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ABSTRACT

This issue of "Communitas" contains 12 articles by Connecticut community college professional staff. In "On the Higher Illiteracy in America," Grant Roti analyzes the grammatical and punctuation errors in a standard scholarly work. Edward Bollenbach's "Teaching Stress Management in the Community College Environment" summarizes participant activities in Northwestern Connecticut Community College's (NCCC's) stress management course. In "Individualizing Introductory Social Science Courses," Sue Corcoran discusses individualized, mastery-based psychology instruction. "A Plea for the A B C's (Advising, Better Counseling)," by Joyce Hirschhorn, stresses the value of mid-term student-teacher conferences and advisement counseling. In "Developmental Studies in the Community College," Thomas Hodgkin focuses on the development and accomplishments of NCCC's program. The Greater Hartford Campus Ministry is the topic of Jean Blanning's essay, "A Religious Ministry in a Community College." "The Non-Traditional Student at Middlesex Community College," by Carol Milatz, considers the special problems and characteristics of older students. In "Why They Hugged in Minneapolis," Bill Nagle discusses the personal benefits derived from involvement in the Phi Theta Kappa honor society. In "Spotlight On...", Betsy Doane describes her experiences as a visually handicapped mathematics instructor. Ben Thomerson, in "A Californian in Connecticut," considers the benefits and insights obtained from teacher exchange experiences. Carol Weiss discusses her experiences in the Yale University Visiting Faculty Program in "How a Faculty Member from a Shopping Center Community College Found Happiness in the Hallowed Halls of Ivy." Finally, in "Sabbatical: A Time of Rest," Mike Moran describes his sabbatical leave activities. (AYC)

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COMMUNITAS

1982

EDITED BY JEAN BURR SMITH

A publication of the

Regional Connecticut Community Colleges

March 15, 1982

I am pleased to write this introduction to the 1982 edition of COMMUNITAS. Since I served on the Professional Development Committee where the idea of a faculty publication was submitted for funding, I have followed with great interest the birth and development of COMMUNITAS.

I must admit, however, that at first I had some second thoughts. A professional staff journal for our little community college system? A journal for a collection of colleges that lacked so many of the other accouterments of the typical American college? How absurd! But it wasn't absurd, it was right on target. In many ways it expressed the very essence of our colleges; faculty and staff creating spheres of higher learning despite the absence of the usual and typically necessary material of higher education. Granted that it was out of necessity and not desire, but other people learned early and well to distinguish filling from fluff. And, though in simple form, a professional journal was born. Ideas are being shared. An outlet for one of our most cherished talents, the written word, has been provided.

With this COMMUNITAS we have enjoyed our issues of articles by professional staff. All of our colleges have participated. What a fine way to exhibit to the world that we are here, that we are alive and vital, and that we are fully contributing to the higher learning of this country!

Robert A. Chapman
President
Middlesex Community College

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ON THE HIGHER ILLITERACY IN AMERICA

BY

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Housatonic Community College

To emphasize the importance of grammar and punctuation to my students, I have made it a practice to point out mistakes made in print by prominent, educated Americans, thereby also showing the students the depth of this particular national ignorance, one which goes far beyond the few seventeen-year-olds taking the S.A.T.'s.

Recently, however, this "depth" began to really distress me. I have begun reading of Lincoln's assassination in Stephen B. Oates' recent Lincoln biography, With Malice Toward None¹, a work which many scholars now regard as the standard scholarly biography. I wanted to take a few paragraphs, change the grammar and punctuation so they were faulty, and use the altered text as a copy-editing examination for my class. I discovered that the mistakes had already been made, obvious mistakes which could not be mere typographical errors. History, of course, is the articulate memory and voice of a people; and in this case one of the most learned historians in the United States, his colleagues who read the manuscript "in its entirety,"² his typist, his proofreader, and the editors of Harper and Row (and Oates himself probably proofread the galley)--all had such shallow feeling for the language that six paragraphs describing the one death which perhaps most changed American history contain two embarrassing grammar mistakes, two seriously misleading punctuation mistakes, two other punctuation mistakes, a number of questionable marks of punctuation, a faulty pronoun reference, and an inaccurate translation of a simple phrase from a foreign language. (I have not yet read the rest of the book.)

Oates states that after Lincoln was shot in the state box

of Ford's Theater, Dr. Leale "lay the President" on the floor.³ The past tense of the verb lay is laid (Oates has confused it with the verb lie); he should have written that Dr. Leale "laid the President" on the floor. The same mistake occurs in the next paragraph, where Oates states that after Lincoln had been carried across the street to the Peterson House, the men carrying him "lay him" across a bed.⁴ They should have "laid him" across the bed. One third of my freshman class noticed the mistakes immediately.

One punctuation mark actually changes a fact of history. Oates states that after the President had been moved to the Peterson House, his son Robert arrived with John Hay, "scarcely hearing the family physician who told them at the doorway that it was no use."⁵ Although Lincoln was a hypochondriac and consulted many doctors, there was only one family physician, Dr. Robert King Stone⁶; and it was he who met Robert at the doorway. Oates should have placed a comma after "physician" to indicate that the clause, "who told them at the doorway that it was no use," is non-restrictive. By not doing so, Oates implies that there was more than one family physician; and there was not.

Other punctuation mistakes are misleading and annoying. Oates says that during the play, "Mary was sitting close to Lincoln and Rathbone and Miss Harris were looking rapturously at Trenchard [a character in the play]."⁷ By failing to place a comma after "Lincoln" to separate the two coordinate clauses, Oates allows his reader momentarily to suppose that Mary was sitting close to all three, Lincoln, Rathbone, and Miss Harris. It is only as the reader nears the end of the sentence that the ambiguity disappears. Had Mary been sitting near Rathbone, she would have blocked the escape route of the assassin, which was through the seven- to eight-foot space between the couples.⁸

Oates states that while the President lay in the Peterson house, Sumner came in, took Lincoln's hand, "but a doctor said 'he can't hear you. He is 'dead.'"⁹ There should be a comma after "said," and "he" should be capitalized.

There are a number of other questionable marks of punctua-

tion within the six paragraphs, but they do not obscure the meaning.

Pronoun reference is also a problem. Oates states that when Dr. Leale was attending to Lincoln on the floor of the state box, "Leale reached into his mouth, opened his throat, and applied artificial respiration."¹⁰ Again it is only as the reader nears the end of this passage that he realizes that Leale is not reaching into his own mouth (for saliva?) but into Lincoln's; by the end of the sentence the ambiguity has disappeared, and the meaning is clear. The first "his" should be changed to "the President's."

Last of all, "sic semper tyrannus [sic]!"¹¹ the cry of Booth as he stood on the stage, is translated as "Thus be it ever to tyrants," the Latin singular ("tyrannus") being translated as an English plural ("tyrants"). The actual Latin expression was "sic semper tyrannis,"¹² and the mistake is, no doubt, a typographical error; but apparently no reader noticed that the printed Latin phrase was inconsistent with the translation.¹³

Anyone should, of course, be allowed an occasional slip in grammar, especially in conversation; but when a chain of intelligent, educated scholars and editors repeatedly overlook basic patterns in the language, then the food and drink of a thoughtful life are being drained away. It begins, I think, in high school where foreign languages are neglected and English teachers avoid grammar and logic in order to enjoy literature. In college, it is fostered by the elimination of foreign language requirements and by an academic disdain for the "mechanics" of English, which have been relegated to distracted graduate students and soon to computer terminals. This produces a cavalier literacy, a servile dependence on copyeditors, and even in the most learned and elemental ignorance. A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands in rest....

ENDNOTES

¹New York: Harper and Row, 1977.

²Oates, p. xvii.

³Oates, p. 432.

⁴Oates, p. 432.

⁵Oates, p. 432.

⁶Dr. Stone testified at the trial of the conspirators that he had been sent for by Mary Lincoln immediately after the assassination and arrived "in a very few moments." The case was immediately given to his care. Refer to Benn Pitman, Assassination of the President and the Trial of the Conspirators (Cincinnati: Moore, Wilstach & Baldwin, 1865), p. 76.

⁷Oates, p. 431.

⁸Mary Lincoln was seated on Lincoln's right; and to their right, seven to eight feet away, were Rathbone and (on his right) Miss Harris. The two couples were separated by a small partition. Refer to the National Park Service diagrams in Ralph Borreson, When Lincoln Died (New York: Appleton-Century, 1965), pp. 16-7.

⁹Oates, p. 432.

¹⁰Oates, p. 432.

¹¹Oates, p. 431.

¹²The words sic semper tyrannis were attributed to Booth by James P. Ferguson in his testimony at the trial; refer to Pitman, p. 76. Matthew Arnold, it is said, felt that the use of Latin here "offered a ray of hope in the United States' otherwise bleak cultural outlook" (Dictionary of Quotations, ed. Bergen Evans (New York: Delacorte, 1968), p. 715, item 9).

¹³Only one of the thirteen popular and scholarly reviews that I consulted made note of any grammatical mistakes: Hans L. Trefousse, Civil War History, 23 (1977), p. 172, complains of Oates' "ungrammatical terms." Richard N. Current in his review in the American Historical Review, 82 (1977), p. 1075, noticed

slangy expressions, over-familiar terms, mixed metaphors, mis-usages, and malapropisms, but nothing ungrammatical; he says simply that Oates "deserved a better copyeditor." Other reviews include Thomas H. O'Connor, America, 136 (1977), 426; Booklist, 73 (1977), 786; Choice, 14 (1977), 742; Mark Norman Schatz, Library Journal, 101 (1976), 2478; Herbert Mitgang, New York Times, March 12, 1977, p. 21; David Herbert Donald, New York Times Book Review, March 13, 1977, p. 2; Luther Spoehr, Saturday Review, Feb. 5, 1977, p. 35; James A. Rawley, Journal of American History, 64 (1978), 1115-7; Harold M. Hyman, "Neither Image Breaker Nor Broker Be," Reviews in American History, 6 (1978), 72-9; the Times Literary Supplement, April 28, 1978, p. 476; and the Economist, March 11, 1978, p. 116.

TEACHING STRESS MANAGEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT

BY

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A course in stress management entitled "Techniques for Reducing Stress" was offered at Northwestern Connecticut Community College during the Fall 1981 semester. Enrollment was limited to thirty participants of which twenty completed the course. Seventeen of these students kept detailed records of their experiences relating to stress throughout the semester. The availability of these records provides a means for an analysis of the effectiveness of teaching stress management techniques in a community college setting. This paper summarizes and discusses the experiences of participants in this course.

The "Techniques for Reducing Stress" course grew out of an interest in stress management which began during the Fall of 1979 and Spring 1980 when I had the opportunity to take an NSF Chautauqua short course for college teachers entitled "Holistic Health," which was offered at the University of Hartford. Relaxation training techniques were included in this course, and as a result of exposure to these techniques I decided that these methods provided a potential for positive change for anyone who wished to learn and practice them.

The "Techniques" course was presented in an experiential mode. That is, participants were instructed in relaxation inducing techniques and were told to keep a diary of their relaxation experiences. This diary included physiological measurements (finger temperatures before and after relaxation), subjective experiences and feelings, and a record of any changes in a variety of stress related complaints.¹ For students taking the course for credit 50% of the final grade was determined on the basis of individual student records. Record keeping itself

served as the basis for a grade not performance or results. Relaxation techniques demonstrated and practiced in the course included progressive muscular relaxation, imagery and visualization, self-directed relaxation, autosuggestion, autogenic training, and various meditative techniques.

Peripheral circulation (blood flow in the extremities), particularly the amount of blood flow through fingers and toes has been shown to be a reliable and easily measured physiological indicator of the relaxation response.² Increase of blood flow to the hands and fingers will result in increases in hand and finger temperatures. Warm hands and fingers indicate relaxation while cold hands and fingers reflect tension or activation. Students recorded finger temperatures before and after each relaxation exercise daily throughout the semester. In this way each student could use this physiological response to estimate the degree of relaxation they were able to induce. Students also kept records of their own subjective feelings during relaxation so that they could correlate their subjective experiences to finger temperature changes. Each student was instructed to plot on a graph one finger temperature reading before and after relaxation for one day during the week for the remaining weeks of the semester. These graphs show unique responses to relaxation training. Some graphs also demonstrate the degree of self-regulation that can be developed with regular practice of these techniques. Some students felt temperature taking interfered with relaxation and took readings for fewer weeks than others. Temperature graphs for some students covered as few as 6 weeks while for others 12 weeks of temperature readings were taken. Three graphs from the entire group were chosen which illustrate the different ways individuals can benefit from this biofeedback temperature training. Figure 1 shows the results for a 19 year old female student. Her finger temperature before and after relaxation were plotted over 6 weeks. This student's finger temperature, prior to relaxation, increased weekly through the first five weeks. This suggests a lower level of tension throughout the day as practice over the

semester progressed. This same student reported that intense neck and shoulder pain that was stress related, diminished to zero pain over the semester. She also rated her anxiety and depression level as moderately painful at the start of the semester and rated both levels as hardly noticeable at the end of the semester.

Figure 2 is the finger temperature graph of a 23 year old woman. At the start of the course she complained of cold hands and expressed frustration that they did not become warmer during relaxation even though she said she felt relaxed. She was instructed to continue her relaxation periods unconcerned about changes in finger temperatures. As is shown in the graph, after three weeks of regular practice she showed significant improvement in the ability to warm her hands. This student reported incapacitating tension headaches at the start of the semester and reduced them to what she reported as mildly disturbing by the end of the semester. She also reduced her fatigue, reported as irritating at the start of the semester to hardly noticeable by the end of the semester.

Figure 3 shows the graph for a 62 year old woman. She reported that she suffered from incapacitating arthritis and also cancer when she began the course. As her graph shows, she became proficient in inducing profound relaxation, as measured by the ability to warm her hands over twenty degrees, during the last five weeks of the semester. A finger temperature of 95° is indicative of deep relaxation. Although this woman reported no change in her arthritis or cancer, she did report depression as intense at the start of the semester and reduced it to mild by the end of the semester. She also reported incapacitating fatigue at the start of the course which diminished to mild at the end of the course. All three people cited above represent unique and positive responses to stress management training.

Figure 4 is a composite graph for all 17 students with average beginning and ending temperatures over ten weeks. When we look at the entire group and average their beginning temper-

atures there does not appear to be significant change for beginning temperatures through the semester although we can see a slow but steady rise for post relaxation temperature. This may indicate that, as a group, the class was developing increased ability in inducing relaxation.

At the start of the semester students were asked to rank the severity of stress related complaints on a scale of from one to five. After one month and again at the end of the semester they were asked to reevaluate those complaints. The scale was interpreted as follows:

- 1 - hardly noticeable
- 2 - mildly disturbing
- 3 - constant irritation
- 4 - moderately painful
- 5 - extremely painful

For a list of the stress related complaints used see Mason 1980.¹ For each stress-related complaint improvements were average for the entire class. The following nine conditions showed most improvement among class participants.

<u>Complaint</u>	<u>Average Severity Rating Before Course</u>	<u>Average Severity Rating After Course</u>
Tension headache	3.3	1.0
Muscle cramps, spasms	3.2	0.6
Back pain	2.9	0.4
Jaw Tension	3.3	1.6
Migraine	3.0	0.7
Insomnia	2.8	1.1
Fatigue	3.5	1.5
Anxiety	2.8	1.2
Depression	2.9	1.3

From these data it is clear that many found the course rewarding. Offering "Techniques for Reducing Stress" in the community college is a valid community service, and most participants reported that the experience was life enhancing. Physi-

cians are well aware of the toll that stress can take. Many physicians believe that fifty to eighty percent of diseases result from chronic physiological response to psychological stress.² Despite this fact most physicians are either not qualified or do not have the time to teach stress management skills. Offering stress management courses at the community college provides access to instruction which results in benefits to health, productivity and coping in our overstressed society.

FIGURE 1

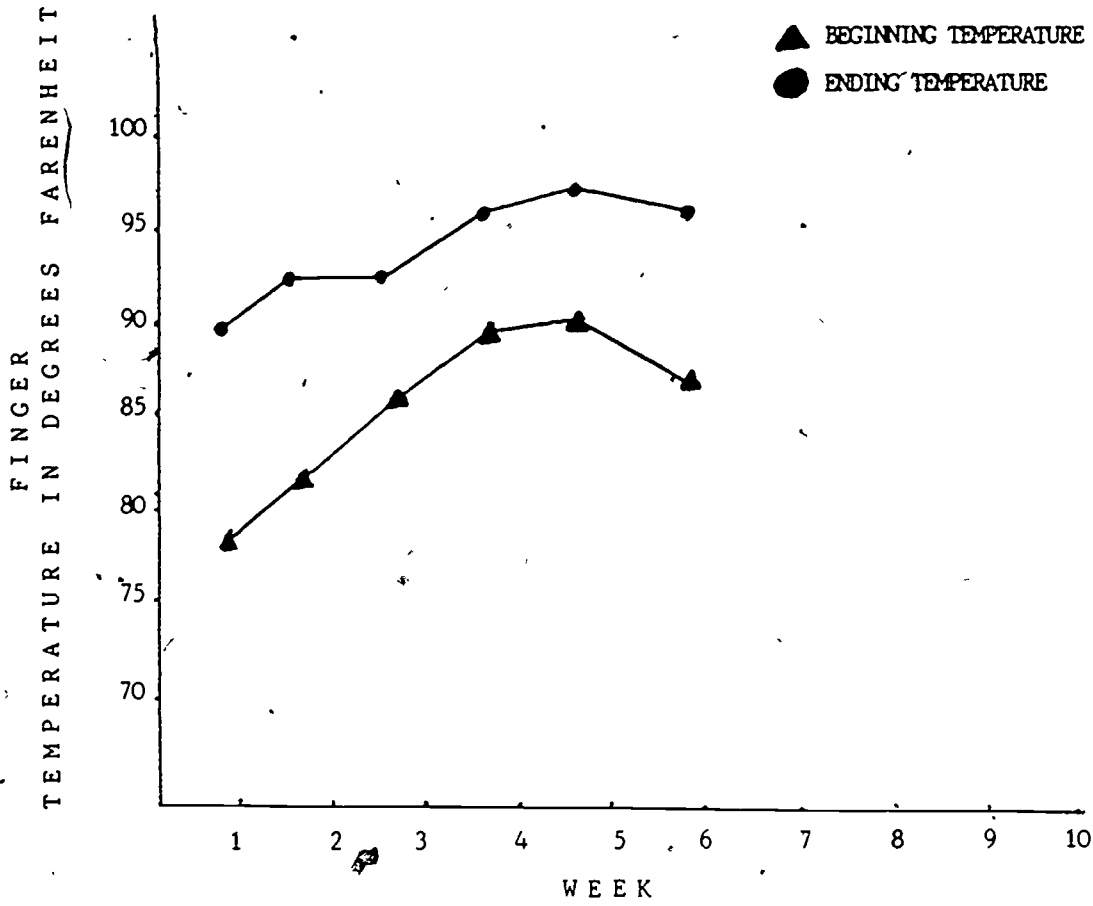


FIGURE 2

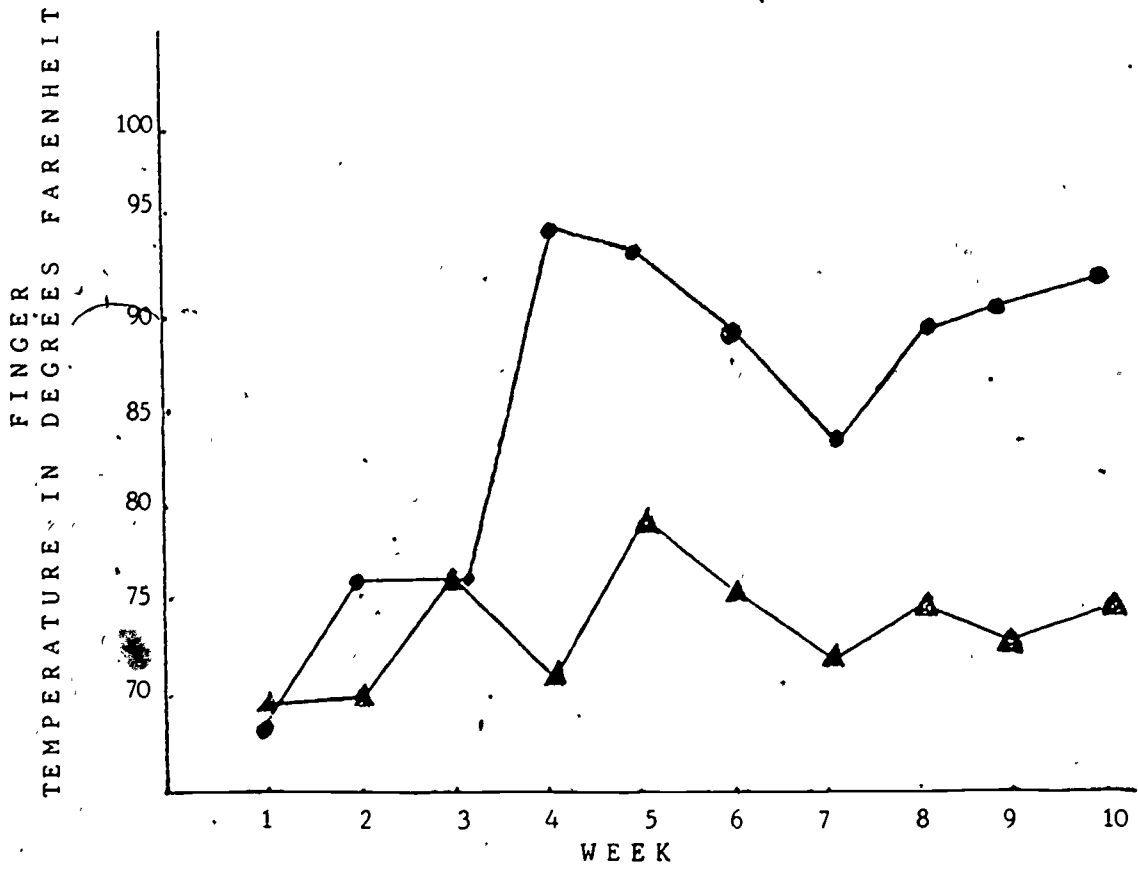


FIGURE 3

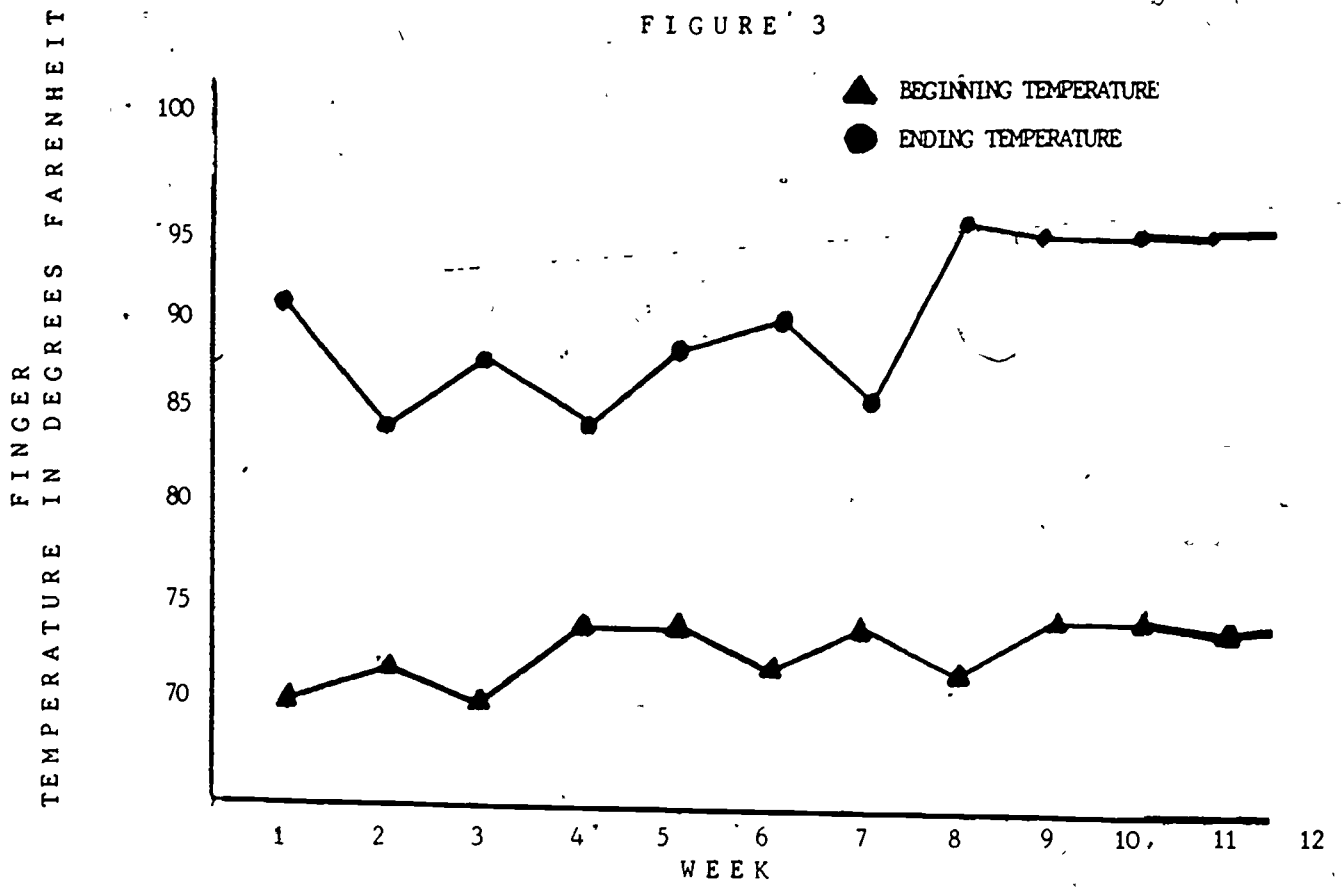
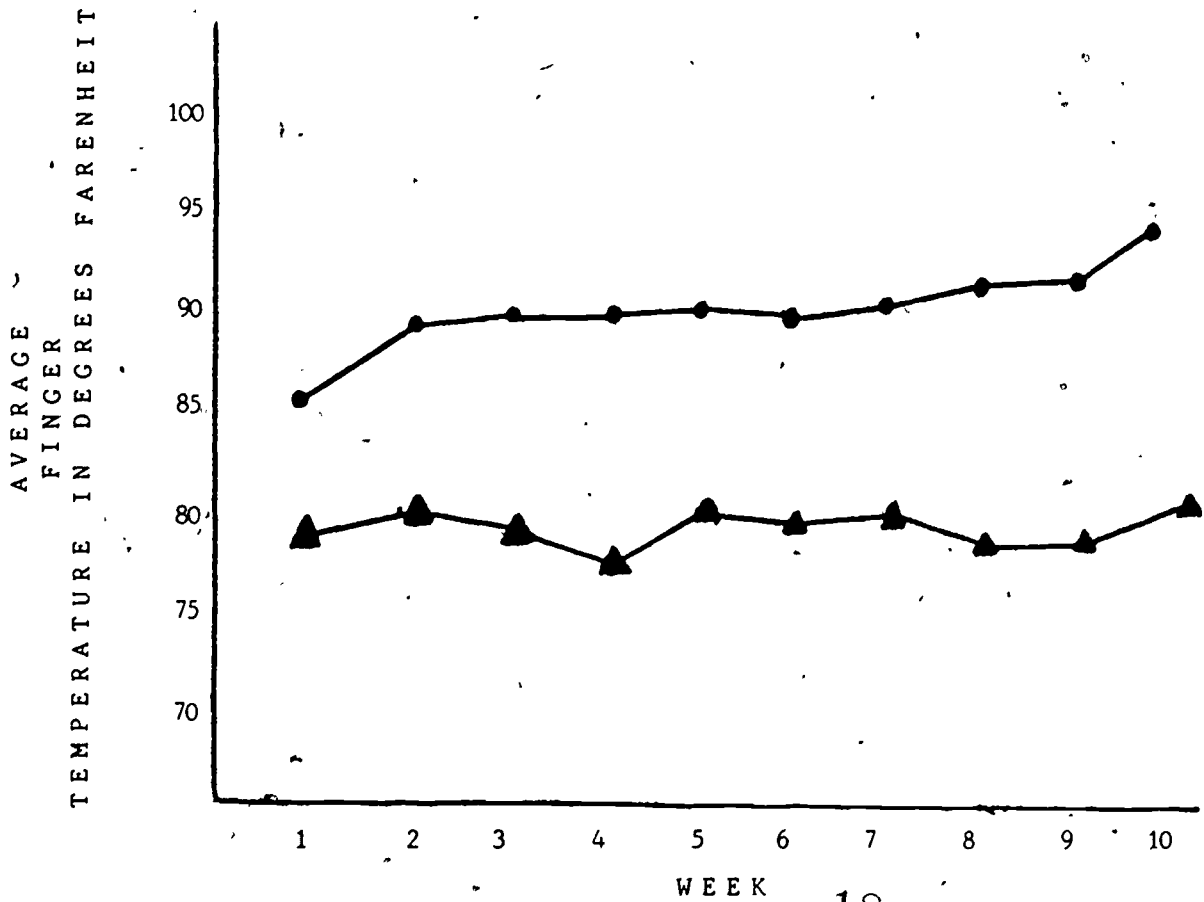


FIGURE 4



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1. Mason, J., Guide to Stress Reduction, Culver City: Peace Press, 1980.
2. Lowenstein, T., Helping Professional Guide, Manhattan, Kansas: Conscious Living Foundation, 1980.
3. Shealy, C.N., 90 Days to Self-Health, Bantam, 1980.

INDIVIDUALIZING INTRODUCTORY SOCIAL SCIENCE COURSES

BY

Sue Corcoran
Asnuntuck Community Collège

In my Introduction to Psychology I combine learning about psychology in an individualized format and experiencing psychology in a workshop setting in class. In this article, I plan to (1) outline the individualized, mastery-based program for learning content, to (2) describe the classroom component to enable students to participate in psychology, and to (3) suggest how other introductory courses in the social sciences might be offered in much the same individualized and participatory manner.

I am enthusiastic about this format, which I have offered for six semesters. The student completion rate is high. There are fewer drop outs and F grades. Class enrollments are large; many students and college counselors have become advocates of the course. Grades are high (mostly A's and B's), but there is no way to earn a high grade without clearly demonstrating mastery of the content, doing all the work and attending class regularly. Students take responsibility for their own learning, but they also have structure, clear expectations, ready assessment of how well they are doing and support enabling them to define problems and to learn more effectively. In class we demonstrate principles, role play real life situations and examine attitudes and personality patterns.

Mastery Based Program

Every social science has both its content and its discipline or process. The content includes principles and theories, methods, research findings, new vocabulary and names, dates and events. It is important not to confuse real learning with knowing what has been done and said by others in the field.

Modular organization

In my course, the content is modularized. The material is organized into twenty-two curriculum packages designed to give students information and experience with a topic. Each curriculum package contains the basic content, coordinated films and tapes, short articles, questionnaires, assigned papers, and three alternate forms of short multiple choice tests.

Core curriculum

All students are required to complete the core curriculum, nine modules which I think are essential to Introduction to Psychology.

Individualized content

Students can then pursue career related topics or explore areas of interest by choosing any four modules from among the remaining thirteen. In this way, content is individualized.

Individualized learning styles

Because students learn in different ways and because a course goal is to enable students to define personal learning styles, the basic content is presented in a textbook chapter for those who learn best by reading or in an audiotape/workbook program for those who learn best by listening. Many students try both learning formats to define their preference. Some use both the visual and auditory modes for one topic to reinforce their learning if they are having difficulty. It does not matter to me how they learn but that they learn the material.

Self pacing

The course is self paced. A student works on a module studying the content, hearing/seeing the media materials and completing the written assignments. Whenever he feels ready, he takes a test to demonstrate his mastery of the content. The test is graded as soon as it is completed for immediate knowledge of results. If he passes, great; he proceeds to the next module.

If not, too bad; however, he can check to see what he does not yet understand, study again and return later to take another test. The variable is how long the student takes to pass, not how much he learns in a prescribed period of time or how well he does on a one-shot test.

Assessment and development of academic skills

If a student has difficulty understanding the material or passing tests, we together define what academic or emotional problem (usually performance anxiety) is preventing his success. We set up a plan to overcome his problem and he goes back to the unit when he is ready. He has the necessary time and the support to improve until he can demonstrate mastery by passing a test. In this course format, which is based on sound learning theory principles, many students significantly improve study skills, comprehension and retention, and test-taking skills. These learning skills apply to any course.

Mastery criteria

Grades for learning the content are based on mastery criteria. A student must pass the objective tests, but we do not differentiate between a student who passes successfully the first time and one who requires more attempts. We do not discriminate between all correct and missing a few. A student gets credit for learning; there is no failure, no competition, less pressure. This might be likened to teaching students with diverse abilities to run five miles. We give them credit for successfully running five miles, not for how fast they run, whom they beat, or for their running style. We support them, encourage them to experiment to find their best running style and stride, and are there at the finish line to cheer their running the distance. Mastery criteria enables students to focus on learning without the anxiety of getting a lower grade for missing one or two objective questions. I would rather have students struggle at the beginning without the consequences of a final low grade and also free to experiment with alternative learning

styles without fear of failing a test. Here there is room to experiment, to fail temporarily, and to learn how to learn. Mastery criteria keeps the focus on the big picture, not minute details. In order to pass a test, a student must understand the basic concepts and know the material.

Contract for grades

There is a clear contract for grades. Students must pass thirteen module tests including the nine required core modules, submit all written work and papers well done, hear/see all the media materials and attend class regularly. An incentive to finish during the semester helps students get organized and spares the registrar many Incomplete grades. Those who do not finish during the term complete the work at their own pace and receive one letter grade lower than if they had finished earlier.

Mechanics of the course

The administration of the program has worked out smoothly thanks to the support of our Learning Resource Center staff and careful background planning, including Betty Tenore's Nuts and Bolts Workshop at Bunker Hill Community College. An assistant at the individualized psychology desk in the LRC hands out materials, supervises use of media equipment, administers tests, grades tests immediately and keeps records. The services at this desk are available five mornings and two evenings a week. Last semester we accommodated one hundred students in this program.

Record keeping is surprisingly manageable. A large master sheet indicates which test students have taken and how many questions were missed. It also includes credit and grades for the short required papers. Use of media materials is recorded in a notebook at the media desk.

Recently, when I was showing a visiting instructor the program, four students were in the LRC. A young man with very weak academic skills was still working on the modules after almost two semesters of struggling and working with a peer

tutor. This student almost certainly would have failed a traditional course, and he likely would have dropped out of college. Here his motivation was sustained, his skills improved and he proudly told our guest about having only three more modules to finish! He was doing very well at his own pace. His incomplete will probably become a C or perhaps a B if his papers are excellent and he completes all the other requirements.

A middle aged woman, who had started off slowly because of rusty concentration and test anxiety, was passing a second module test in one week to be able to finish on time.

A young man, an excellent student, was nearly finished with all the module tests five weeks before the end of the term. He told the visitor that he was testing his discipline to see how early he could finish. He created his own challenge. Based on the quality of his papers and his conscientious work, his A was almost assured.

A fourth student, a young woman, had not been in for the last two weeks while she took time out for a chemistry mid-term exam and a long philosophy paper. She used the flexibility built into the course to do more work in psychology when she had more time and less when she was pressured in other courses. She told the visitor that she had never had so much control over her schedule or been so clear about how she was doing in a course.

Here were four very different students feeling good about their learning and progress. Of course, the procrastinator was at home telling himself that he will study and take a test tomorrow! No program is for everyone.

The Classroom as a Workshop

Small group interaction

Because this independent work takes considerable time, I require that students come to class half of the scheduled time. In smaller classes, I spend half the class time in the LRC with students and the other half in class. In larger classes, I divide the group in two, meeting with half the students at a

time. These smaller groups provided a more informal environment with more opportunity for participation.

Since students are studying different topics during any given week, we do not spend much time on content in the classroom. Class time is used to bring psychology to life--to experience psychology, practice psychology, demonstrate psychology and apply psychology.

In defining their personal learning styles, students assess whether they prefer to learn by reading or by listening; whether they prefer teacher-centered classroom instruction, study groups with other students, or independent study; how to respect personal study patterns and concentration spans. Students practice listening and other communication skills. We role play interpersonal situations and sculpture family systems. Students are actively involved in exercises on perception, values clarification, decision making and assertiveness. We discuss stages of adult development and issues related to death and dying. This experiential learning is frequently directed toward students' greater self awareness, self acceptance and clearer self expression.

Students participate enthusiastically and enjoy class. There is no pressure related to grades except that attendance is required. I enjoy these classes which are easily tailor-made to the particular group of students. For example, last semester one class requested a special session on guilt.

Application to Other Social Sciences

Hopefully, my experience with individualizing Introduction to Psychology, creating a mastery based program, and livening up class sessions will spark interest in my colleagues who teach introductory courses in the social sciences.

Two personal examples of experiencing math and history from my under-graduate education seem relevant here. After public school education in which I was taught to think mathematically, to apply concepts and understand how numbers work, I found my college classmates from more traditional math back-

grounds memorizing formulas, plugging in numbers, and grinding out answers. They had missed the beauty and discipline of mathematics. How sad. No one had taught them.

In a second example, I had always thought of history as learning what happened long ago. To a large extent, this seemed to involve memorizing names and battles. When I was in my last college history course, in response to a classmate's question, the professor pulled down a map and said, "Well, we can think it through together." She proceeded to describe a dynamic interaction of cultural forces with different views of reality moving against one another. The answer to the question was obvious and exciting. Suddenly, I realized that I had missed the beauty and discipline of history. How sad. No one had taught me.

To adapt any introductory social science course to this individualized approach, I would make the following suggestions:

- (1) Organize the content into creative curriculum packages containing textbook and/or taped theoretical and factual material, media materials, articles, questionnaires, short papers or other written assignments and coordinated tests.
- (2) Decide which topics are central and consider having a core curriculum which is required of everyone as well as alternative curriculum packages from which students must select a few to pursue their personal interests.
- (3) Provide systems for distributing materials, administering and immediately grading module tests, keeping records and identifying and confronting students' academic skill problems. I think you will find learning resource center staff members eager to participate in the learning center concept.
- (4) Creatively plan what to do in class. Use the classroom as a vehicle to bring the process and discipline of your field to the students.

This creative teaching is the most exciting part to me as an educator and advocate of personal growth and abstract and

creative thinking. We are suddenly freed from presenting the material that is in the books and from trying to pace the course to diverse students who learn in different ways and at different rates. Here is an opportunity to bring our fields to life. How can we do psychology, history, economics, political science, etc. with our students? How can we apply the principles and methods? How can we think historically, sociologically or anthropologically? I see potential for demonstrating the discipline of the field; encouraging students to get involved in demonstrations, debates, projects, experiments, values clarification exercises, critically analyzing strengths and weaknesses, and assessing the current state of the art and directions for the future. I encourage students to learn content and to see its importance in the total educational process. I also indicate how quickly the social sciences are changing, warning students not to accept what is in the book as final answers but to question what they learn. I help them identify and question the basic assumptions in an academic area.

We avoid the deadly model of education as our pouring in the stuff which the students later spew back. We, as teachers, become examples of what we want for our students--applying principles and thinking creatively and critically. Education becomes much more than learning what is now known and accepted. By freeing ourselves from the passing along of current information, we are able to stand back with a broader perspective and to demonstrate our fields on the move, contributing to society and getting into trouble. This dynamic education stretches us to deal with hard questions and give students the skills for life-long learning.

A PLEA FOR THE A B C'S (ADVISING, BETTER COUNSELING)

BY

Joyce Donen Hirschhorn
South Central Community College

Who am I? Where am I going? These unasked questions are hidden somewhere in the inner recesses of the minds of many of our students. They should be encouraged (advised) to confront these questions head-on at their initial encounter with the community college system.

The students entering the college for the first time have to establish a new identity. They are usually the first in their families to attempt a higher education and they are unsure of their ability to achieve their goals, no less know exactly what they are striving for. The college experience is an unknown entity. They need to redefine their self-image to reflect their new status more accurately. What happens as a result of an unclear self-image is the increased probability of failure--failure to be motivated, to do the work, and to succeed. Howard B. London states that community college students are in a double bind; the threat of upward mobility, changing values and lifestyles can be anxiety producing because of how they view themselves, and they, therefore, program themselves to fail.¹

One of the compulsory assignments in the basic speech communication course I teach is the T.S. (teacher-student) conference at mid-semester. This is a fifteen minute information sharing interview in a private setting which allows the student to reveal personal feelings, misgivings, questions and comments that would not be appropriate in the classroom. Our relationship is enhanced; we discuss their progress in the course, the reality of the grade they would like to receive and the air has been cleared. Everyone agrees that this is one of the most worthwhile activities of the semester. "This is the only time I've

ever talked to any professor like this." "Even though I was nervous and didn't know what to expect, it was O.K. I mean, I think it helped me understand what's happening." "I really like having the opportunity to talk to you and find out what your impression of me is."

If it were not for the interview, I would never have been able to discover that there are students who still don't know what they are doing in my class, except that they have to be there (speech communication is required for most programs). Obviously, these are the students who indeed are failing. Painful as this declaration may seem, it shows the lack of necessary preparation and guidance for them to cope.

Last summer, I spent six weeks as a NISOD (National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development) researcher, evaluating our admissions, testing, and placement policies. After attending workshops, seminars and actually observing the entire admissions procedure, I was and still am convinced that the key to a successful college career is the personal interview.

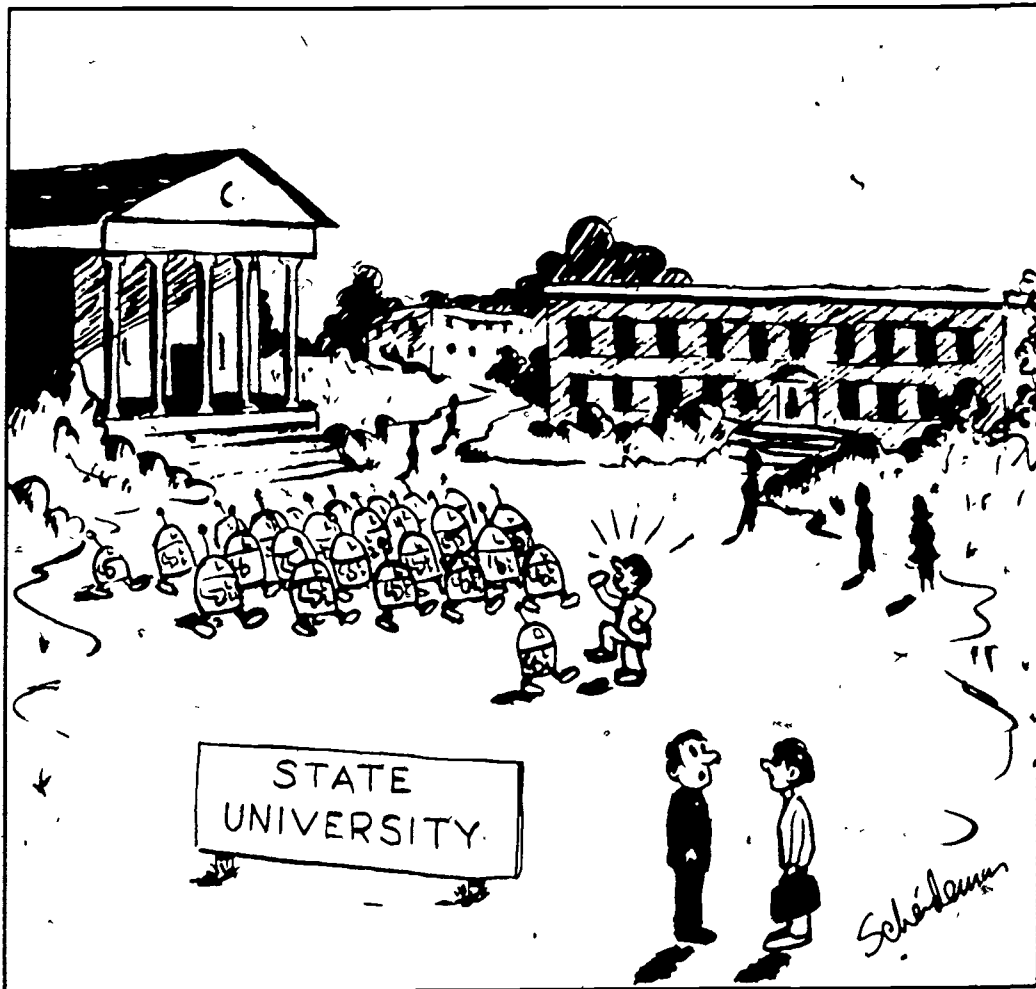
As soon as the students complete the placement tests, they should make an appointment for an interview with an advisor (counselor) who would accomplish the following:

1. Evaluate the students' needs and abilities based on the test results.
2. Clarify the students' range of major responsibilities (family and work).
3. Design a program or course of action compatible with their abilities and responsibilities.
4. Promote the services of the counseling department for future use.
5. Most importantly, establish a positive relationship, making it easier for the student who might still encounter difficulties to contact that person again.

Inherent in any interview is the necessity for the interviewees to study themselves, explore their feelings, and examine their lifestyle and objectives. Not only will the personal interview give them the confidence to accept their new identity and

achieve their goals, but it will also serve as a strong weapon to keep them as productive students in the community college.

¹Hurdles, Herbert S. Sacks & Associates, (N.Y., Atheneum, 1978)



"You must admit, they do have a great computer training program!"

DEVELOPMENTAL STUDIES IN THE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BY
Thomas Hodgkin
Northwestern Connecticut Community College

I study the paper before me. Through the scrawled and scratched-out handwriting I detect a verb error, two missing articles, and a host of misspellings. And two fragments. There are enough problems here to send any English teacher screaming for his red pen and gradebook. But it is workable. I glance over at a student, notice his shy nervousness, and smile ruefully to myself. Workable, yes; easy, no. Sometimes I wish I had a red pen and a gradebook....But then that is not why we are both here. "Okay, let's look this over together," I say, and we begin.

In January of 1979, Northwestern Connecticut Community College began its Developmental Studies Program. Declining competencies in basic English and Mathematics demanded attention; utilizing a federal Title III Strengthening Developing Institutions grant, a coordinator, four instructors, and an educational assistant were hired to conduct classes in basic developmental reading, writing, and mathematics, and life/study skills. 43 students registered that first semester, and by next fall enrollment was up to 127.

In the semesters that have elapsed, the Program has changed and adapted in both personnel and style. Fiscal strictures, as everywhere, have played a part; the original Federal grant provided diminishing funds until September of 1981, at which time the entire Program was to be picked up by general funding. The decision to take on Developmental Studies in a period of budgetary cuts reflects the deep commitment of Northwestern to the idea of basic education, and the recognition that such a program is both necessary and within the responsibilities of the Community College.

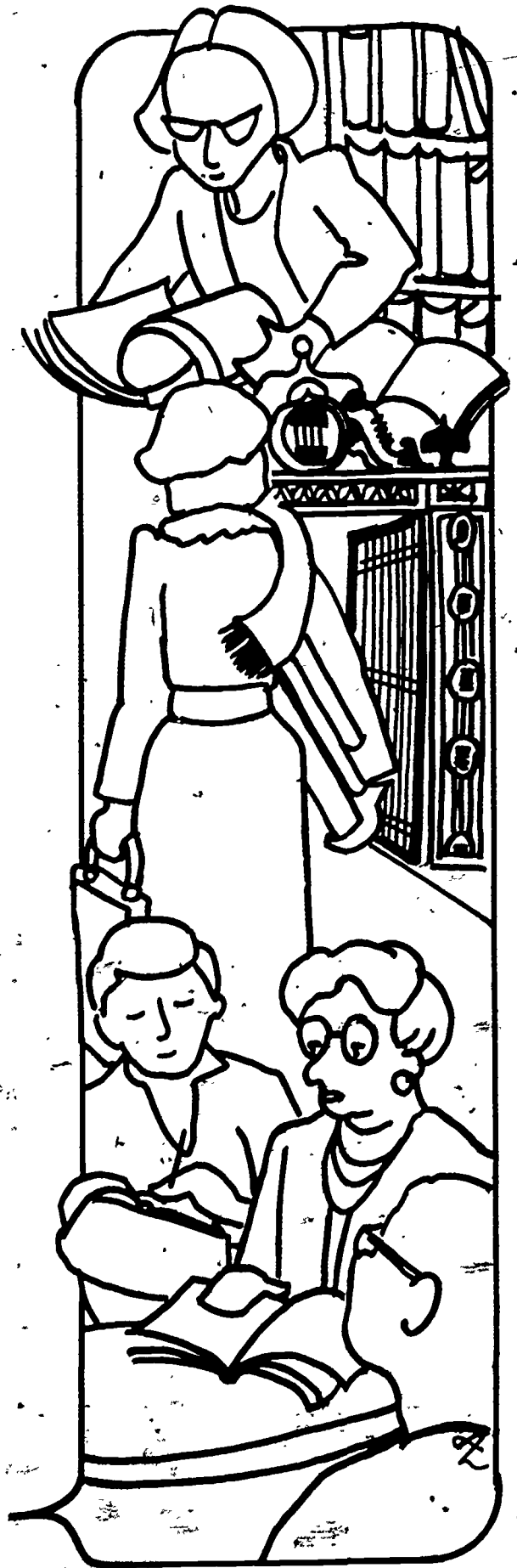
In addition, increased and changing student needs have dictated adaptation on the part of the Developmental Studies Program. Since 1976, Northwestern has enrolled a sizeable population of hearing-impaired students, and in the last two years the Developmental Studies Staff has researched and implemented curriculum changes aimed at making the acquisition of language skills easier for these students. All four of the staff working day-to-day in the Learning Lab are now fluent in sign language and a number of peer tutors are also students in the Interpreting program. In all of the course offerings, curriculum changes and additions have been implemented almost every semester as the staff has searched for the most effective and meaningful manner of providing individual remediation and basic competency. In 1981, a new Developmental Science course was initiated by a faculty member close to the Program, and this has expanded and consolidated the core offerings to include basic skills in science, mathematics, reading, writing, and study skills.

One aspect of the program that has not changed is the steadily-increasing enrollment and acceptance of the program by students. In 1980-81, 204 students were enrolled in one or more courses in Developmental Studies; in 1981-82 enrollment was almost that high for the Fall Semester alone. In addition, as students have moved on and spread the word, drop-in consultations and individual advising have increased to more than 60 documentable hours per semester.

The significance of the Developmental Studies Program goes far beyond its enrollment, however. Retention to the College from D.S.P. has averaged about 70%--many of these individuals, who may never have made it through their first semester in school without supplemental education. Now, with one or two semesters of intensive work behind them and a support system in place, these students are finding success in College courses they may never have considered previously. Even more significant, however, is the awareness that the visibility and success of the Program has created in the College community. Students who once may have felt helpless and overwhelmed are now learning

that there is a place for them to take stock of their situation and mend their deficiencies. Located in the basement of the Library, the Program also offers help with papers, test, and study-skills for an increasing number of drop-ins who have discovered that the staff maintain completely open office hours. The reputation of Developmental Studies has also led to a new project for the staff this year: working with four functionally illiterate adults who have come forward from the community looking for some kind of help, no matter how modest the expectations. While providing basic skills training in preparation for College courses and insisting on competency, the Developmental Studies Program has also committed itself to service the broadest needs of community education.

In the past, and probably into the future, the need for remedial education has been criticized. Nonetheless, it is a fact that such a need exists. The existence and success of Developmental Studies Programs at Northwestern and elsewhere is testament that the desire for education transcends age, class, and skill barriers. It is no longer viable to throw potential students to the wolves because of past deficiencies. To do so is to turn our "open door" into a "revolving door," alienating both officials and community in one fell swoop. The need is for the realization, by both student and College, that with a little patience, humor, and flexibility we may still be able to provide for our student without abandoning our standards.



A RELIGIOUS MINISTRY IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BY

Jean M. Blanning
Greater Hartford Community College

The Greater Hartford Campus Ministry at the Greater Hartford Community College serves to illustrate that, regardless of the diversity of students and their schedules in this setting, a religious ministry can contribute to campus life. Through an interfaith planning committee composed of three faculty members, the director of student services, a local clergyman and the campus minister, this ministry tries to address some of the religious, social and ethical issues of the times and provide supportive relationships through its presence on campus.

The establishment of the planning committee and the forum format for an approach of the ministry on this campus developed under the guidance of Reverend Katie Keene-Babcock in 1981-82 when she acted as interim part-time minister for the Greater Hartford Campus Ministry. Working with Dr. Arthur Banks, President of Greater Hartford Community College, and the ministry's Board of Directors, she found people willing to carry out their suggestions. Thus, these people--Esther Eddy, Samuel Goldberger, James Morris, Janet Rogan, Reverend Paul Santmire, Lois Tutherly and Katie started an interfaith program with the cooperation of administrators, counselors, other faculty and persons in several of the college offices. The Reverend Michael Stevens presented the first forum with slides and comments on his trip with an ecumenical group to study conditions in several Latin American countries.

When I became the full-time campus minister in the summer of 1982, I found the same strong group of people ready to continue the work. As a result, we have had two forums: Dr. Mark Shedd, Connecticut Commissioner of Education, on "Academic Freedom and Public Education" and Dr. Colin Williams, a professor

of theology and former dean of Yale Divinity School, on "The Challenge of the Moral Majority." A presentation on religion and the arts is being planned for spring.

In addition to the forums this year, resources for the classroom are offered to the faculty. A professor of bioethics invited people that I, as campus minister, had suggested from the Hartford community, to speak to her class on one topic and consult with her on background for another. The Cultural Affairs committee has invited me, because of some previous professional work, to give a lecture in the Humanities Lecture Series. The invitation illustrates the possibilities of a campus minister, with an area of interest and expertise appropriate to a subject discipline, addressing students and adults in a similar format.

Forums, resources and presentations are academic in nature. For personal contacts, the planning committee members have lunch together weekly in the college cafeteria and invite students to join them. Students are beginning to identify the ministry with a core of people from the college and off campus. They are beginning to sense a presence. I also try to converse with students who are alone in the cafeteria before I meet the others for lunch. Although slow in developing, a "cafeteria" ministry may become an important avenue for our work.

The counseling department under the direction of Dr. William Edmonds is exploring with the campus ministry new approaches to peer counseling programs that might be feasible for this campus and thus assure more one-to-one and small group relationships among peers.

Other results of the ministry occur as the academic year progresses. The ministry has people, structure and content but always remains flexible for new occasions and explorations. It is building on last year's foundations and attempting to meet some of the vital needs on campus through the efforts of people in the college, the churches and the community.

CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

ASNUNTUCK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

111 Phoenix Avenue
Enfield, CT 06082
745-1604

GREATER HARTFORD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

61 Woodland Street
Hartford, CT 06105
549-4200

HOUSATONIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE

510 Barnum Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06608
579-6400

MANCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

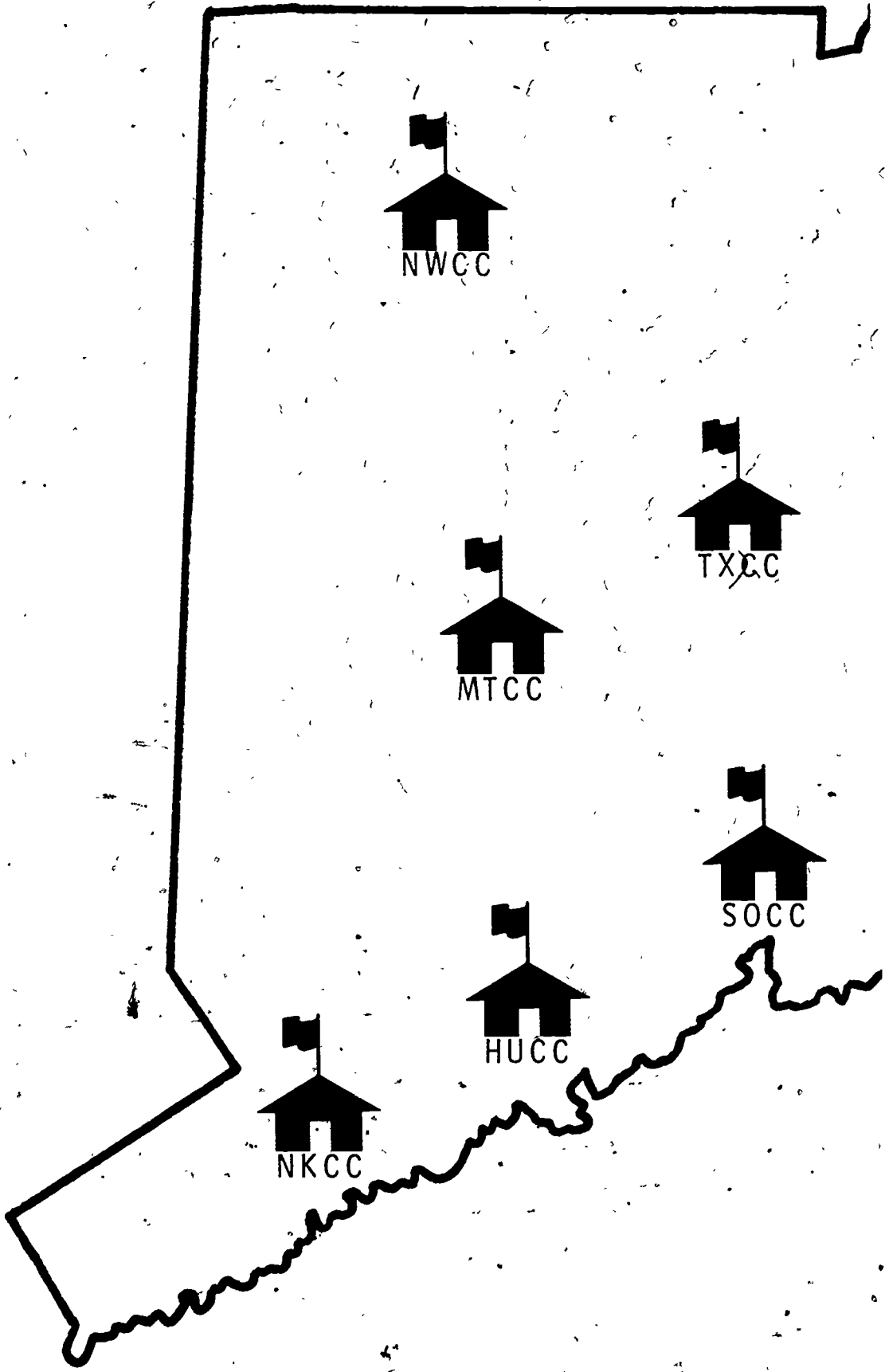
60 Bidwell Street
Manchester, CT 06040
649-4900

MATTATUCK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

750 Chase Parkway
Waterbury, CT 06708
575-0328

MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

100 Training Hill Road
Middletown, CT 06457
344-3001





COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

MOHEGAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

P.O. Box 629
Norwich, CT 06360
566-7476

NORTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Park Place East
Winsted, CT 06098
379-8543

NORWALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

333 Wilson Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06854
853-2040

QUINEBAUG VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

24 School Street
Danielson, CT 06239
774-1130

SOUTH CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

60 Sargent Drive
New Haven, CT 06511
789-7036

TUNXIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Rtes. 6 & 177
Farmington, CT 06032
677-7701

THE NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENT AT
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BY
Carol Milatz
Middlesex Community College

Community college enrollment is booming and the growing non-traditional student population may be the reason. There are more females, handicapped persons and other minorities attending community colleges. The average student is older and may also have family responsibilities or a full-time job in addition to his or her classes. These non-traditional students have several different reasons for entering college: some enroll to accomplish unfinished goals; others enroll to perfect job skills or to learn new ones. They have different abilities, educational backgrounds or physical handicaps to overcome. Yet, they have at least one common denominator--they believe the community college will fulfill their needs. Obviously, judging by its large enrollment the community college is meeting their needs, but is there more the college can do to help non-traditional students succeed? An informal poll at Middlesex Community College indicates that while most students feel satisfied with their choice, there were a few minor complaints.

For instance, students who have children who become ill find stringent attendance requirements an undue burden. Mature students who are highly motivated and responsible can make up absences or get lecture notes from others. Most colleges feel students at this advanced level can make responsible judgments concerning class attendance. Again, when the college remains open on school holidays, parent-students face another dilemma. If students bring their children to class, it could cause a disruption; however, if they stay home, these students may have to take a lower grade. If a student manages to find a baby-sitter and can afford the cost, the household may be in shambles

when he or she returns. The problem could be resolved by coordinating the community's school schedule with the college's schedule. After all, we are a "community" college. This scheduling problem presented a serious dilemma when final exams ended on December 23 last semester. Parent-students faced an unhappy choice--curtail holiday plans to study or jeopardize their final grades. Is it possible that a more flexible fall schedule could eliminate such a distressing choice?

Another common problem older students encounter involves multiple choice tests. It appears that some instructors test their students' test sophistication rather than how well their students know the subject. While it is true, older students must adapt to this type of test; still, it is frustrating to find an answer marked wrong not because the student did not know the material, but because he or she has been tricked by a carefully chosen or discreetly placed modifier. One bright student who had great difficulty taking this type of test arranged to take essay exams instead. Perhaps other professors might consider extending themselves if a student has much difficulty with multiple choice tests.

Although we usually think of older students when we think of non-traditional students, they may also include the physically handicapped. These students often have tremendous courage and motivation which stimulates other students, but handicapped students also have unique needs. The college can help these disabled students meet their needs and make their experience more rewarding and successful. The author works with a student who is confined to a wheelchair. She has difficulty going through doors that only open one way; she must reach door handles and lift her wheelchair over ledges that seem to be everywhere. When sidewalks are not clear of all snow and ice, it collects in the wheels of her chair and causes her to lose control of it. Bathrooms with inadequate door space present another nightmare. Handicapped students rarely complain, but obviously, most of us never deal with the kind of stress our handicapped students handle daily. Improvements have been made, and it is

gratifying to hear that our administrators have met with our handicapped students to discuss possible changes and increased services to our disabled.

Our faculty and administration here at Middlesex Community College really listen and try to answer the needs of all our students. Perhaps, this is why so many feel that attending this school has been their most rewarding life-experience. Our non-traditional students express strong positive feelings about our congenial, small college atmosphere. They find professors who extend themselves to help any student. Smaller classes being less formal means that professors can give their students more individual attention. All students who were sampled felt that the warm, congenial atmosphere at this community college helped improve their learning experience. Because of the friendly air, students often work together on homework or projects and, as a result, they improve their learning experience and form some deep, lifelong relationships. Several graduating students said that they had gained much more than a formal education at Middlesex. They got to know a variety of people and broadened their experience. They received support and learned to support others. Those who had problems found that the staff and other students were willing to help; so, while resolving the difficulty the students learned to handle future difficulties more effectively. Is it any wonder that, although our college needed a few minor improvements, it still rated a good, strong A?

"WHY THEY HUGGED IN MINNEAPOLIS"

BY
Bill Nagle
Middlesex Community College

It happened as recently as last night on the way to dinner.

"And what kind of discipline problems do you have?" came the question from the darkness of the front seat. "I imagine you would have trouble with so many students who come from the lower tracks in high school."

And still later, "And do your students have difficulty getting into four-year colleges?"

And still later, a whole discourse over hors d'oeuvres about reserving higher education for those who are academically competent. Unspoken in all of this, of course, pity for such a bright person as I, trapped among people who can provide little intellectual stimulus, amusing myself for whatever reason with mediocrity.

I have long since come to expect, unfortunately, this kind of perception of the community college and its students, and have learned to react to it with what I trust is reasonable poise and dignity. The inward offense never wears away, though. And so this incident seems a natural way to introduce these few remarks on the quality of intellectual aspiration at the community college, and, in particular, on Phi Theta Kappa, an honor fraternity that provides an important focus for those who have excelled academically.

Last year I was invited by Middlesex' PTK chapter to be its faculty sponsor. I readily agreed, since it is my contention that we do entirely too little to honor those who have done well. I am not sure precisely what I expected my experience to be, but now I find myself impressed -- enough so to take this opportunity to warmly commend the fraternity to those colleges in the system who do not have a chapter. Briefly, the organiza-

tion (it is neither a club nor merely a list) is open to men and women in two-year colleges who have attained a high academic average. Having thus been admitted, members perform various services to the college. The primary benefit is, of course, social and intellectual fellowship. Because it is a national fraternity, this fellowship extends beyond any particular campus, to regional groupings, a national convention, and, increasingly, to alumni chapters at baccalaureate institutions.

These bare facts aside, what I have learned this year is something about the people who are our students. In this new setting, I have discovered a remarkable degree of enthusiasm for and dedication to scholarly ideals, and a wisdom not illustrated solely by classroom performance.

A few weeks ago, I accompanied four members of our chapter to the national convention in Minneapolis. Being a reserved person normally, and being accustomed to the restraint of the classroom, I was taken aback by the characteristic PTK greeting, a full-fledged hug. And I was astonished to witness standing ovations for nearly everything that occurred. College presidents who had accompanied their chapters to the convention were greeted in a way that I had thought reserved for star basketball players! At first I was amused; later I thought, "Why not?"

I must admit that my personal reserve is still intact, but I have returned with more than a handful of the infectious enthusiasm of that weekend. I have returned proud to have been awakened long past midnight by our four delegates, who wanted advice on ethical and political questions that had arisen during their discussion of which candidates to vote for the next day. I have returned with a full measure of admiration for the national vice-president who managed not only her fraternal obligations, but also those of mother, student, and full-time worker. As a result, I have renewed admiration for those of our students who are making their way so successfully with similar weighty responsibilities. I have returned fully intent on establishing PTK as the unifying, pervasive force on our campus that it appears to be elsewhere -- something of permanence in an

academic setting too often, characterized by movement and randomness.

My experience in PTK, then, has not really provided new answers for the lady in the car. I have known for some time that our students do not throw spitballs, that they often become distinguished members of four-year colleges, and that their academic competence is such that they may force a rewriting of the definition of orthodoxy in higher education. What I have discovered is that our students' immense pride is not limited to their own accomplishments, but spills over to a wholehearted support for the college's academic integrity, and to an attachment to the idea, the abstraction of intellectual fulfillment.

It was not all that long ago that I dragged out my college yearbook and thought wistfully to myself that the one thing I really missed from the four-year experience was that attachment to learning for its own sake -- the one that puts aside the necessities of grades and employment. I am, now happy to admit that I was mistaken, that the pursuit of excellence does exist, and that it has at least one formal focus, Phi Theta Kappa, that is available to us all.

SPOTLIGHT ON..

Betsy Lombardi Doane is an Assistant Professor at Housatonic Community College where she has taught for over 10 years. She holds a Master's degree and a Sixth year certificate in mathematics. She teaches "the whole gamut" from basic algebra to calculus.

Visually handicapped from birth, I have been at Housatonic Community College since 1970 and am presently associate professor of mathematics. During this time, I have taught courses from basic algebra through third semester calculus, linear algebra and differential equations.

A graduate of Albertus Magnus College in 1968, I attended the University of Massachusetts with an assistantship where I earned an M.A. degree in mathematics in 1970. While teaching, I subsequently took courses through the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Finance as well as the University of Bridgeport and The University of Massachusetts to fulfill the requirements of the Sixth Year equivalent work in mathematics.

When first teaching, I learned quickly that I was very fortunate to know that mathematics was a career I wanted to pursue and that for most students, choosing a career is a much more difficult task. Ever since high school, I knew that I wanted to teach mathematics.

But, the methodology which I would use remained a question. With the support and encouragement of the mathematics faculty at Albertus, particularly Professor Florence D. Jacobson, a method which I still use today was developed. Lectures are first prepared in Braille then typewritten with the aid of

special mathematical symbols called "typ-its" on an electric typewriter. From these masters, transparencies are made to be used on a standard 3M projector. Homework problems are discussed with student participants at the blackboard to demonstrate their work, saying what they write. The method works very well because an atmosphere of mutual concern for others is fostered in the classroom.

One of the most fascinating aspects of teaching is working directly with students. During the last few semesters, I have assisted the staff in the counseling area consulting with students about academic and personal concerns following through when referrals are necessary.

I have recently become interested in the application of microcomputers to computer assisted instruction. Last Spring, I attended a meeting of the Mathematics Association of Two Year Colleges in Connecticut at Manchester Community College and heard a fine presentation on the subject by Professor Jack Wolter of Mattauck Community College. Having decided to learn something about the subject, my husband and I bought an Apple II computer. My first concern was how I would read the screen. Having been an amateur radio (ham radio) operator for over 20 years, a knowledge of the International Morse Code came to my rescue. Software was written to translate what appears on the screen to Morse Code. Later, a speech synthesizer was incorporated into our system to allow faster reading of output. This semester, as part of the instructional development component of a Title III grant awarded to the College, I am writing and collecting software for use in algebra courses. Experimentation with students indicates so far that this different mode of instruction motivates them to practice and learn the material presented. I am developing most of the software at home with the aid of the speech synthesizer which spells out letter for letter what is on the monitor. The work is slow and arduous because I do not have quick access to a printed listing of the program steps. When that is required, it is either read to me or I transcribe each step after having instructed the computer

to list the steps of the program. Braille printers are available but expensive.

In addition, I have participated in the Women and Mathematics program sponsored by the Mathematics Association of America giving talks to high school classes about a topic in mathematics.

In summary, I enjoy my work very much; working with my colleagues at Housatonic Community College is a real pleasure.

A CALIFORNIAN IN CONNECTICUT

BY
Ben Thomerson
Middlesex Community College

For this past academic year, 1981-82, I have been an exchange instructor at Middlesex Community College. Last winter, Ms. Stephanie Dell'Agnese and I made an arrangement by which she was to teach my scheduled English classes at Crafton Hills Community College in Yucaipa, California (about 70 miles east of Los Angeles), and receive her pay from Middlesex, while I was to teach her classes here and receive my pay from California. The exchange took us a good bit of negotiation and preparation to effect, but the results of our planning have paid off well in a number of personal and professional benefits.

I initiated the exchange by sending letters of inquiry to the English departments of a number of New England community colleges, briefly describing my home college and the general terms of the arrangement. After receiving several promising responses, I decided on Middlesex for its size and location and on Ms. Dell'Agnese for her willingness to overcome obstacles. She had, for example, to accept the inequity of teaching a five class load while recognizing that her California colleagues are compensated more liberally. She was even game to take on the challenges of teaching in our large, urban campus (San Bernardino Vally Community College) with its 17,000 students and 25 English instructors, until a last minute vacancy allowed her to take a position in our second campus (Crafton Hills) that compares in size and composition to Middlesex. Our respective administrators so warmly supported the exchange that we had the formal agreement approved by mid-April. The informal details involved in our home exchange took a little longer, but we were satisfied before our move in August that our houses and furnishings would not suffer for the exchange. Indeed, it would take

more than a chipped plate or a dead house plant to diminish the gains we have realized from this exchange.

Personally, of course, the arrangement has allowed each of us to savor life in the opposite end of the country at length and at leisure. Native Californians, my twelve year old son and I have thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity to explore New England. Autumn colors in picturesque villages, the Peabody Brontosaurus in New Haven, Aida in the Hartford Civic Center, Evita on Broadway, and history in Old Sturbridge Village, Salem, Gloucester, and Boston--the region has yielded up a multitude of pleasures to a couple of westerners who had never been east of Minneapolis before. We have learned to appreciate a way of life far different from Southern California's, from scraping ice off windshields and paying outrageous fuel bills to substituting lasagna for tacos as our favorite spicy dinner fare. We have learned the pleasures of living in Ms. Dell'Agnese's two hundred year old house (as full of idiosyncracies as of history) and the pains of shoveling snow during a 15° cold spell. For her part, Ms. Dell'Agnese reports similarly enlightening experiences: suffering under stifling August smog and desert-heated winds, basking in 75° weather during the Christmas break, mowing grass in January, driving extravagant distances on California freeways, and so on. But most important to both of us have been our contacts with the people of our exchanged lives, colleagues and acquaintances alike, for through them we have managed to break down many of our eastern/western stereotypes. Connecticut, I have discovered, is no more inhabited exclusively by cold, intellectual snobs than California is by white-wine-sipping, hot-tub-soaking sybarites. The exchange has brought us a long way in expanding our views of our contemporaries.

Professionally, too, the exchange has allowed us to savor our exposure to different teaching styles and conditions. In many respects, the two systems are quite similar. Both feature well-trained staffs more dedicated to teaching than to research, and both honor an open-door policy of admission. Both systems

face the challenge of serving increasing numbers of non-traditional students with ever decreasing dollars for quality education. This much, of course, I anticipated in advance of the exchange. A number of my more tentative expectations, as well, have been corroborated by my experience at Middlesex. For example, I expected students generally to come to their college classes with better writing skills than those I had observed in California, and I expected students to be more tenacious in their pursuit of the AA Degree. I expected Connecticut English instructors to apply more rigorous grading standards to student writing. When my classroom experience here failed to substantiate or refute these expectations, I conducted a grade analysis comparison (included at end of article) to gain some perspective. The comparison is far too small for definitive conclusions, but it does yield some interesting observations.

Some of the grades do not correspond exactly. San Bernardino's Cr/NC option allows a student to receive credit only for a course not in his major. "Cr" is interpreted as "C or better," and NC carries neither unit nor grade penalty. San Bernardino's "X" means incomplete and reverts to a "W" if specified work is not completed within one year. San Bernardino's "D" grade in Remedial Composition satisfies the college requirement for English in some AA Degree and certificate programs, but it does not qualify a student for entry into Freshman Composition, which is required in all transfer programs. With these differences in mind, we may note some further differences in the results of the teaching efforts at our two colleges.

In our Remedial Composition courses, which compare in both intent and content, the negative grades are strikingly similar: just over 40% of our students wash out through failure, withdrawal, or incomplete. The wash out rate is slightly lower than the overall departmental average at San Bernardino (45%) and significantly higher than that at Middlesex (29%). Significant, too, is San Bernardino's greater proportion of remedial to transfer level composition courses (35 to 29 at San Bernardino, and 8 to 14 at Middlesex). This suggests that in San Bernardino we

do in fact serve a greater proportion of students whose writing we identify as deficient. Since I have participated in extensive departmental grading sessions in both colleges, I feel that the criteria we use, the standards we apply, in this identification are really quite close. For this reason, I regard the 24% higher successful pass rate at Middlesex (overall 63% to San Bernardino's 49%) as an indication that students here are somewhat more academically inclined. Letter for letter (if we add San Bernardino's quotations "CR" to the "C" column), the departmental totals for the two schools are almost identical for passing grades; only in the failing of negative grades do dramatic differences occur. It appears that my Southern California students are not so tenacious as my students here. As I contemplate my return to California in June, I regard that nearly 50% wash out rate with some dismay.

If my expectations of student performance have happily been fulfilled, however, another realm of expectation has not. I have long held education in New England in something like awe, with my preconceptions dominated by the aura around the private colleges and universities. That was naive, of course, but I have been disappointed to find at Middlesex what I call a minimalist attitude--the practice of meeting basic minimum requirements with the least expenditure of money, time, or energy possible under the circumstances.

Entirely subjective this observation springs from my experience of my home district's plush years, 1965-1975. In those years, we hired new instructors, initiated new programs, granted released time for curriculum development, and even opened a new campus. We experimented. When enrollment in the physical education department declined, we approved such new courses as "White Water Canoeing" and "High Sierra Fly Fishing"; when titles like "Survey of American Literature" appeared not to interest students, we developed courses like "Growing Up Male in America" or "Literature of the American West." We met the ecological crisis by developing a Human Ecology course taught by a high-powered team of architect/urban planner, biologist,

and geographers. "Relevance" and "innovation" were more than just buzz words in the jargon of contemporary education; they were dynamic and creative concerns in the day-to-day running of the college. Over the past six years, as we have leaped from one budgetary precipice to another, much of that has changed. Some programs have been dropped, some have been so altered as to be indistinguishable from traditional offerings, and others like the Human Ecology course, have simply faded away with the passing of a fad. Still, something positive lingers from those plush times. I perceive it as a spirit of expectancy, a sense that the college supports improved teaching and that instructors grow more proficient through their experimentation.

I have not had that sense at Middlesex. Not having participated in the creative years when the college moved from temporary quarters to its permanent site, I lack a real perspective on the innovative features that have been implemented. I acknowledge the legitimacy and practicality of service curricula, basic courses to meet basic student needs, but I lament the absence of a smorgasbord of course offerings. Particularly deficient, it seems to me, are courses in the humanities and social sciences that encourage self-exploration and cultural awareness. Since such courses seem not directly related to students' employability, they must appear as expensive luxuries to students and administrators alike. Admittedly, Connecticut has not known California's largess with its community colleges, but the problem of minimalism feels more pervasive to me than lack of money alone can account for.

These observations may well be gratuitous, for I have not participated in the concerns of Connecticut community colleges except as an outsider. But my ability to make them has driven me to my point, that is the real value of this exchange. When Ms. Dell'Agnes and I return to our home campuses, we will be full of new perceptions and new advocacies--the stuff that continues to make community colleges exciting institutions to teach and learn in.

GRADE ANALYSIS

San Bernardino Valley College, Fall 1980

English 010 (Remedial Composition) 35 Sections, 1531 students

A	B	C	D	F	Cr	NC	X	W	ABCCr	D	FXWNC
86	149	145	136	7	376	133	161	338	756	136	639
6%	10%	9%	9%	0%	25%	9%	11%	22%	49%	9%	42%

English 101 (Freshman Composition) 29 Sections, 847 students

A	B	C	D	F	Cr	NC	X	W	ABCCr	D	FXWNC
95	171	135	26	15	14	61	108	222	415	26	496
11%	20%	16%	3%	2%	2%	7%	13%	26%	48%	3%	47%

Department Total, 3238 students

A	B	C	D	F	Cr	NC	X	W	ABCCr	D	FXWNC
329	492	375	192	34	403	278	342	793	1599	192	1447
10%	15%	12%	6%	1%	12%	9%	11%	24%	49%	6%	45%

Middlesex Community College, Fall 1981

English 99 (Remedial Composition) 8 Sections, 192 students

A	B	C	D	F	P	I	W	ABCP	D	FIW
				22	108	2	54	108		78
				11%	56%		28%	56%		41%

English 101 (Freshman Composition) 14 Sections, 424 students

A	B	C	D	F	P	I	W	ABCP	D	FIW
28	79	148	52	29		10	77	255	52	116
6%	18%	35%	12%	6%		2%	18%	60%	12%	27%

Department Total, 876 students

A	B	C	D	F	P	I	W	ABCDP	D	FIW
75	156	218	65	64	108	20	169	557	65	253
8%	18%	25%	7%	7%	12%	2%	19%	63%	7%	29%

HOW A FACULTY MEMBER FROM A SHOPPING CENTER COMMUNITY
COLLEGE FOUND HAPPINESS IN THE HALLOWED HALLS OF IVY

or

MY EXPERIENCES IN THE YALE UNIVERSITY
VISITING FACULTY PROGRAM

BY

Carol A. Weiss
Tunxis Community College.

As the only full-time faculty member in psychology at Tunxis Community College, I have often experienced a sense of academic isolation. Therefore, when a colleague described with great enthusiasm her year in the Yale University Visiting Faculty Program, I immediately decided to apply. This program, sponsored by the Mellon Foundation, provides faculty members of institutions within commuting distance of Yale with the opportunity to work for a semester with Yale faculty members in an area of their choice. In addition, Visiting Faculty Fellows may attend classes, and they are given a small stipend for travel costs, a charge card for lunches at a Yale dining hall for the semester, and, best of all, a Yale library card which is valid for a year.

I was especially attracted by the possibilities for learning about current research, because psychology is a discipline where change is constant, and keeping up-to-date poses a continual challenge. We community college faculty members tend to be generalists, either by inclination or by necessity, and each year I teach courses which cover the entire life span, as well as both normal and abnormal aspects of behavior. Because of this, I proposed in my letter of application to Yale that my involvement in the program consist of spending time with a variety of faculty members whose research interests in psychology coincided with my teaching areas. At first I encountered some resistance to this "generalist" approach; Yale, after all, is a

bastion of specialists! However, I was able to persuade my host, Sharon Lynn Kagan, Associate Director of the Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy, that this type of broad-based activity would enhance my teaching more than an in-depth involvement in a project with a limited scope.

I was accepted into the program for the 1981 summer semester and began an experience that was both enlightening and enjoyable. It is difficult to convey on paper the excitement I felt while walking around the Yale campus for the first time, soaking up the atmosphere as well as the architecture. (If this excitement seems excessive, please keep in mind that for the last eight years, the writer's faculty office area has been located in a windowless former supermarket and her classes in a building which was a Robert Hall store until a few years ago!) I also admit to being impressed by the fact that the Yale psychology department has its own separate business office, which employs more people than the Tunxis business office.

During the summer I met with approximately twenty members of the psychology department to learn about their research. I prepared for these meetings by reading articles which each faculty member had suggested beforehand. I soon discovered that I was doing almost as much educating of them as they were of me--while they explained their work to me, I described the community college system and our students to them. Several expressed appreciation and even envy of the varied ages and backgrounds of our students; as researchers they are aware of the unrepresentative samples provided by the Yale undergraduates whom they are often forced to use as research subjects.

In addition to meeting with faculty, I sat in on Yale's introductory psychology course. There were only fifteen students in this summer class; however, during the academic year there may be as many as two hundred and fifty students in a section. I found the contrast interesting -- for the same course, a full-time Tunxis student pays about \$25 in tuition to be in a class of forty-five students, while a Yale student (or parent) pays \$715 to be in a class of two hundred and fifty students.

Although my major involvement in the Yale Visiting Faculty Program took place in the summer, I discovered so many other interesting activities going on at Yale that I have continued to travel to New Haven about once a week during the current academic year. In the fall, I participated in a seminar in adult development given by Daniel Levinson, author of Seasons of A Man's Life. This was a valuable experience, because I was in the process of developing a course on adulthood at Tunxis. Throughout the year I have attended weekly presentations in the psychology department and at the Institute for Social and Policy Studies, and monthly colloquia in psychology. I have also spent many wonderful afternoons roaming through the stacks and the periodical room of Sterling Library.

Was it a worthwhile endeavor? YES! I feel that my teaching this year has been strengthened both by the knowledge of current research which I have been able to bring to my students and, perhaps more importantly, by the sense of intellectual and academic renewal which I have experienced.

Would I like to "transfer" to Yale? NO! Yale is an institution primarily devoted to research, with all of the pressure and competitiveness that such an orientation entails. My involvement there has given me a greater appreciation of my community college colleagues' dedication to teaching and concern for students. As a professional who is committed to teaching, I am in the right place.

SABBATICAL: A TIME OF REST

BY

Mike Moran

Asnuntuck Community College

When I began a six-month sabbatical from Asnuntuck in the spring of 1980, I knew that the "period of rest" promised in the dictionary definition was about the last thing I could expect to get!

My goal was to complete as much work as I could toward a second master's degree: an M.A. in Peace Studies from Antioch University in Ohio. This program is "individualized" so that each student combines independent study and research, including a thesis, with a period of internship work for at least one international organization in another country. I hoped then to finish most of my academic requirements, along with the foreign work experience, by my return to Asnuntuck for the fall semester.

So after a short but hectic stint of reading and writing at home, I set off for a 4½-month stay in London, where Antioch's international program is headquartered. After settling into a communal household of 12 people in comfortable Hampstead (next door, incidentally, to Sigmund Freud's house, where his daughter Anna still lives), I enrolled for one semester as a post-graduate research student in the International Relations department at the London School of Economics. There, under the guidance of Professor Nicholas Sims, I interviewed many leading figures from radical activists to government officials, in the now famous movement for European nuclear disarmament as part of a study of British followup to the First UN Special Sessions on Disarmament, held in 1978.

I also worked part-time for several London-based nongovernmental organizations whose concerns related to my own interests in human rights and disarmament: Amnesty International; the Campaign against Arms Trade; and Pax Christi, the international

Catholic peace movement. My duties at all three included: general office coverage (just like staffing my reference desk at home!); writing leaflets, press releases, and campaigning materials; speaking about various issues to adult and student groups (who always seemed to enjoy the novelty of an American accent); lobbying Parliament; and organizing several demonstrations (at one of which - in a memorably crowded Trafalgar Square - I was snubbed by a self-styled "Ronald Reagan hawk" from the United States!).

From London as a convenient point of departure, I was able to travel not only through much of England (often, as when en route to a talk, at someone else's expense!), but into six other countries (Wales, Scotland, Ireland, France, Belgium, and Italy) as well, for anywhere from a few days to a week. Most of this time was spent at conferences or seminars that related to my degree work, but I did manage some sightseeing in cities like Paris, where I unexpectedly served as a hyphenated British-American delegate at the week-long "First UNESCO World Congress on Disarmament Education."

Aside from occasional fatigue and countless rides on the London tube, this varied schedule gave me far more concrete sense of what it means to work for peace and international understanding than I think hundreds of hours in even the best classrooms could have done.

The only real disappointment of my sabbatical was the cancellation, for political reasons, of a study tour of the Soviet Union which I had hoped to join that summer. But this opportunity recurred a year later, when I used three weeks of vacation time to travel with 45 other Americans to the USSR on a "peace seminar" organized by Promoting Enduring Peace of Woodmont, CT.

The trip lasted from August 2 to August 23, 1981, with 3 to 5 days each in five of the Soviet Union's largest cities: Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Tbilisi, and Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad). Our daily schedule usually included at least one excursion to a cultural or historical site, and, often, a meeting

with church members, academic experts, or local peace or friendship committees (unofficial groups of ordinary citizens found in most Soviet cities). An interpreter-guide from Intourist, the official state travel agency, accompanied us on these prearranged trips, but besides occasional free time, we could skip any part of the planned itinerary to explore the cities on our own.

What most impressed me about the USSR was the apparent loyalty of the vast majority of Soviet citizens to their government and the communist way of life. This seemed to rest mainly on the state's successful effort to rebuild Soviet society after the massive destruction of World War II and on the relative material progress that followed. Even several Namibian students at the University of Leningrad tried for a few hours one night to convince me that the USSR was more "democratic" (in trying to close the gap between rich and poor) than the U.S.

Not everyone felt this way. Our freedom of movement meant that many of us met people on the streets who could be called dissidents; they didn't hesitate to tell us (mostly in quite good English) their complaints against the socialist system. But most of our discussions with loyal communists were just as frank, open, and honest. Everyone answered even the toughest questions we asked about Afghanistan, Poland, etc., despite our strong differences of perception on some issues. They generally maintained, for example, that their government had entered Afghanistan only after declining 13 prior "invitations" from the Afghan government.

We even found that they are just as afraid of us as we are of them (and not without good reason, as the Moscow Peace Committee reminded us on the day when President Reagan announced that the U.S. would build the neutron bomb). But they agreed overwhelmingly that both our countries must begin immediately, with something like a mutual freeze on the development of nuclear weapons, to reverse the arms race that threatens us all.

This feeling was the basis for the next phase of my degree work: the preparation and teaching of a three-credit introduc-

tory peace studies course at Asnuntuck this past fall which I called "The Nonviolent Alternative." And I have drawn on all these experiences to write my thesis, now in progress, a handbook of disarmament education. By the time I complete my degree requirements this summer, I will also have served a final six-week internship in the UN Secretariat during the Second Special Session on Disarmament this June/July, thanks again to vacation time.

It should be obvious by now that the flexibility of this degree program has given me a unique opportunity for professional growth in several directions. And all this has been accomplished with minimal disruption of Asnuntuck's library services - a real danger in view of the limited staff and normally heavy workload that we librarians face throughout the community college system.

I hope now that the broadened worldview I gained in my "period of rest" (?) can enrich not just my daily work at Asnuntuck but all my contributions to college life.

Footographs *to*



Jar

Jargon *to*

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Jean Blanning has a B.A. from Connecticut College, an M.A. from SUNY, Albany, in Social Studies, and a B.D. from Yale. She has published in several educational journals, particularly in the field of the talented and the gifted.

Ed Bollenbach is an Assistant Professor of Natural Sciences. He has a B.A. in Biology from SUNY, New Paltz, and M.A. and has taken 6th year courses in Biology from the University of Tennessee.

Sue Corcoran is an Assistant Professor at Asnuntuck. She holds a B.A. from Connecticut College and an M.S. from the University of New Hampshire.

Joyce Donen Hirschorn is an Assistant Professor of Speech at South Central Community College. She has a B.S. from the University of Michigan and an M.A. from Teachers College, Columbia.

Ed Hodgkin has a degree from Hampshire in outdoor education and English. He taught in Minnesota's Outward Bound program and has taught English at Northwestern Connecticut Community College for two years.

Anna Lafferty, who did the cover and borders for this issue, is an Assistant Professor of Graphic Design at Tunxis. She has a B.A. from UCLA in Applied Arts, an M.S.Ed. from the University of Hartford and an M.F.A. from Syracuse.

Betsy Lombardi is a graduate of Albertus Magnus and has an M.A. from the University of Massachusetts. She has a 6th year certificate which included courses from the Wharton School, the Univ. of Bridgeport and the Univ. of Massachusetts. She has been active in the association of two year college math professors.

Carol Milatz is a non-traditional student at Middlesex who successfully puts together the various pieces of her life, wifing, mothering, working and studying. Her main academic interest is in mathematics, which she plans to teach someday.

Michael Moran is Director of Library Services at Asnuntuck. In addition to the academic work described in his article, he holds a B.A. from Assumption College, Worcester, and an M.S.L.S. from Simmons. He is on the Capitol Region Library Council Board and actively involved in committee work with the Connecticut Library Association.

William Nagle is an Associate Professor in English at Middlesex. He has an A.B. from Muhlenberg College and an M.A. from the University of Wisconsin. In the past he has chaired the English Department and the Humanities Division; more recently he has chaired the college reaccreditation committee and has been an active sponsor to the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Fraternity.

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He has a Ph.D. from SUNY, Albany. He is a classicist and medievalist, primarily working in Boethius and the classical influence on English and American literature.

Jack Scheideman is the Director of Audio-Visual Services and Chief Library Cartoonist at Manchester Community College.

He has a B.A. in Music Education and an M.A. in Audio-Visual Education from the University of Northern Colorado, and a 6th year in Instructional Media and Technology from the University of Connecticut.

Ben Thomerson is a native southern Californian who has been sampling life in New England for the past year. He received his Master's in English from San Diego State College and for the last dozen years, after a brief stint in the Dakotas, has been teaching English and Humanities at San Bernardino valley Community College.

Carol Weiss is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Tunxis.

She has an A.B. in French Literature from Brandeis, an M.Ed. in Counseling from Northeastern and has done doctoral work in Human Development at the University of Pennsylvania.

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Jean Smith is an Associate Professor of Mathematics at Middlesex, President of the Math Association of Two Year Colleges in Connecticut, member of the Executive Board of a National Science Foundation Network for Women in Scientific and Technological Fields, member of the Advisory Board of Middlesex and, incidentally, with a great deal of help from many sources, editor of this year's *COMMUNITAS*.

Margaret Owens is Director of Library Services at Manchester Community College, a former President of the Capitol Region Library Council Board and present Chair of the Cooperating Library Service Review Board, and was even more incidental than Jean in assisting the editor to produce this issue.

We need a few good
souls who would
like to help put
together Communitas 83.

Description of duties: Snuffle out articles
and other contributions, edit, do lay-out,
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can do.

Minimum qualifications: Willing to work hard
for neither money nor glory but just for
the hell of it.

Please contact Margaret Owens
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646-4900, ext. 295

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