring to corporations both a mature understanding of the public and the ways of the business world.

The Internship period is scheduled to last one year, beginning in September 1975, with future options to be decided by the participants. Interns are all American Studies Ph.D.'s and will be selected according to their competence and interests. Employers will be able to choose specific Interns from a pool of qualified, professional men and women. For the one year period partial funding for the Interns' salaries will be provided by foundation grants, the rest by the participating corporations. During the year Interns will meet periodically to share their experiences, but at no time will corporate proprietary information be discussed. Rather, these meetings will provide working papers for future preparation of humanities students who hope to enter the business sector. The success of this Program involves providing new impetus towards reshaping humanities curricula as well as introducing humanists to business. It is hoped that mutually encouraging and productive experiences for the corporations and the humanists will lead to corporations' welcoming trained humanists and to future humanists' applying their energies to societally constructive ends.

AMERICAN STUDIES INTERNSHIPS

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Graduate education in the humanities is presently foundering in an identity crisis. Ph.D's who were once thought to be fit only for academic positions are now finding themselves victims of unplanned obsolescence. Yet students are still seeking graduate education in the humanities and particularly in interdisciplinary fields like American Studies. These students are part of a new wave of graduate students who see their education as a facilitating experience, an experience which will allow them to explore many areas of interest and train them to utilize varied methods and approaches to problem solving. And they choose the humanities interdisciplinary program because one of their basic concerns is the survival of humanistic values outside of the classroom.

It would be idyllic and impractical to assume that these students are not seeking to translate their knowledge into viable lifestyles and life work. Hence the identity crisis. They are trained in a world which labels Ph.D's in the humanities as inept outside of academia, yet American Studies Ph.D's interests are very much oriented to the society as it exists outside of the ivied walls. Such a situation necessitates a redefinition of the job market and, concomitantly, of graduate education.

The recent report Scholarship for Society: A report on Emerging Roles and Responsibilities of Graduate Education in America (Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service, 1973) notes that society's concern must be "with how to make knowledge a more effective resource for meeting social needs." Ph.D's can be useful and productive outside of academia, but the point that is stressed is that alternative modes of employment have "too little effect in shaping academic self-definitions."

The Rockefeller Foundation has agreed, in spirit and through funding, that action must be taken to remedy this crisis in the humanities. A pilot project to investigate alternative career options and to establish internships for American Studies Ph.D's in government and industry has been funded. American Studies is the chosen field for a variety of reasons. It is interdisciplinary and American Studies students are therefore equipped to solve problems utilizing varied approaches and methods. Through analyzing American culture these students have become knowledgeable about, and sensitive to, the changing values of our society. But perhaps most important are the students that American Studies programs attract -- people with diverse interests and a desire to participate in the world outside of academia. Field work is a component of many American Studies programs, and organizations such as the National American Studies Faculty involve American Studies scholars in the cultural and business life of America by creating community programs. Models for interaction between the university and the society are evolving through American Studies programs.

The focus of the American Studies Internship project is to set up experimental one year internships for American Studies Ph.D's in government and industry. There is no doubt that many newly trained professionals have expressed interest in entering non-academic fields, but the problem has been to organize a method for bringing American Studies humanists together with government and industry. For too long there has been suspicion among the academic, governmental, and industrial sectors of society and if we seek a productive future we must recognize the need for communication and cooperation. Government and industry are also confronting crisis times; they are now investigating their responsibilities and commitments to the society. Increasing automation and technology in American society make it essential that government and industry make use of humanists in order to maintain balanced perspective on the uses of technology and its impact on American society. The internship project is aimed at bringing American Studies humanists into government and industry where they will not only "learn by doing" but exercise their expertise in problem solving, defining values, and presenting researched, logical conclusions.

The interns will be selected according to their competence and interests, and employers will be able to choose specific interns from a pool of qualified professionals. Interns will go through an intensive training program prior to beginning their internships and they will meet periodically throughout the year to share their experience and knowledge. The total effect of such a program is incalculable as yet, but two primary goals can be foreseen: government and industry will benefit from the humanities perspective as applied to their short and long range goals, and the feedback from the program will aid graduate American Studies institutions in redefining their programs.

The Once and Future Kingdom of the Humanities: Recommendations

During the past fifty years, critical thinkers and writers have urged the humanities disciplines to look to the present and future as well as to the past. The argument for the nonacademic practice of the humanities has been linked to the crucial need in modern society for better understanding of the human resource in all its manifestations.

In 1928, Abraham Flexner spoke to a British university audience and urged that "humanism should further charge itself with the appreciation of the present as well as of the past, of the value of science, of the value of industry, of the soundness, comprehensiveness, justice, fairness, worthwhileness of government, ours, yours, other nations'."[1] He predicted that the "humanist may not only affect industry; the industrialist may in the process of humanizing his operations promote the primary ends of industry."[2]

In 1949, Howard Mumford Jones encouraged his fellow scholars to take a new look at themselves in light of their relationship to society. He rejected the ivory-tower notion of scholarship in favor of the larger world: "But I can no longer agree with eminent colleagues who hold that the social cost of what they do is no concern of theirs and that an article or two in a learned journal is sufficient justification for professional tenure as a scholar. Surely our social obligation is greater than the mere fact that we exist and do what we want to do."[3]

More recently, Louis Kampf of the Humanities Department at M.I.T. urged that the humanities be viewed in social context: "If liberal education is to perform its proper function - to help students see things as they are, to face them humanely and freely - then that education must be placed within an appropriate social context. Creating this context becomes, consequently, the foremost task for the liberal arts."[4]

And David Reisman, writing about graduate education, urges that, "Wherever possible graduate students should make some connection with an external world that has bearing on their speciality."[5]

In a recent recommendation about universities today, a recommendation which arises as a result of a survey of graduate students and graduate educators, Ann Heiss states that "As much as, if not more than, other men, scholars

should be concerned about the social consequences of their research and teaching. If they limit their interest and comprehension to the ever-fragmenting area of their specialties, they reduce their ability to observe the effect of their activities on mankind or on the human spirit. The role of the critic is too easy. As thought informs action, so action can inform thought."[6]

G. Jon Roush[7] bemoans the fact that the humanities have become like a museum housing the artifacts of the past, and that humanists are fast becoming curators for those artifacts. He urges that humanists cannot go on as curators but have a more important and vital role to play in the present. Like Steven Marcus, who pleads for "an active attempt on the part of the humanities to achieve through the processes of self-clarification an improved and informed consciousness of the present and their relationship to it,"[8] Roush asks for a reclarification of what tradition signifies in the present time and for the present time - "Consider the man who lives in a modern city and understands what Chaucer has to say on the subject of love. If he is not moved to challenge those aspects of his environment that prohibit love, he is not a humanist but a pedant, and he should not be surprised if his society considers him expendable."[9]

Roush's distaste for pedants comes not from an abstract yearning for commitment or relevance, but from careful observation of students and colleagues. The need for problem-oriented curricula, for providing "contexts outside the classroom within which humanistic learning is appropriate," is a need acknowledged by more and more humanists who find that preserving and communicating what was once an elite culture is no longer a sufficient rationale or activity for a humanist, for one steeped in knowledge of human creations, in this more complex interdependent world.

In all, these critics and reformers of graduate education echo the sentiments of Alfred North Whitehead in urging a tempering and leavening of book knowledge with the personal experience of knowledge - "Firsthand knowledge is the ultimate basis of intellectual life. To a large extent book learning conveys secondhand information, and as such can never rise to the importance of immediate practice." It is now time to open the gates of the university so that a free flow of ideas and exchange can exist. The predictions

about the future of higher education and especially humanities education are truly frightening. If we want to avoid their becoming fact, we had better deal with our fears out of the powerful knowledge that the humanities gives us.

Changing Attitudes

A truism: Reality changes faster than do attitudes regarding reality. Our challenge is to maintain a perspective on reality which enables us to keep from becoming attitudinally stagnant. In our media-ridden society attitudes are often flexed like muscles - tensed in response to threat or, as in Mr. America contests, shined up and displayed for show. In either case this show of strength does not necessarily indicate any real strength or belief. College open admissions and business codes of ethics, to take two of many examples, have been accused of being attitudinal flexes, advertisements that belie any real institutional change. Hence any recommendation for a change in attitude is actually a recommendation for an investigation into old attitudes and current realities.

The prevalent attitude in humanities graduate programs toward nonacademic careers is still that they are "second-rate." A student who announces a desire to work outside the academy is, by definition, a loser. Such attitudes must change because reality has changed. Academic career opportunities have decreased and will not, according to all statistical predictions, increase. The nature of the university's role in the society has changed. As the academy comes to realize that it is an institution that must function as a part of a larger system of institutions, faculty members must become more knowledgeable about those other institutions. Increased respect for other institutions or an acknowledgment that the university is one institution among others would signal a decrease in elitism or, in perhaps more palatable terms, an increase of democratization. If the humanities are to survive, faculties will have to begin to consider the possible professional roles a humanist may play outside of the academic environment.

Ways of instigating such attitudinal changes and at the same time exploring nonacademic roles for humanists may include: (1) exchanges of ideas and personnel between academic and nonacademic sectors, e.g., humanists

working with business and government professionals on questions of ethics; and (2) increasing the interaction of humanists and specialists in more action-oriented fields, like business, political science, and international relations, on task forces having to do with the university's role in the culture.

Ernest Boyer, Chancellor of the State University of New York, has called for the establishment of task forces on societal problems emphasizing the university's function in public service.[10] He stressed the need for universities to redirect their energies toward societal issues, and suggested the establishment of an Office of Public Service, a University/Industry Panel, and a University/Social Agencies Panel. In the past, academic participants in such cooperative ventures, the few that existed from time to time, have been limited almost exclusively to economists, social scientists, and political scientists. Humanists have been virtually ignored. In a time of societal reexamination and redirection, humanists must be included to provide the cultural and historical perspective so necessary to effective problem-solving.

The establishment of Dr. Boyer's suggested task forces would accomplish at least three objectives:

- to get some of the best minds in the society to apply their knowledge to pertinent social problems involving health, the economy, and human resources;
- to provide models for academic interaction with other societal institutions; these models will be important in demonstrating nonacademic options for students in the humanities and other fields;
- to increase respect and knowledge among the different sectors of society for the special resources and talents of each.

In this manner we may achieve what the Panel on Alternative Approaches to Graduate Education stressed the need for - uncovering "overlooked resources and approaches in the humanistic disciplines that could be applied to social questions, and thus point the way to alternative careers for holders of doctorates."[11]

Changing Graduate Education

> We have to change the ideas of problem-solving - we've got to start talking about a lot of different kinds of things. We're into ecology now but it doesn't mean ecology in an environmental sense - it means a study of philosophical relationships between parts and the whole. Given this kind of problem, what kind of models can we generate? Can we start talking about the metaphors and symbols in science and in business and in economics? Of course we can. There are people who are doing it, but those people are not necessarily in charge of graduate study programs.
>
> Humanities graduate student, Alternative Careers Workshop, November 1975

> If you ask me what "the humanities" is, the last thing I would have thought of is a person who loves to deal in documents of history and to deal with the literary text. I think of the humanities as having to do with values and the willingness to think that values and their meanings are important. Secondly, some rational way to try to approach values. I don't mean that we are trying to find that there are natural values, but simply to find some orientation about what I am doing in this world that will save me from throwing up my hands and saying, "Nobody knows, nobody can tell, and to heck with it."
>
> Mellon Fellow at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Study, Summer 1975

The interests students bring to graduate study in the humanities are as varied as the students. And just as certain students are prepared for teaching or research careers, others should be allowed, even encouraged, to structure programs which may lead them to nonacademic careers.

Among graduate students there appears to be an increased interest in the problem-solving aspects of a humanities education. What are my skills and how can I solve academic humanities problems and social or political problems? One approach to this type of applied humanities question would be the development of interdisciplinary and team-taught courses utilizing the skills and expertise of a humanist and social scientist.

Interdisciplinary Programs

In an excellent article on interdisciplinary studies, Henry Winthrop outlines a variety of issues and needs that could be dealt with in interdisciplinary graduate programs. They include:

1. automation and cybernation; their current and anticipated social, economic, and industrial effects;
2. environmental pathologies of the technetronic civilization;
3. the quest for community, that is, the illnesses of the large-scale, industrialized urban center and some of the proposals for achieving authentic community in the sense of a philosophy of the good life and in the sense of physical design of community;
4. forms of alienation in our technological society;
5. the nature of the quest for personal identity and the cultural and social forces which tend to abort that quest;
6. the contemporary social problems created by the impact of science, technology, and invention in Western society;
7. studies of the future and some of the problems with which this new field is beset;
8. the dimensions of value in a complex social and technological milieu, and some of the relationships of the planning and policy sciences to these dimensions of value;
9. modes of communication, their relationships to some of the issues in the social and behavioral sciences, and the factors obstructing or breaking down these modes of communication;
10. some of the problems of contemporary American culture and some of the social and psychological factors that give rise to them;
11. the value patterns of modern technological societies and some of the existing proposals for world order that these patterns necessitate;
12. some critiques of the social fabric of Western society and the variety of social and psychological causation used to account for existing forms of social pathology.[12]

Interdisciplinary programs of study are intellectually sound and vocationally applicable. In discussing the relationship of education and work, Eli Ginzberg, perhaps the nation's foremost manpower expert, said:

> I think the university's extremely rigid departmental segregation has made it very hard for students to put together the kinds of combinations that would give them not only as good intellectual training as they get now - even a better one, in my opinion - but would also greatly increase their capacity to make their way in the world of jobs.[13]

Interdisciplinary programs are not geared toward obscuring departmental expertise, but attempt to use this to offer a variety of educational experiences

to students. The growth of interdisciplinary programs has threatened individual departments, especially in an era of financial stress, and there is no easy solution to this problem. But, if the humanities departments are to assert their applicability in American society, there must be a coordination of department activities with interdisciplinary programs.

The Relationship of the Humanities to Professional Education

The professional schools - law, medicine, and business - in universities across the country are currently reexamining the role of the humanities in their specialized curricula. The problem of values and ethics and the problem of the social responsibilities of professionals are among the motivating factors in this reexamination. Courses have been established on business, government, and the changing environment; business and society; socio-ethical issues in business; corporate social responsibility; social ethics and the law; images of the legal profession; medicine, ethics, and society; social and cultural impacts of the medical profession, etc. In many of these courses the subject matter of the humanities, philosophical treatises, historical documents, novels and other fictional works, are read and discussed. For the most part, humanities scholars are not involved in the preparation or teaching of these courses. This may be due to the fact that there is rarely interaction between the professional schools and other graduate schools on campuses, and this is a situation that can be overcome.

Graduate programs in the humanities can provide expertise to the professional schools for these new courses and, at the same time, graduate students in the humanities as well as the students in the professional schools may benefit from such cross-fertilization. Closer cooperation among graduate humanities programs and professional schools may lead to increased opportunities for humanists in fields not traditionally seen as the humanities fields.

Therefore, graduate humanities programs which exist within universities having professional graduate schools would be well-advised to:

1. establish communications with the professional schools;
2. obtain professional course descriptions to determine where humanities input may be desirable;

3. share resources with the professional schools, e.g., team teaching, guest lecturing (this includes inviting professional school colleagues to participate in humanities programs);

4. investigate the potential for creating interdisciplinary graduate programs with the professional schools (examples of this already exist within the sciences and social sciences - there are M.D.-Ph.D. programs in existence with the Ph.D. field being one of the biological sciences or a social science field such as sociology).

Career Counseling

Career counseling has been notoriously deficient for the Ph.D. humanist, the assumption being that sooner or later all would get teaching jobs. This orientation has rendered nonacademic career counseling an obscure, word-of-mouth, and mainly unpracticed art. This is not an area which can be improved; it is one that must be developed for the first time. Humanists should be polled to find out their fields of employment and, if the field is nonacademic, a follow-up should be done. Although the Higher Education Research Institute in Los Angeles is currently seeking this kind of information from graduates of forty universities, each graduate institution in the country that is eager to establish nonacademic career counseling for Ph.D.'s should seek information from its own best source, its graduates.

The following are recommendations for establishing nonacademic career-counseling services:

1. Graduate students in the humanistic disciplines should be informed of the job possibilities and predictive statistics for specific job areas upon entering graduate programs.

2. Graduate students who are interested in nonacademic employment should be interviewed and given diagnostic skills tests.

3. A special counseling service should be established for nonacademic placement of humanities students and attempts should be made to establish ties between the academic community and potential business and government employers.

4. Job counseling for academic humanists should include preparation for nonacademic interviewing and the preparation of functional resumes. The functional resume begins with a statement of career objective and a brief summary of background experience and qualifications. Specific skills and experience are then listed separately, including such

activities as administration, communications, analysis and research activities, planning, organizing and problem-solving skills, speaking, writing and editing skills, public relations, public affairs, and community experience. There are many guides to writing such resumes and to the language of non-academic job seeking (Dictionary of Occupational Titles, What Color Is Your Parachute by Richard Nelson Bolles, How to Hire an Employer by Richard Irish, etc.) and these should be made available to the job candidate.

The entire area of job counseling is becoming increasingly important to graduate students and the need for such services is a resounding theme in any conversation with these students:

> You say we've got to be aware of alternative careers and I think most of us are thinking in terms of alternative careers - but nobody else puts out job lists like academic departments do. How do you find out about alternatives? You could spend your whole life beating the bushes.
>
> Graduate student, Alternative Careers Workshop, November 1975

Thus far the disciplinary associations have done some preliminary scouting and have published some brief reports and guides to nonacademic careers (see bibliography) but the real need is for specific counseling and that burden must be shared by the graduate institutions.

Internships

In order to gather more information about the potential of humanists in nonacademic organizations and to further interaction between humanists and professionals in business and government, internship programs designed to place graduate humanists in nonacademic institutions should be initiated. These internships could be developed by individual universities or professional associations or perhaps more effectively through a pooling of resources and personnel. A national humanities internships program would be an ideal innovation for it would guarantee recruitment of interns from across the nation, and all disciplines would be represented.

Optimally, funding for the interns would be provided by the institution accepting the intern and ultimately the success of an internship program would depend on this. But in the early stages of an internship program joint funding, shared by nonacademic institutions and agencies, foundations, and the universities would indicate joint support of such a program.

The length of an internship would vary with placements but in all cases there should be an adequate amount of time for the intern and employer to investigate the applicability of the intern's training to the employment situation.

Interns placed in similar agencies or businesses should meet periodically to share information and experiences with the guarantee that proprietary information will not be discussed. No obligation to continue employment of the intern should be incurred, although the option to hire an intern after the internship period should be available to the agency or institution.

A final meeting of interns and supervisors along with final written evaluative reports should be integral parts of any internship program. Such evaluation procedures would have substantial effect on the revision of curricula and the establishment of career counseling for graduate students seeking to prepare for nonacademic careers.

Shedding New Light on the Humanities

To date there has been no study on the exact nature or effect of the humanities, no investigation of the skills derived from humanities training. The humanities have been spoken of and thought of mainly in terms of subject matter and not in terms of approaches and skills. Therefore, the Ph.D. in humanities has been viewed as a scholar who specializes in a specific subject area - the Medievalist, the Renaissance-Reformation expert, the Kant scholar, etc. Thus far, this system of categorization has served to place the scholar in his appropriate niche in the university departmental hierarchy. But as the humanities are reviewed in light of applications to nonacademic endeavors, attempts must be made to understand the general skills that the humanist brings to his work.

Studies should be undertaken by university humanities programs and the professional associations to delineate and demonstrate the skills obtained through humanities training, skills such as problem-solving, communication techniques, organizational abilities, research and analysis strengths. Some such studies and resulting programs are already in progress. The University of Kansas's history department, in an effort to understand more clearly their role in the university, has begun a reinvestigation of what historians teach,

not only the subject matter but the skills. The history department at the University of California at Santa Barbara, in conjunction with several other departments, has made the step from examining these skills to defining a program where such skills may be applied to a nonacademic field. They have just established a doctoral program for historians who wish to work in the public sector - the public historian. Descriptions of the above two projects are available from the universities involved.

The professional humanities associations (MLA, AHA, APA, ASA), in conjunction with a funding source (National Endowment for the Humanities or a private foundation), could design and implement a study of the basic skills derived from humanities graduate training and the ways in which these skills relate to:

- skills obtained from other fields of study;
- the university curricula as a whole;
- vocational imperatives - academic and nonacademic.

A national humanities survey could answer the kinds of questions that both employers and people concerned with the future of the humanities ask:

What is the role of the humanities in an understanding of our current and future societal problems?

How does knowledge of the past - historical, cultural, and ethical - function in determining policy decisions?

Notes

[1]Abraham Flexner, "The Burden of Humanism" in The Humanities After the War, ed. by Norman Foerster (Freeport, New York, 1944) p. 56.

[2]Flexner, p. 51.

[3]Howard Mumford Jones, "The Social Responsibility of Scholarship," PMLA, 64 (1949) p. 42.

[4]Louis Kampf, "The Humanities and Inhumanities," Nation (September 30, 1968) p. 313.

[5]David Reisman, "Thoughts on the Graduate Experience," Change Magazine (April 1976) p. 15.

[6]Ann Heiss, Challenges to Graduate Schools: The Ph.D. Program in Ten Universities (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1970) p. 273.

[7]G. Jon Roush, "What Will Become of the Past?" Daedalus (Summer 1969) pp. 641-653.

[8]Steven Marcus, "Notes on Some Problems in the Humanities Today," Partisan Revfew, 4 (1974) p. 516.

[9]Roush, p. 652.

[10]Ernest Boyer quoted in an editorial in The New York Times (July 9, 1976).

[11]Benjamin DeMott, "Graduate Work: Has Its Meaning Been Lost?" The New York Times, Section 4 (June 15, 1975).

[12]Henry Winthrop, "Interdisciplinary Studies: Variations in Meaning, Objectives and Accomplishments" in Prospects for the 70's, ed. by Finestone and Shugrue (New York, 1973) pp. 169-170.

[13]Eli Ginzberg, "Manpower Needs: Are Universities Training the Right People for the Right Jobs?" Seminar Reports, Program of General and Continuing Education in the Humanities, Columbia University, Vol. 3, No. 4 (1975) p. 39.

Note to the Nonacademic Job Hunter

There are a number of associations and publications of special interest to humanists seeking nonacademic jobs. Each of the humanities professional associations is seeking to include notice of nonacademic jobs in their employment bulletins. The following additional publications will also prove helpful:

"English and the Foreign Languages: Employment and the Profession," available from the Modern Language Association;

"A Guide for Job Candidates and Department Chairmen in English and the Foreign Languages," available from the Modern Language Association;

"Non-Teaching Jobs for Historians," available from the Organization of American Historians;

"Non-Academic Careers for Historians," available from the New York State Education Department.

How-to Hints

"A Guide to Career Alternatives for Academics" by Zambrano and Entine is available through Change Magazine (NBW Tower, New Rochelle, New York 10801). This guide contains lists of books for job hunters, lists of directories and addresses of nonacademic associations. It also includes samples of the functional resume.

What Color Is Your Parachute: A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers by Richard Nelson Bolles (Ten Speed Press, 1972) is a classic in its field and is a complete how-to guide.

Associations

Employment Crisis Committee is organized to spur the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians to take action on employment issues. The ECC publishes a newsletter available from Karl von Loewe, Editor, 23 Courtlandt, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901.

The Association for the Full Employment of Doctorates, Mrs. Delina Halushka, 448 4th Street, Santa Monica, California 90402.

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