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THE EDUCATIONAL LEADER



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VOLUME XVII • NUMBER I

THE EDUCATIONAL LEADER

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The Enjoyment of History

BY DUDLEY TAYLOR CORNISH

Editor's note.—This article is an outgrowth of addresses delivered by Doctor Cornish at the annual banquet of the Phi Alpha Theta chapter at William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., on March 12, 1953, and at a joint banquet of Phi Alpha Theta and the Westminster Historical Society of Westminster College, Fulton, Mo., on March 17. Phi Alpha Theta is the national honor society in history. Doctor Cornish, assistant professor in the social science department, has long been active in Phi Alpha Theta, serving on the national council of the society, 1948-1950, and as a member of its National Advisory Board, 1950-1952. He has recently been appointed news editor of its journal, *The Historian*.

There was a time when the educated person, almost by definition, was understood to possess a good grasp and a broad understanding of the major epochs, movements, personalities, conflicts, ideas, and concepts of the history of western civilization, of the whole sweep of that history from its origins in the Near and Middle East through the great stages of development, of progress and retrogression, from Babylon to Athens and Rome and on through feudal times to the dawn of our modern era, through the great social, political, intellectual, and economic upheavals of the past three hundred years to the emergence of the world as we know it. So much, at least, was expected of the educated person as an essential part of his basic intellectual equipment. Accordingly, the primary schools used to begin with a smattering of facts and dates and legends. The high schools laid on two or three more layers: ancient history, European history, American history. And the colleges were presumed to set the capstone to the whole structure with further hours of more or less required study. There was not a great deal of questioning. Too often it was assumed that history needed no defense, that the

study of history needed no excuse or argument. History presumably spoke for itself.

Occasionally, of course, reasons were offered for the teaching and study of history: from it the young would learn values, perspective, patriotism, respect for the great dead, critical abilities, a sense of the continuity of man's long struggle on earth; by it the young would be inspired and succeeding races would move forward. Occasionally, too, some cynic would ask uncomfortable questions, some Henry Adams would raise dark doubts as to the value of the whole educative process, or some Henry Ford would call the whole magnificent record "bunk." But not until the last generation in this country has history and its vaunted claims to an important if not an essential place in the education of the whole man been challenged successfully. The challenges have been so persistent and so successful that history and historians have had to go on the defensive lest the offensive carry the day and sweep all before it.

Historians ought not to respond to this challenge merely by denouncing the critics and their new departures in core curricula, problems courses, and general education. At least the critics and some of their proposals have the merit of fairly definite objectives and some recognition of the facts of individual differences and interests. The answer to attacks on the teaching of history is not necessarily more history, but better history, better taught, better understood, better explained by historians themselves. Too often historians have simply repeated the same old reasons for history and its enforced study. They have simply damned all who attempt curricular improvements as pagans sullyng with unclean hands the sacred vessels of Clio's temple, their private domain. Certainly historians have a vested interest in history, and it is only reasonable to suggest that changes in history requirements at any level of instruction be made by and with the advice and consent of the historians concerned. But history is larger than historians, and to defend history historians must be more than a priesthood defending a temple holy only to themselves.

History is the story of man's activities in the past, and more than that, history is the investigation, understanding, analysis, interpretation, and narration of that story. History *is*, but not automatically. Without the narrator there could be no story. The story is almost as large as life, far more extensive and full and abounding with possibilities for deep satisfaction than the narrow and confined existence of any one individual in one short lifetime. Here the historical defense of history ought to begin. There is a Latin motto carved

over a fireplace in the browsing room of the library at the University of Rochester: *in secundis voluptas, in adversis perflugium*. Freely translated, it means "in normal times a pleasure, in difficult times a refuge." As used in the browsing room, the motto had reference to reading and contemplation, the reasons for setting aside the room and furnishing it with comfortable chairs and a rich variety of the world's literature. In a more special sense, the motto has meaning when limited to history. For the long story of man's life and struggle is at once an enjoyment and a refuge. The enjoyments of history are legion: history is entertainment; it is escape; it is discipline; it is strong medicine and stimulant; it is a liberalizing force. By enjoyment is meant not the shallow pleasures of the moment, but the deepest and most lasting kind of satisfaction, moral and intellectual satisfaction. The enjoyment of history need not be the same for all men; certainly historians recognize individual differences and requirements and are opposed to cramped intellectual conformity of any sort. History itself denies the validity and the practicality of such forced conformity. But since not a few men have already found deep satisfaction in the study and contemplation of history, is it not reasonable to suggest that others may find in it the same rewards?

There is first the enjoyment of history as a pleasant pastime. History is for many historians not only a profession but a hobby as well. The reading of Parrington, Froude, Parkman, Wingfield-Stratford, Becker, Huizinga, Emerton, Trevelyan, Toynbee, or James Harvey Robinson, that reading is among the highest pleasures. It is recreation of the spirit and stimulation of the mind. There is richness of color and imagination, humor of several sorts, sound grasp of the facts, and the challenge of ideas and interpretations. There is none of the dullness of which history is too often accused. One wonders if those who call history dull have ever read any history. For in the genuine histories by the men who know history well and write well of it, dullness is rarely found except in the reader. Even in the newer textbooks, dullness is fast disappearing. It is possible to read the best of them, Bailey's *Diplomatic History of the American People*, for example, or Morrison and Commager's *Growth of the American Republic*, to improve an evening hour or two, to rest the mind and spirit and prepare it for repose.

People as a rule enjoy a good story, or did before the advent of picture books, digest magazines and TV. What is history but one long involved series of stories? Biography, of course, is for many the most enjoyable form of historical literature, particularly now

that biographers have got pretty well away from the old "let us now praise famous men" school. It is a matter of record that in the past few years book publishers have found the market for biography not only holding up well but growing widely. Not all biography is sound history, but sound biography giving an honest and accurate life-picture of its subject is an essential part of historical literature.

Where but in historical literature can the reader find greater variety, greater scope? Here is all of man's past spread out invitingly, if one but had the time. What a choice there is: one may sail with Ulysses, march with Alexander, talk to the birds with St. Francis of Assisi, argue the baselessness of the Petrine Doctrine with Marsiglio of Padua, observe the behavior of Cesare Borgia with Machiavelli, be dazzled by the splendor of the Sun King at his court of Versailles, witness the death of another French king in the Place de la Revolution, turn back the rebel tide at Gettysburg, drain the dregs of disillusionment in the incredible era of the twenties, know again the depression and the hope of the thirties. The list is without end. All that is necessary is a modest literacy, a library in the vicinity, some intellectual curiosity, and time. Is the rarest of these time? Historians may be able to stir the intellectual curiosity of some of their students and thus point the way to their lasting enjoyment.

History is also a refuge, an escape. When the contemporary world and its unromantic materialism crowds too closely, the whole recorded human past offers a wealth of havens. The good old days of Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker or Curtis Nettels may call one back to lose himself among the Puritan oligarchy or the roots of our American civilization. This can be overdone, of course, even by historians. More than one faculty wife has complained that she lost her husband in the Civil War. But more than historians get lost in the comforting days that are gone: one has only to look at the publishers' reports of book sales. Histories—and historical novels (which today are roughly ninety percent history)—have never sold better. During the depression the American reading public rediscovered the historic past, and during World War II the demand for history and historical novels grew stronger. Since the war that demand—it might almost be called a hunger—has increased. The book clubs have become aware of it, and even a number of clubs specializing in history have found widening support for their selections and services. Reasons for this escape into history go beyond preference for the problems of another time, another epoch, another world. In times of stress there are many who

seek not only escape from the present but some source of strength in the stories of other men who have passed through troubled times in their own lives. Vicarious experience may instill a kind of vicarious courage.

There are other enjoyments in history and its study. History as a discipline provides enjoyments of a different kind. For history, properly studied and properly taught, is a discipline, intellectual discipline of a high order. Ideally, the student of history must discipline himself to postpone the hasty judgment, to hunt for the last available bit of evidence, to sift through the testimony of witnesses who stubbornly disagree, to gather and sort, to assess and evaluate, to strive for something like an objective point of view. Any art has its disciplines; any science has its rules and standards; history is both art and science. Perhaps this matter of disciplined objectivity is the hardest for students to grasp. Too often a term paper, for example, will remind one of nothing so much as this book title: *An Objective Study of the War Between the States from the Southern Point of View*.

The scientific attitude—and the historical attitude is the same thing—is characterized by the tentative conclusion based upon all the observed facts of the case, or all of the facts that can be observed. And the conclusion is reached *after* the research is completed and the evidence has been examined, weighed, and evaluated. That requires discipline of a high order. Breaches of this discipline are dealt with sternly by historians, whether the offender be student or practicing scholar. An excellent current example is Ruhl Bartlett's review of Charles C. Tansill's *Back Door to War*, the final paragraph of which follows:

Most historians like to think that amidst the furor of polemical writing on contemporary politics and recent events they are able, through their training and discipline, to stand a little above the din and to examine and appraise complicated and conflicting data to the end of finding truth however elusive it may be. This requires patience, a degree of serenity, all the detachment possible, and a firm, unyielding devotion to the purposes of historical investigation. It is to be regretted that these are not the distinguishing characteristics of Professor Tansill's work, and equally to be regretted that so much effort should result in so little advantage. The book is unredeemed by humor, art, or insight. To read it and to write about it are unrewarding tasks.*

Working to work well may have a mid-Victorian sound to twentieth century ears, but for the historian there is no other way.

* *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXXIX (December, 1952), 581.

There are no excuses for the sloppy, the haphazard, the subjective, and especially the downright mendacious. The ultimate aim of the historian is to find truth "however elusive it may be." In the pursuit of truth there is satisfaction of a moral as well as an intellectual nature. This is not to say that everyone who studies history for so-many semester hours will emerge a well-disciplined objective scholar. Habits are not easily acquired, especially good ones. But clear explanation of the standards and the reasons for them, and honest effort to hold to them can have gradual results. What is more desirable than the truth? What is harder to discover?

Perhaps it is already clear that history is strong medicine. Certainly, to many there is no stronger medicine than discipline, particularly discipline to a great extent self-imposed. For the historian almost always works alone. Who has seen the hitherto unconsidered manuscript but the researcher who discovers it? Who will bother to dig down to check the accuracy of the statement? Who will question the validity of the over-hasty, ill-advised interpretation? In all instances, the historian must remain faithful to his own conscience—and to the "purposes of historical investigation."

History is medicine in another way. Perspective is a medicine which improves the vision, and it is sometimes painful in the acquiring. We let go our mythology grudgingly. Nothing seems to stick so stubbornly as a wrong notion. We grapple misunderstandings to us, as individuals and nations and races, and we hate to be proved wrong. We hate to admit error. We hate to face the facts. Facts are the historian's stock in trade, and he must learn early to respect them, not for themselves alone, although their intrinsic value may be high, but in a larger sense for their meaning, their significance, their consequences. The new idea may well be an old one in the light of history. The myths that grow up around major personages, policies, and events in history are thick underbrush which the historian must cut away ruthlessly. History that does not open new doors, correct old errors, explore new paths, sharpen old insight or present entirely fresh insight is hardly worth the paper, sweat, and trouble involved. Truth is not easily come by, nor is its discovery always pleasant. But the deepest satisfaction of the historian's life comes just here: in the discovery of the truth or some particle of it, no matter what the interests, the oppositions, the pressure groups, the sacred cows that stand in the way.

History is stimulant as well as strong medicine. Not that the Great Man school of history is stimulating, although its claims are

strong and ancient. Far more stimulating is the true story of how the heretic was glorified, how the voyage was made, how the election was won, how the war with France was prevented, not so much because John Hus or Christopher Columbus or Woodrow Wilson or John Adams was superhuman in his wisdom, courage or insight, but in spite of the fact that he was only a mortal man. The story of man's activities is the story of men and women, weak and strong, craven and courageous, sick and well, stupid and wise, who lived and struggled and died. Their living and struggling and dying as ordinary men and women has far more stimulating strength than might be the case had they in fact been something more than human. If all the wonders of the world had been accomplished by supermen, what encouragement would there be for the mass of ordinary men and women?

What is history after all but a long train of challenges and responses. Aware of what toils and troubles man has met already, cannot the student of history be encouraged to face more bravely the problems of his own life? This is not to imply that because some problems have been solved all problems will be. But there are the facts of history in the generations and centuries behind us. Over and over again, in age after age, man has survived this life and occasionally glorified it. Man is the central character of history, not always the hero, nor always the pawn. In the words of Sandburg, "the strong men keep coming on"—and the weak and frightened men, too. It is possible to draw a sort of vicarious strength from the endurance already demonstrated: the indentured servants lasting out the ten-weeks voyage across the dark Atlantic; the British facing Hitlerian Europe alone and undismayed for one of the longest years in modern history; the forces of western Christendom slowly pushing back the Moslem invaders of Europe from 732 to 1492. The perspectives history alone affords are stimulating and ought to be kept available to those who require them.

There are of course those who argue that all that history teaches is that men forget what history teaches. There are times when the bases for that argument seem strong. But history, especially the teaching of it, involves a large element of faith. Historians must have faith that truth is of fundamental importance, and that the truth does help make men free. Free men, free minds, working in a free society—that is the boast of democracy. Historians have a large responsibility in making good that brave boast. They must teach for more than one course, one semester, one campus. Historians

must study and teach for all life. The "A" student has failed if he goes forth never to read another word of history. The best teacher has failed likewise though all the grades be high, if the students passing on never look again to history.

To respond to the challenge, historians must begin not with attacks on the attackers alone, but by cleaning their own house, mending their own walls, re-examining what they teach and why they teach, what they write and how and why they write it. The enjoyment of history is the enjoyment of truth, and it has many levels. At its best, history can broaden horizons, increase awareness, deepen knowledge and understanding of life. Journalistic approaches are inadequate to the involved problems of the twentieth century. Historians cannot make history attractive by dilution, rather is the better method enrichment. There is nothing satisfactory or satisfying in superficiality. Enrichment can be achieved by allowing history to stand forth in all its own richness, the long story of man's struggle here on this earth. The story is more romantic and infinitely more realistic than any Jules Verne or comic-book fantasy.

History is no narrow field; history is more than western civilization. History is the story of all mankind wherever that story can be found. History is no dull tale of the dead past, no irrelevant story to pass an hour away. History is the living past, and the historian's high responsibility is to call up that living past, to tell the story, interpret it, synthesize it, to the end that those who study history will not be cut off from awareness of what has already occurred on this earth, will not remain mere children with no memories longer than yesterday. In humility, in calmness of mind, in abiding conviction in the rightness of truth, historians will continue to follow their calling. And history will continue to have its rich rewards for those who use it.

Withdrawal Among Music Students in Secondary Schools

RANDOLPH FOSTER, JR.

(Editor's note.—Part of this study is omitted as of primary interest to Texas only. The part included has elements of national applicability.)

There were no reasonably accurate estimates of music withdrawal rates from which to start this investigation. Therefore, such research had, of necessity, to be begun from the original source, the schools themselves. In order to facilitate and better determine the accuracy of such an investigation, three hundred eighty-five questionnaires were sent to secondary schools throughout Texas. These questionnaires endeavored to elicit enrollment figures from the beginning of the junior high-school level to the completion of high school. The number of grades was also to be indicated, and was taken into consideration in tabulating the ultimate results. A complete questionnaire form will be found in the appendix. To validate the findings based upon enrollment figures for only one year, one item of the questionnaire concerned the distribution of scholastics throughout the grades. In all cases, excepting six, the distribution was normal.

The remainder of the study is based upon the answers and opinions advanced in the completed questionnaires, which numbered 105.

In trying to determine the reasons for student withdrawal, no effort was made to gauge those which were private or economic. Those, it was felt, would automatically be considered in the figures for total withdrawal, and other reasons must be considered separately. Therefore, the reasons listed on the questionnaire were selected purely on the basis of factors relating directly to music education.

Every teacher in the public schools of Texas realizes how great is the loss of potentially educated boys and girls each year through their leaving school. In some sections, particularly those where there are large numbers of migratory workers, this is taken as a matter of course rather than a cause for alarm. But others view it as a more serious problem and are greatly concerned for the future,

if such trends continue on their present level. They feel that if steps are not taken to curb this loss, forthcoming generations of citizens will not be as sufficiently equipped as they might have been to live in a world demanding more and more specialization and concentration of knowledge.

Serious as this problem is throughout the school system, it is even more greatly pronounced in such limited fields as the arts, particularly music. A musician is not trained in a short time; to produce even a moderately successful one takes years of work, interest, and concentration. For this reason it is imperative that the instructors of these courses endeavor to discover and counteract factors tending to produce withdrawals.

One of the foremost tasks facing the beginning teacher of music in the secondary schools is that of maintaining a balanced music curriculum. In order to do this, he must first estimate as nearly as is possible the number of students who will continue their music training on through high school. The student who will become one of the withdrawals must be given as much in the short time he is to study as is possible. On the other hand, the student who wishes to carry on his work in music must not be held back to the level of the others.

I. According to Population Distribution

The towns with populations of 5,000 or less had withdrawal rates comparable to those for the state as a whole between grades seven to eight. The scholastic withdrawal rate for towns of this size was 13.7 percent, while the average scholastic withdrawal rate for all towns was 13.2 percent. Similarly, these same towns had a music withdrawal rate of 29.16 percent, compared to a rate of 28.96 percent for all towns.

Towns with populations ranging from 5,000 to 10,000 had an enrollment drop of 11.3 percent and a music student drop of 26.17 percent from grade seven to eight. Both rates are 2.5 and 3.5 percent lower than the figure for all towns in Texas for this grade.

Cities with populations of 10,000 to 25,000 show a total enrollment drop of 10.1 percent, compared with a rising music withdrawal of 29.2 percent from grade seven to eight. This group had the greatest net loss with a rate of 19.1 percent, and all other groups in this grade had a net loss of from 14.67 to 15.76 percent.

The cities of 25,000 to 100,000 have in the eighth grade a scholastic withdrawal rate of 14.2 percent. The percentage of music students who drop out of those courses in this same group was 29.9 percent.

The largest group according to population, cities of 100,000 or more, showed a loss of 16.7 percent of the scholastics, while 31.37 percent of the music students failed to continue music study after the seventh grade.

In the ninth grade, the scholastic withdrawal rate rose for all towns, but the rate of music withdrawals exhibited a tendency to drop. Music withdrawal rates were close to, or were less than, the scholastic withdrawal rates.

Towns of 5,000 or less almost doubled the rates of scholastic withdrawals in the ninth grade, with a jump from 13.7 percent to 25.5 percent, while the music withdrawal rates dropped one-third from the previous grade rate of 29.16 percent to the ninth-grade rate of 19.2 percent. Here is exhibited a case similar to the average of all towns for this grade. The music withdrawal rate is smaller than the total enrollment withdrawal rate by 6.3 percent.

In the ninth grade the highest music loss was found in towns of 5,000 to 10,000 population, where 25.6 percent of the students failed to pursue their studies in this field. And the total scholastic withdrawal rate was the lowest of all the groups, 21.6 percent, making the net music withdrawal rate 4.0 percent the greater for the ninth grade.

The highest scholastic withdrawal rate in the ninth grade was found in those cities of 100,000 population. Here the rate was 29.4 percent, compared with a music withdrawal rate of 21.8 percent, which is below the state average for music withdrawal and the second lowest in the population groupings.

The middle group, in both enrollment and music withdrawals, was found in the 25,000 to 100,000 population group. These schools lost 27.7 percent of their students in the ninth grade, but lost only 22.35 percent of their music students, exhibiting the second most favorable net rate in the ninth grade.

Schools in cities of from 10,000 to 25,000 population had withdrawal rates comparable with the average of rates for all towns in this grade. They lost 27.7 percent of all students, the state average was 27.3 and 22.35 percent of the music enrollment, compared to 22.6 percent for the state, showing that in this group the music departments fare better than the schools as a whole.

The rate of enrollment loss of students declined in all towns to 20.1 percent from the ninth to the tenth grades, but the rate of music enrollment losses rose slightly to 23.54 percent. This leaves a low net loss in music withdrawals of 3.44 percent.

The group with the most comparable rate was that of cities of over 100,000 population, with an enrollment withdrawal rate of 21.5 percent and a music withdrawal rate of 23.7 percent.

The towns with the lowest enrollment withdrawal rate in the tenth grades were those of 5,000 population or less. However, the enrollment in music courses in these towns suffered the second highest withdrawal rate in this grade, 26.3 percent.

Although the rates do not vary greatly, the highest rate was found in cities of 25,000 to 100,000 population. Their rates were higher in total enrollment withdrawals, with 22.1 percent, and also in music student withdrawals, with 27.5 percent.

The lowest withdrawal rate in the tenth grade was found in towns of 10,000 to 25,000 population. Here 17.6 percent of all students left school and 20.0 percent of the music students failed to continue in music.

The withdrawal rates in towns of 5,000 to 10,000 population were similar. Total enrollment losses were figured at 19.1 percent, and music enrollment losses at 20.2 percent, a net difference of 1.1 percent.

Dropping even further in the eleventh grade, the music student withdrawal rate for all towns declined to 14.92 percent, while total enrollment withdrawal rates rose slightly to 21.02 percent. It is significant that the rates of music course enrollment losses are lower than the rates for total enrollment losses in every population group in the state in this grade.

Two groups of towns, those of less than 3,000 population and those of 25,000 to 100,000 population, had identical total enrollment withdrawal rates, 19.6 percent, and their music course withdrawal rates were also similar, 14.7 percent being the rate of the former and 14.9 percent that of the latter.

The lowest rate of music withdrawals in the eleventh grade was 12.9 percent, which was found in the cities of 10,000 to 25,000 population. In this group the general withdrawal rate was next to the smallest, being 20.1 percent. This follows the general trend all over the state of smaller music withdrawal losses than of general withdrawal losses.

The two higher groups, those of towns with populations of 5,000 to 10,000 and 100,000 and more, were also closely linked. The latter had the highest enrollment withdrawal rate, with a 23.5 percent loss, and a 16.3 percent loss in music student enrollment. The former is not far behind with 22.3 percent of its scholastic total dropping out, and 15.8 percent of its music students failing to continue.

Replies to the questionnaires indicate that in the last year of high school 18.37 percent of the total enrollment of the schools failed to complete their high-school education. However, only 3.9 percent of the music students who had studied up to that level failed to finish their secondary work in music.

In the cities whose population does not exceed 5,000, only 1.3 percent of the music students who completed the eleventh grade did not complete their music work in high school. However, in this same group, 19.15 percent of all students failed to finish school.

In towns with 5,000 to 10,000 population 2.6 percent of the music enrollment was lost during the senior year, or after the end of the junior year and before the beginning of the senior year. In comparison, 16.2 percent of the total enrollment was lost from the schools as a whole.

The greatest difference in total enrollment withdrawal rates and music withdrawal rates in the last year of secondary school was shown in schools situated in cities with 10,000 to 25,000 population. A total of 20.15 percent left school, while the percentage leaving music courses was only 4.4.

The music withdrawal rate tended to rise parallel with the population in the senior grade of high school, as is evidenced by the fact that in cities of 25,000 to 100,000 population the rate was 5.4 percent, and in those of 100,000 population or over the rate was 5.8 percent. However, this does not follow in the general withdrawal figures, as the former had a percentage loss of 17.1 and the latter 19.25.

II. According to Opinions of Superintendents

In endeavoring to establish a definite picture of music withdrawals, rather than a study of total student withdrawals, the author selected a point of view in which the causes of excessive music student withdrawals are to be found in the curriculum provided for the students, and the administering of the curriculum. This necessarily limited the causes of withdrawals included in the questionnaire to those factors of most influence upon a course of study in music in the state's secondary schools.

The first listed reason, pre-school training, elicited the reply from the majority of the superintendents that its adverse influence on the study of music in secondary schools was little or not at all. Only six felt that it hindered the student's school music program. Twelve felt that it had some effect, while fifty regarded it as having no ill effect at all.

The second reason, student interest, in comparison varied from the first, as eighteen replies indicated that lack of it was seemingly responsible for the loss of many students from music courses. Twenty-four—only half as many as were represented in the first reason—considered it as having no ill effects, while forty-four said it did have some adverse effect.

In keeping with the lack of student interest, many school superintendents blamed lack of adult interest for most students' failing to continue their study of music. But a tabulation showed lack of adult interest to have less ill effect than student interest. These two items ranked below only three others in having the worse effects.

Some superintendents blamed local school requirements for their drop in music study enrollment. In approximately the same category were those who said the lack of variety of musical courses available to the students necessarily caused a number of withdrawals. The schools with only one music course could not allow that course to be taken again and again for credit; therefore, their music enrollment withdrawal rate of necessity was large.

The reason advanced most often for lack of continued or consistent student participation in the music program of the schools was lack of equipment. In replying, superintendents and teachers both said that bad equipment, or lack of equipment, often kept the school from supplying certain music courses which would have been done otherwise. The eighth reason, lack of funds, was cited as the underlying factor causing a dearth of equipment, especially in the small school systems of the state.

Considered as serious a cause as lack of equipment was the problem of inadequately trained teachers. Several superintendents cited cases of students' refusing to continue their music courses in school because they actually had no respect for the musicianship of the teacher who was instructing their classes, and often some knew as much or more in some fields of music than did their teacher. Below this on the list came teacher personality, which also drew criticisms from the supervising officer of the schools. One superintendent said that some teachers, in trying to overcome their lack of knowledge of music, tried too hard, thus conveying to the students that they did know nothing. Other superintendents complained of too little patience on the part of the music instructors, while others wished for a less belligerent attitude. One superintendent, on the other hand, said, "Music teachers grade too leniently—fail less than one percent and pass out A's and B's indiscriminately."

Administration and school board emphasis on other subjects were

the main errors in the eyes of several of the superintendents. It was felt that pressure was being applied by administrative officials not connected with the schoolroom in such a manner that the courses in the so-called fine arts category were being hampered and, in some cases, completely cut out of the school curriculum. Hand in hand with this line of reasoning was the consideration of the attitude of the faculty, particularly those in the athletic field, as being particularly detrimental to the interesting of students in music. Parental guidance also came in for criticism by the same school officials.

It must also be stated that while these reasons were cited as being responsible for the relative lack of success of music programs in schools all over the state, far more supervisors disregarded them as having no effect. It is significant that no less than twenty-six administrators felt all of the fifteen reasons had no ill effects whatsoever.

Inadequate staff was indicated as hampering several school music programs. The average number of teachers of music in the schools replying to the questionnaire was 2.2 teachers per school. The number of teachers per school varied from one to six. These had an average of twenty-six hours in music education courses to their credit, although the actual number ranged from no credits to those required for a doctor of philosophy degree. The average, as tabulated, teaching experience per teacher was seven years and two months, although the actual range varied from one to twenty-three years.

The suggestions elicited from those answering the questionnaire were overwhelmingly in favor of a more complete music program in the secondary schools, which administrators felt would stimulate interest. They also felt that more theory courses should be offered, and that more emphasis could be placed on individual and smaller groups, and perhaps less on large groups, such as massed choruses and large bands. Many felt that before a teacher should be permitted to teach a music course he should be required to have at least a minor in his college work in music, and also be required to take music education courses at more regular intervals.

Summary and Conclusions

Tabulation of the questionnaire answers shows that the average percentage rate for music withdrawals was greater than that for general enrollment withdrawals, in the secondary schools in Texas. The tabulation also showed that this trend is particularly true of the early years of junior high school, and that the trend tends to reverse

itself in the last two years of senior high school, in which case total enrollment withdrawal rates exceed those of music withdrawals.

A tabulation of the answers according to a population grouping shows that those schools located in the cities with the largest number of people tend to suffer the highest withdrawal rates. Conversely, the schools found in small communities tend to have lower withdrawal rates, especially in music courses. The rates of music withdrawals declined sharply in the upper levels of the secondary schools in all towns and cities, regardless of size. This trend is much more apparent in music withdrawal rates than in those of total enrollment. The trend of music student withdrawal rates tends to vary directly in proportion to the size of the cities in which the schools are located, the only exception being that the 5,000 to 10,000 population group had rates in music withdrawals that exceeded slightly the rate for music withdrawals found in the next largest group, that of 10,000 to 25,000 population.

The highest rate for total enrollment withdrawals occurred in the ninth grade, while that of music withdrawals occurred in the eighth grade. The lowest rate, both for total enrollment withdrawals and music withdrawals, was found in the twelfth grade in senior high school.

The opinions of the various school superintendents, though varying greatly, show a steady trend toward attributing the high rate of music withdrawals to a lack of teacher training in Music Education, and to teacher and administrative attitudes.

Since the withdrawal rates in music courses decrease by grade, more emphasis might be placed on the junior high school music program, perhaps explanatory courses, for these grades had the highest rates of withdrawal. However, since there was a definite withdrawal rate in the senior high school, some improvement is also needed there.

As different geographical areas have different problems as well as withdrawal rates, those suffering most in withdrawals should be given more time and effort toward the development of secondary music education. There might also be some changes made in the music departments of the large city schools to help maintain a more consistent participation in music withdrawals found in the eighth grade.

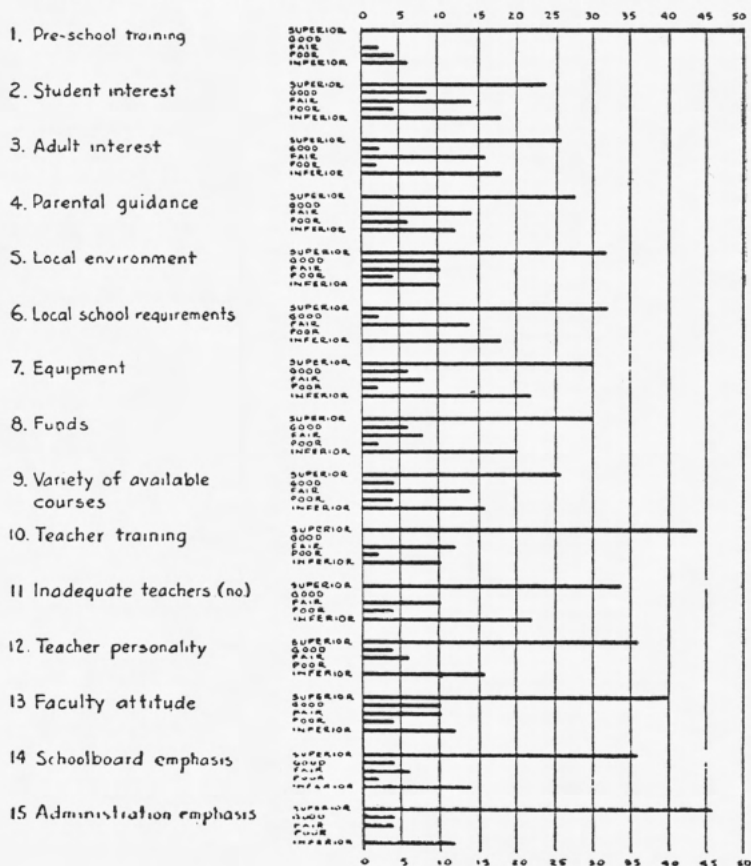
Taking into consideration the suggestions and opinions of the various administrators, improvement in every case must come from at least two directions. Not only should the music program be

improved through enlargement and organization, but also through the use of better administration of the program. There should be an ever constant improvement taking place in the training of teachers, for only through increasing knowledge can increased knowledge be disseminated, and the teacher who does not seek improvement cannot create or maintain student interest, much less guide the students in their quest for education.

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SUPERINTENDENTS' ANSWERS TO CAUSES AFFECTING SUCCESS OF SECONDARY MUSIC PROGRAMS IN TEXAS



Graduate Schools for Master Teachers

By ALVIN H. PROCTOR

A few months ago, the education editor of *The New York Times*, Mr. Benjamin Fine, rudely shattered whatever self-righteous complacency college educators might have had with some abrupt statements about the quality of people who teach American youth. There is disturbing evidence, he asserted, to prove that "superior high-school graduates shy away from teaching."¹

After summarizing evidence secured by the Educational Testing Service at Princeton and comments by three leading educators, Mr. Fine stated that "the fact remains that the teaching profession is not drawing upon the best minds of the land." He warned that the time had come to raise the "general caliber of people going into teaching."

Although it is undoubtedly true that some of the best minds do go into teaching, many of them do not. As Mr. Fine points out, evidence indicates that many of the "best" students study engineering, natural sciences, and mathematics. If this is true, the question is what to do about it. How can we attract the "best minds" to the teaching profession? And what can we do to improve the present product of teachers colleges and colleges of education?

If teachers received salaries comparable to other professions or enjoyed their social status, much of the problem of attracting superior students would be solved immediately. Hence, the more significant question is how we can most effectively utilize the people who do enter the profession. How can we produce better teachers with available material?

Although considerable progress has been made in the undergraduate education and training of teachers in recent decades, there is little evidence that most graduate schools have been equally alert and progressive. As we approach the time when all teachers will have bachelor's degrees as the minimum for certification, it becomes more important than ever that graduate programs for teachers be evaluated and revised.

Educational institutions are conservative, and inertia is more potent in graduate schools than elsewhere. Consequently they change but little as the decades pass and tend to defend fiercely

1. *New York Times*, February 1, 1953.

their historic philosophy, objectives, and curricula. Because teachers colleges have been highly imitative of the universities, they have had much the same philosophy, objectives, and curricula for graduate schools and have been reluctant to change. Evaluation of graduate study for public school teachers leads one to reach some rather provocative, although tentative, conclusions.

The graduate faculty for the master's degree in many teachers colleges, especially in the Middlewest equals that of many state universities, and their standards for the traditional degree are equally high. But the important question is whether the traditional master's degree significantly increases "the general caliber" of those teachers who obtain it. The traditional master's degree does confer a little more prestige, a little more security, and even a little more pay, but is it actually what it purports to be when awarded to public school teachers? Does it really signify achievement of that standard of excellence as a *master teacher* for which we should strive? Or does it represent research achievement which is insufficient for public school needs?

What is meant by "master teacher" from the viewpoint of the public schools? He is not a research specialist, nor is he likely to be a master teacher if he is the product of those graduate schools which concentrate chiefly on potential candidates for the doctorate. Neither is he a graduate school time-server who spends a requisite number of weeks under the sheltering label of "graduate student" with little stress on excellence but with considerable attention to inconsequential research on some minute topic.

On the contrary, he should be a teacher who, because of his graduate program, becomes a better educated and more cultured person in general, whose teaching skills are sharpened and extended, and who has that experience in public teaching which should be characteristic of master teachers. As excellent as it may be in the traditional sense, it is doubtful that the average graduate program for teachers is designed to educate such teachers.

The successful candidate for the degree of master teacher should become a better educated and more cultured person, devoted to that "love of excellence" which a noted Canadian educator said should be the first aim of education.² He should increase the depth and breadth of his knowledge in a particular area of teaching. As a graduate student seeks to become a master teacher, he should deepen his

2. Sir Richard Livingstone, "The Meaning of Civilization," *Atlantic*, CXCI (March, 1953), 43.

understanding of youth and increase his skill in the classroom. He should increase his knowledge and understanding of the local, national, and world community so that he can utilize that knowledge in his teaching, be a more effective citizen, and work to improve them. Finally, he should steadily strengthen his moral and ethical ideals through knowledge and understanding.

The chief deficiency in the average graduate program, if the objective is to produce master teachers, is narrowness and rigidity. On the one hand, little or no attention is paid to improving skill in teaching methods. On the other, it over-stresses methodology or concentrates on turning out potential administrators. The one program is as inappropriate for producing master teachers as the other.

Master teachers can best be produced by the proper union of academic learning, professional training, and teaching experience, which are the result of the personal initiative of the teacher and which are shaped and taught by the campus classroom and by experience in the public schools. No one of these three can produce a master teacher, and it is extremely doubtful whether any two of them can. Academic learning without training in the skills of teaching inevitably results in dull, instructor-centered teaching. Technical skill without learning produces the motions of teaching without the actuality; and both without the third ingredient, experience, produces a person lacking the accumulated wisdom, the understanding based on realism, and the matured personality which are characteristic of a master teacher.

Teachers should be the best educated people in the community but sometimes they are not. This is frequently true when they are compared with those who have liberal arts degrees, for the semester hours devoted to learning how to teach in the average undergraduate teachers program requires the sacrifice of one semester or more of "academic" study. The master teacher should correct this deficiency in his graduate program, for every public school teacher should be a well-educated, cultured person. The rigidity of departmental lines should be relaxed to plan programs which are designed not only to broaden and deepen knowledge and learning but also to remedy deficiencies revealed by experience. Moreover, the research-type graduate program generally precludes other types of learning such as directed travel or community experience.

One who earns a degree as a master teacher should receive it only after having teaching experience in the public schools, followed by advanced training in the art and skill of teaching. Perhaps a