INFORMATION TO USERS

This reproduction was made from a copy of a document sent to us for microfilming. While the most advanced technology has been used to photograph and reproduce this document, the quality of the reproduction is heavily dependent upon the quality of the material submitted.

The following explanation of techniques is provided to help clarify markings or notations which may appear on this reproduction.

1. The sign or "target" for pages apparently lacking from the document photographed is "Missing Page(s)". If it was possible to obtain the missing page(s) or section, they are spliced into the film along with adjacent pages. This may have necessitated cutting through an image and duplicating adjacent pages to assure complete continuity.

2. When an image on the film is obliterated with a round black mark, it is an indication of either blurred copy because of movement during exposure, duplicate copy, or copyrighted materials that should not have been filmed. For blurred pages, a good image of the page can be found in the adjacent frame. If copyrighted materials were deleted, a target note will appear listing the pages in the adjacent frame.

3. When a map, drawing or chart, etc., is part of the material being photographed, a definite method of "sectioning" the material has been followed. It is customary to begin filming at the upper left hand corner of a large sheet and to continue from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. If necessary, sectioning is continued again—beginning below the first row and continuing on until complete.

4. For illustrations that cannot be satisfactorily reproduced by xerographic means, photographic prints can be purchased at additional cost and inserted into your xerographic copy. These prints are available upon request from the Dissertations Customer Services Department.

5. Some pages in any document may have indistinct print. In all cases the best available copy has been filmed.
PLEASE NOTE:

In all cases this material has been filmed in the best possible way from the available copy. Problems encountered with this document have been identified here with a check mark √.

1. Glossy photographs or pages ______
2. Colored illustrations, paper or print ______
3. Photographs with dark background ______
4. Illustrations are poor copy ______
5. Pages with black marks, not original copy ______
6. Print shows through as there is text on both sides of page ______
7. Indistinct, broken or small print on several pages ______
8. Print exceeds margin requirements ______
9. Tightly bound copy with print lost in spine ______
10. Computer printout pages with indistinct print ______
11. Page(s) ______ lacking when material received, and not available from school or author.
12. Page(s) ______ 235 seem to be missing in numbering only as text follows.
13. Two pages numbered ___________. Text follows.
14. Curling and wrinkled pages ______
15. Other__________________________________________________________

University Microfilms International
TOWARD A THEORETICAL BASE FOR GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULAR DESIGN

DISSERATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for The Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University by

Craig Alan Kridel, B.G.S., M.A.

* * * * * *

The Ohio State University
1980

Reading Committee:
Paul R. Klohr
Robert F. Rodgers
Robert B. Sutton

Approved By

Paul R. Klohr
Adviser
Faculty of Educational Foundations and Research
To

Paul R. Klohr, Gentleman
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank my committee, Paul R. Klohr, adviser, Robert B. Sutton and Robert F. Rodgers, for their support and counsel during my dissertation studies. I am also grateful to my University professors for the continued interest they have taken in my work: Professors P.L. Smith, Charles Galloway, Angelika Gerbes, Ross Mooney, Elsie Alberty and John Champlin.

Norman Cousins, Maxine Greene, Harold Taylor, Lewis Harris and Theodore Brameld have been most gracious with their time. Their encouragement and understanding is greatly appreciated.

My colleagues, Paul Shaker, John T. Holton, Robert V. Bullough and Nicolae Sacalis, have greatly influenced my conceptions of liberal education. Each has acted as friend; each has served as teacher.

Others who have been especially helpful during my dissertation research are Susan Zimmer Vogel, Ronald Voogt, Benjamin Peck, Steven Silverstein, Susan Sarwark, Sharon Lakey and Michael Olivas. In addition to exemplifying the "scholar at work," these individuals continue to renew my faith in the importance of a general education.

I would not be writing acknowledgments to a completed dissertation if it were not for Kenneth Wollitz. Through his presence I have been "struck," "touched," "awoken" and "inspired."

And lastly, to Johann Gutenberg, for without his...
VITA

J u l y 31,
1973

1 9 5 1 ....................................Bo r n ;

........................................................

Col umbus ,

Ohi o

B . G . S . , Ohi o U n i v e r s i t y ,
A t h e n s , Ohi o

1974- 1 9 7 6 ..............................................A d m i n i s t r a t i v e A s s o c i a t e ,
C o l l e g e o f A r t s and S c i e n c e s
Honor P r o g r a m , S t u d e n t P e r ­
s o n n e l Ass i s t a n t s h i p P r o g r a m,
The Ohi o S t a t e U n i v e r s i t y ,
Co l u mb u s , Ohi o
1 9 . 7 6 ........................................................M. A. , The Ohi o S t a t e U n i v e r ­
s i t y , Co l u mb u s , Ohi o
1976- 1 9 7 9 ..............................................T e a c h i n g A s s o c i a t e , F a c u l t y
o f C u r r i c u l u m and F o u n d a t i o n s ,
The Ohi o S t a t e U n i v e r s i t y ,
Co l u mb u s , Ohi o
,,1 979- 1 9 8 0 ..............................................P r e s i d e n t i a l F e l l o w , The
G r a d u a t e S c h o o l , The Ohi o
State University
PUBLICATIONS
"The T h e o r y and P r a c t i c e o f T h e o d o r e B r a m e l d ' s ' D e f e n s i b l e
Partiality':
A Mid-Century ' R e s o l u t i o n ' to t h e I m p o s i t i o n
C o n t r o v e r s y , " J o u r n a l o f t h e Mid-west H i s t o r y of E d u c a t i o n
S o c i e t y , f i f t h e d i t i o n , Aut umn, 1976.
" T h e o d o r e B r a m e l d ' s ' F l o o d wo o d P r o j e c t ' , " The C u t t i n g E d g e ,
Journal of the Socie ty f o r Educational R e c o n st r uc t io n ,
Vol ume 9, Number 2, W i n t e r , 1977.
" T h e o d o r e B r a m e l d ' s Fl oodwood P r o j e c t :
A De s i g n f o r
A m e r i c a , " E d u c a t i o n a l R e c o n s t r u c t i o n i s m , F r a n k A. S t o n e ,
editor.
( S t o r r s , Conn. :
Varousia P r e s s , 1978).


VITA (continued)


Paper Presentations


1979 "General Education: An Antidote to the Patchwork Curriculum," Association for Supervision and
VITA (continued)


FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Curriculum Theory

Studies in Curriculum. Professor Paul R. Klohr, advisor; Professors Charles Galloway and Elsie Alberty


Studies in Psychology and Student Personnel Services. Professor Robert Rodgers

Studies in Dance History. Professor Angelika Gerbes
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Content Themes in the General Curriculum Development Process</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background and Setting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem and Underlying Assumptions of the Research</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures of the Study</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Report</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THREE HISTORICAL PARADIGMS OF GENERAL EDUCATION</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th Century Conceptions of English Colleges and German Universities</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Education at Columbia College</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Chicago Experiment</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed Curricular Reform at Harvard</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. CONTEMPORARY EFFORTS TO REFORM GENERAL EDUCATION: THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE DESIGN REALM</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 1978 Harvard Core Curriculum</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Carnegie Missions Proposal</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell's Reformation Proposal</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold Taylor's Philosophy</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenix's Realms of Meaning</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Rational Claim: King and Brownell</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 1979 Bard Conference</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. PERSISTENT DESIGN DILEMMAS AND AN EMERGING THEORETICAL BASE</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Depth vs. Breadth Dilemma</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CONTENTS (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IV. (continued)</td>
<td>The Balance Dilemma</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Utility Dilemma</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Realistic Expectations Dilemma</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sources for an Alternative Theory</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Basic Dimensions of an Alternative Theory</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Reformation of the Educative Process</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content Themes in Curriculum Design</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONTENT THEMES: A TRANSLATION OF THEORY AND PRACTICE</td>
<td></td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cousins' Background and Education</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>His Professional Career</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Saturday Review Years</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cousins' Philosophy and Views on Education</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Identification of Content Themes</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Function of Content Themes</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. GENERALIZATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td></td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIXES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Exerpts from Report of Student Council Committee on Education, June 12, 1939, Harvard</td>
<td>238</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The Use of Festivals in General Education Curricula</td>
<td>251</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. &quot;Is It Possible to Be an Optimist?&quot;</td>
<td>261</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td></td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background and Setting

General education is a term that symbolizes a current groundswell in American colleges and universities. The words themselves are not new. They have appeared frequently in the history of education, so much so, that the casual observer is likely to comment that he sees no reason why there should be so much concern over the concept at the present time. Have not the schools always been concerned with general education?

This observation, made by Alvin C. Eurich over forty years ago, underscores the fact that general education has been a persistent concern. Throughout the history of American education it has been examined, reexamined and debated. The late 1970's was no exception. Fresh and widespread interest had been generated by such events as the release of the 1978 Harvard University's General Education Core Proposal. Publications such as Time, Newsweek, Harpers and Saturday Review recognized the importance of the issue to the public at large and the problems it presented both to secondary schools and to higher education as these institutions moved into the decade of the 1980's.

Yet there persists a paradox. While there is this evidence of continued concern for general education, the
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching issued a report in 1977 in which it called general education a "disaster area" which has been "losing ground for more than 100 years."^2

Clearly, the Carnegie Commission was describing "what is" rather than "what ought to be." Education as a field of study and curriculum as a subfield within it ought really to rest on a more substantial theory base than simply descriptions, however highly refined, of what seems possible at any one time. But an overview of the state of the field of education and, in turn, curriculum proposals for the redesign of higher education are lacking any such theory base.

There are many factors which have prevented the development of a stronger theoretical base for general education. The historian Lawrence Cremin, in his assessment of the situation, is critical of the philosophers and, more particularly, philosophers of education. He urged them to return to their traditional role of working with fundamental questions of value and beliefs. Given this relationship between curriculum theory and philosophy, Cremin then points to the failure of philosophers to provide better foundations for education:

Philosophers today seem to have turned away from such questions, thinking, perhaps, that their historic responsibility to ask them carries a corresponding obligation to come up
with timeless answers. I for one would hope they return to the charge, for if they do not others will, only less thoughtfully, less systematically, and less responsibly.4

But philosophers are not solely responsible. The entire society, especially since the end of World War II, has been caught up in a technological rationality that has often been confused with science. Raymond Callahan, in his study of the "cult of efficiency," has identified some of the most basic historical antecedents of this perspective in the field of education. The great general systems theorist, a scientific theorizer in the best sense of that term, Ludwig von Bertalanffy was concerned that this overly technological societal press might distort his basic theory.5 From such a pseudo-scientific perspective, individuals and their education are degraded in many ways. This distortion would take the form of narrow, analytic framework which focuses on fragmentation rather than integration.

Perhaps the most severe critic of this pervasive influence is Jacques Ellul, the French scholar of the history of law and social history. In his books The Technological Society and the Political Illusion, he asserts that technology has become autonomous and is taking over the traditional values of society and subverting and suppressing them in ways that render all non-technical differences
merely appearances. Indeed, Ellul is pessimistic that there is no longer an alternative open to individuals.

An increasing number of scholars who study the relationship between schooling and society and the influence this relationship has on curriculum are known as the Revisionists. Individuals in this group such as Joel Spring, Michael B. Katz, and Clarence Karier, tend to make a Marxian analysis of the relationship. In effect, they assert that schooling, even higher education, reflects the oppressive role a capitalistic society must take towards its citizens and especially its youth. Critics such as Ivan Illich and his mentor, Paulo Freire, call for a complete de-schooling of society, claiming that there can be no effective institutional reform in a basically oppressive society.

Others in the humanist tradition, such as Lewis Mumford, Norman Cousins, and Kenneth Boulding, are more optimistic about the future of society and humans in it but, nevertheless, are concerned about what has happened to an integrated view of the world. This humanistic perspective translates into their views on education and especially the liberalizing aspects of education. Boulding, for example, sees science and technology as but a subculture among many subcultures. In view of this, he proposes an organic theory of knowledge as a base for education.6
Yet another factor that impinges on the problem of providing a more adequate general education is the so-called knowledge explosion. Bell commented on this phenomenon by calling attention to Derek Price's analysis of the exponential growth of knowledge in Great Britain.

This overview sketches some aspects of the general social setting for the investigation. An analysis of current theory and applied efforts for coping more effectively with general education at the college and university levels in this social context reveals that direction comes from two rather distinct sources.

One is the traditional humanist perspective—the academician who seeks to extend or redefine the concept of the "liberal arts" and its assumed liberalizing effect on students. Such individuals draw upon an extensive body of literature in the field of higher education, material that explicates the values of a liberalizing education. Exemplars of this perspective are the 1946 Harvard Report, General Education in a Free Society, Daniel Bell's The Reforming of General Education and Charles Wegner's Liberal Education and the Modern University.

The second perspective is more often that of administrators who approach the problem of general education from a budgetary, programmatic base. This orientation tends to rest on economic underpinnings. Reports characteristic of
this are full of charts, graphs, and lists of proposed behavioral changes. The recently released Carnegie Commission Report, Missions of the College Curriculum, is a case in point. Others could be cited for during the past decade systems management approaches have influenced operations in all levels of education as have also technological skills.

General education curriculum reform developing from these two dominant perspectives has failed to give adequate attention to the problem of effective curriculum design. The prevailing tendency within the first perspective has been to produce persuasive statements of need for general education and often eloquent statements of purpose. The second perspective has, more often than not, produced rearrangements of course offerings rather than a thoroughgoing redesign. As a consequence, the problem of effective design persists. Moreover, the matter of an adequate rationale, or theory, to support such proposals is missing both in general education curriculum theory and practice.

Given this situation, this research is undertaken within the design realm of general education theory. Curriculum design is the pattern of relationships which exist among the elements that give structure to a curriculum. The elements of curriculum design can be identified and described as can the patterns of relationship. Efforts to
attend to these aspects of curriculum should rest on a sound theoretical base.

Other related aspects of curriculum reform such as the formulation of purposes, the development process itself, the preparation of teaching resources, the implementation of curricular change in an institutional setting, and the evaluation of curricular innovations are all treated in this research only insofar as they relate to the design problem. Yet, clearly, a total plan for curriculum reform must attend to each of these concerns.

To understand more fully the nature of the study with its focus on the nature of curriculum design, attention must be given to what the term general education, itself, has come to mean. Like many concepts in the field of education, it has no universal definition. This lack of consensus adds to the problems of generating more effective general education programs. The first known historical reference to the term appears in an 1829 article in the North American Review written by A. S. Packard of Bowdoin College:

Our colleges are designed to give youth a general education, classical, literary, and scientific, as comprehensive as an education can well be, which is professedly preparatory alike for all the professions. They afford the means of instruction in all the branches, with which it is desirable for a youth to have a general acquaintance before directing his
attention to a particular course of study, while professional studies are pursued at separate institutions, the law, divinity, and medical schools dispersed over the land.

From this early version of the term, it is possible to trace the history of its changes in meaning to the end of World War I. Russell Thomas, in The Search for Common Learning, notes that the terms "general education," "general studies," and "general training" all originally referred to that part of the curriculum which constituted the common core of the disciplines considered to be essential to all liberally-educated individuals.

Even as early as the end of the 19th Century, the concept of a common core was being eroded by increasing vocational and professional specifications resulting in courses not designed to serve a common cultural need. In view of this development, Thomas asserts that general education came to be associated more fully with attempts to "experiment" with curricular reorganization in order to achieve (or to retain) the common learnings outcomes that were originally intended in liberal education.

From this brief account of its historical development, some of the elements that continue to cause confusion and prevent a clear definition of the term general education are obvious. Over time, it has meant the broad, liberalizing common core of the curriculum. But it has also
taken on the meaning of curricular experimentation to achieve such intended ends.

The difficulty in defining the term is further complicated by the fact that, typical of many curricular concepts that exist largely at the level of rhetoric rather than practice, general education has often been used as simply a set of administrative arrangements. An example of this use is found in the orientation course movement which came into practice in many institutions following World War I. These programs were—and in some cases still are—known as general education.

Fitts and Swift give a comprehensive review of these efforts. They found that over 102 general orientation courses were being offered in 1926. These offerings can be categorized into three types: Type I, adjustment to college life, helping the students adjust to the "new mental and social environment of college life"; Type II, introduction to methods of thinking and study; Type III, adjustment to the social and intellectual world.

Traces of these three types are found in the programs which evolved at Columbia, Chicago, Stanford, Dartmouth, Yale and Princeton, as well as in many other institutions engaged in some form of curriculum reform.
Statement of the Problem and
Underlying Assumptions of the
Research

The generation of alternative design elements for
general education curricula in higher education is the focus
of this study.

An examination of current efforts to theorize about
the nature of general education at the college and university levels reveals a widespread lack of understanding of
(1) the history of the problem, and (2) warranted knowledge
in the field of curriculum theory, especially with respect
to the matter of curriculum design. Indeed, the claim that
curriculum development in higher education is both ahistorical and atheoretical is well grounded.

This investigation, then, contributes to a more
adequate knowledge base to counteract this and similar
assessments of the state of the field in 1980. Its contribu-
tion rests on an explication of and a drawing upon an
emerging field of curriculum theory which has not yet been
tapped in current efforts to redesign general education.
The resulting synthesis furthers specialized knowledge
about the curriculum design aspect of general education.

There have been repeated calls for a more adequate
theoretical framework for curriculum development. Curri-
culum as a field of study emerged in most institutions in
the 1930's. An examination of the reviews of educational
research published by the American Educational Research Association reveals the state of the field and supports the effort made to generate an alternative theoretical base, the focus of this study.

University departments of curriculum have tended to be collections of individuals with a wide range of professional interests and competencies ranging, for example, from the teaching of beginning reading techniques to policy studies in higher education. A common knowledge base with which to engage in meaningful professional discourse about curriculum problems at any level has been lacking.

We find John Goodlad, dean of the Graduate School of Education, University of California, Los Angeles, and a recognized authority in the field of curriculum, in his 1960 AERA review of the field calling for "theoretical constructs" to give direction to curriculum development. Such development was then expanding greatly at the national level, in part as a result of massive federal infusion of funds following the launching of the Russian satellite and the subsequent concern that American education might be falling behind in many areas. Goodlad pointed out in his review of the preceding ten years that many of the persistent curriculum questions were "ought" questions not amenable to empirical research as it was then perceived.
If one examines the remaining four chapters of the review that year, each centering on such topics as "Forces Influencing the Curriculum," "Components of the Curriculum," "Teaching," and "Administrative Structure and Processes," there is little, if any, evidence of the theory Goodlad seeks. The studies reported and the innovations described tend to be specific to particular situations and lacking in conscious attempts to examine underlying basic assumptions. In a very real sense, they warrant Herbert Kliebard's assessment that the field is both ahistorical and atheoretical.12

Each of the issues of the American Educational Research Association Review which centered on curriculum in the three-year cycles which followed were essentially the same. We find Goodlad, again in 1969, assessing the state of the field by asserting that curriculum researchers are "hung up" on limited methodologies used by mainstream psychologists.13 And later in the same issue, he observed that the then newly-established National Academy of Education, for which there were great expectations, had proposed that there be "chains of inquiry" developed in educational studies. Goodlad found only a "bare cupboard" with respect to such inquiry in curriculum.14

But examining only the reviews of research in curriculum does not give a full picture. During the same
decade, AERA also published in three-year cycles reviews of the "foundations" field. Inasmuch as curriculum is not well defined and since it clearly draws on foundations of education, one must examine what was taking place in these areas as well. A typical foundations review dealt with such topics as history, philosophy, sociology and anthropology of education. Comparative education was also included as were such topics as "social policy" and "professional organizations." What took place in these fields is directly related to our understanding of the present state of the curriculum field, the context for this investigation.

Philosophy of education, for example, during that period was dominated by the analytic movement. The major efforts of the analysts were centered on articulating and criticizing the logical organization of knowledge and the logical principles involved in cognitive claims. Israel Scheffler's writing stands as a good example of this work. And most of the philosophers in England were also working within this paradigm of "doing philosophy." Developments in philosophy, psychology and social theory taking place in England were also working within this paradigm of "doing philosophy." Developments in philosophy, psychology and social theory taking place in continental Europe were largely ignored or bypassed in this effort to introduce
rigor into the foundations field. In 1980, within many departments and schools of education, individuals still define the foundations field in this limited way despite the fact that professional departments of philosophy and psychology within the larger institutions of higher education have recognized the need for a wide range of modes of inquiry. The statements made by Lawrence Cremin and reported earlier in this chapter underscore the nature of the problem and recognize the need for a change in the perceptions of educational foundations fields.

Special note should be made of one significant undertaking in this direction. The National Society for the study of Education Yearbook is scheduled to appear in 1981 to highlight major developments in the philosophy of education since mid-century. The prospectus for this publication, edited by Jonas Soltis,16 echoes some of the advice of Cremin concerning the larger role of philosophers of education. Instead of defining that field exclusively in terms of philosophical analysis, he reports that complex problems of education which cut across the several subfields of philosophy such as ethics, logic, aesthetics, philosophy of science and so forth, will be examined. As an illustration, he quotes from the initial draft of one of the contributors who deals with the philosophical context of curriculum theory:
In choosing curricular content and objectives we must make value judgments about our educational purpose and we set these, in turn, in relation to the moral, social and political order we believe to be desirable . . . . The epistemological fallacy encourages philosophers and educators to take the structure of knowledge and run. It fosters the illusion that curriculum can be determined without their asking questions about the good life and good society. Nothing could be further from the truth.17

Clearly, this conception of one component of a foundational field for curriculum theorizing sets a direction quite different from the prevailing conventional wisdom of philosophy of education in the 1960's and 1970's.

One curriculum theorist, more than any other, adumbrated this shift in his 1971 review of the curriculum field, James B. Macdonald. By 1971, the AERA had discontinued its three-year reviews and had shifted to a reporting of educational research in its journal and in a series of books titled Reviews. In the journal that year, Macdonald prepared a review of the state of the field of curriculum theory which contrasted sharply with the conventional analyses.18 This was a significant shift. Until then, observers had analyzed what was going on in the theory realm largely in terms of content: i.e., they sought to isolate various categories of content. These tended to vary little from year to year. Macdonald, in contrast, proposed a functional analysis in terms of modes of inquiry being used regardless of the nature of the content.
He identified three groups at work. One group, the largest, he saw as individuals concerned with developing theory as guidelines for applied curriculum development. Their work was basically practice oriented. Others, a much smaller group, he noted, followed more fully traditional empirical research procedures, validating their efforts with the traditional criteria of scientific inquiry. An even smaller number of individuals, he asserted, were concerned with theorizing as a creative intellectual task not tied either to empirical testing or to prescriptive guides for practice. This alternative analysis of the curriculum field proved to be much more significant than just an insightful way of categorizing extant curriculum development activities. It foreshadowed what some observers have viewed as a distinct paradigm shift underway in the curriculum field.

Chapter IV of this study details further efforts of a number of individuals who have been involved in this shift in the nature of curriculum theorizing. The point to be made in this sketch of the context of this investigation is that this researcher situates himself in the emerging theoretical framework of this movement. In effect, this means that the focus of the research—namely, the generation of an alternative theoretical base for curriculum design elements for general education curricula in higher
education and the creation of prototypical elements, themselves--is clearly based upon a number of value-laden assumptions.

It is assumed that (1) the evolving alternative mode of curriculum theorizing has validity for the redesign of general education curricula at college and university levels; (2) an analysis and critique of selected historical efforts to redesign general education will serve to identify critical problems and issues relevant to contemporary proposals and practical curriculum reform projects; (3) a value perspective that draws from efforts that attempt to synthesize foundational resources from philosophy, psychology and social theory can serve as an effective base for the generation of alternative curriculum theory and, in turn, curriculum design elements; (4) a humanistic, or third force, psychology provides a valid base for describing and understanding the critical processes implicit in both the curriculum development processes and their translation into teaching-learning operations in institutional settings; (5) an analysis of the life and views of a humanist-educator can serve as one basic resource for demonstrating how to identify curriculum design elements for general education; (6) the process demonstrated in the identification of curriculum design elements can be generalized to serve as an alternative
theory base to give needed structure to practical curriculum development efforts.

The research undertaken here rests on these six assumptions and on the values implicit in the mode of curriculum inquiry identified by Macdonald and further extended and refined by individuals in a group of curriculum theorists who have come to be known in curriculum literature as the Reconceptualists.

To move the study from solely a theory-generating level toward that of application of general education programs in institutional settings, the investigator makes a number of middle-range projections—the development of "bridges," so to speak, between theory and practice. In this effort he meets one of the most crucial needs of research in the curriculum design realm, namely, the need to make the research usable. One international critic of the curriculum field, David Jenkins, has described it as "gritty and ragged around the edges"—not well-defined and lacking the "settled apparatus" of other disciplines in education and the social sciences.

This study is viewed as an effort to help create "settled apparatus," or conceptual structure, for translating theory into practice in the realm of general education curriculum design. It involves, therefore, both the generation of more adequate theory for such structure and the establishment of prototypical curriculum design elements.
Procedure of the Study

This study employs an approach commonly referred to in research literature as an historical-philosophical mode of inquiry. The intent is to generate a more adequate theoretical base for the design elements in the general education component of curriculum in higher education. The effort, therefore, involves both analysis and synthesis. Data from both literature and from more direct primary sources are used in this process. Tapping the primary sources has involved personal interviews, extensive correspondence, on-site visits to archives, and direct participation in conferences and symposia dealing with the problem under investigation.

From the basic conceptual structure which is generated from these sources, certain middle-range projects are made. Such projections are the basic elements of curriculum design in any curriculum development effort. It should be noted that the design, itself, is but one component of a total curriculum reform undertaking. Prototypical design elements that constitute such projects function as one "feasibility check" on proposed curriculum theory. A critical criterion is: do they raise "good" questions, identify important problems and issues in the curriculum design realm which can then be attended to by further empirical efforts in actual field situations?
The research follows what philosopher of social science Abraham Kaplan describes as the "pattern model" approach to inquiry. He asserts that this model may be especially effective in early stages of inquiry, and by implication, in fields such as the study of education and, in turn, curriculum--fields whose parameters are not clearly defined at the outset. The pattern model involves, in Kaplan's terms, a "reconstructed logic." In such a reconstruction, explanation is achieved when "something is so related to a set of other elements that together they constitute a unified system." 

In this investigation, we seek an alternative conceptual structure for explaining and understanding the curriculum design elements of general education. Conceptual structure in this case is equivalent to Kaplan's "unified system" or pattern model. He further explicates this theory-building effort by asserting:

Not all explanation consists in fitting something into a pattern already given. The task of explanation is often to find or create a suitable pattern. To find or create it, we need not always to obtain new data. The scientific achievement--especially in the formation of theories--often consists in discovering new significance in the old data, giving them significance by ordering them differently, making manifest a new pattern.

Explanation leading to understanding and, finally, to prediction involves providing what Kaplan calls a cognitive
map. Such a map, he writes in his advice to researchers, "tells us how things around us are laid out." With such a map, we must aim to fill in details and relate such details to other elements and fragments. Kaplan suggests that this process leads to new territories which require researchers to subject the map to continuous testing. In this mode of inquiry, the question arises: Can we have an adequate conceptual structure or theory if it does not give us control, i.e., if it does not guarantee prediction in the sense of natural science inquiry. Here Kaplan helps to clarify the nature of the relationship between explanation and prediction which is germane to this study:

In terms of the pattern model we may say that the pattern which provides the explanation does not uniquely determine its parts, so that a knowledge of the pattern as a whole and some of its parts does not always enable us to predict the others. The explanation still explains even though it leaves open a range of possibilities, so that which possibly is actualized is knowable only after the fact.

Clearly, curriculum theorizing and the translation of such theory into practice in institutional settings is of this order. This is to assert, therefore, that developing adequate conceptual structure which employs the pattern model is an appropriate mode of investigation.

The procedures of the study are made more explicit in the following specific steps taken:
1. A review, analysis and critique of selected literature of general education curriculum reform in higher education, selected to uncover the special problems and issues of curriculum design;

2. A review, analysis and critique of selected professional literature of curriculum theory with particular emphasis on implications for general education curriculum design;

3. The study of curriculum design developments in three historical paradigms of general education: Columbia, Chicago, and Harvard;

4. An analysis of contemporary proposals for the reform of general education;

5. The delineation of persistent general education curriculum design problems and issues, or dilemmas, that emerge from the investigation pursued in steps 1-4 above.

Note should be made of the fact that steps 1-4 above also involved personal interviews and tape recordings of their content, extensive correspondence, on-site visits to archives, and direct participation in symposia and conferences centered on the topic of general education curriculum design. Data from these sources were drawn upon in steps 5 and 6.

6. The formulation of a conceptual structure, or theory base, that attends to the curriculum design dilemma
identified in step 5 above.

7. The translation of selected aspects of the conceptual structure through a demonstration of the role of content themes as design elements. These prototypical themes are derived from an analysis of the life and work of the educator-humanist, Norman Cousins.

8. The identification of warranted generalizations from the study and the recommendations for further research.

Organization of the Report

This study is reported in a six-chapter dissertation as follows: Chapter I - Introduction to the Study; Chapter II - Three Historical Paradigms of General Education; Chapter III - Contemporary Efforts to Redesign General Education: Theory and Practice; Chapter IV - Persistent Design Dilemmas and an Emerging Theoretical Base; Chapter V - Content Themes: A Translation of Theory into Practice; Chapter VI - Generalizations and Recommendations. Following these chapters are a bibliography and appendices.
CHAPTER I FOOTNOTES


4 Ibid., p. 33.


8 A. S. Packard, "The Substance of Two Reports of the Faculty of Amherst College to the Board of Trustees," North American Review, vol. 28, 1829, p. 300.


14 Ibid., p. 370.


17 Ibid., pp. 229-30.


19 Ibid., p. 197.


22 Ibid., p. 333.

23 Ibid., p. 336.


CHAPTER II

THREE HISTORICAL PARADIGMS OF GENERAL EDUCATION

The history of curriculum reform in higher education is replete with the names of individuals who have made significant contributions to an understanding of curricular change at the college and university level, changes which often influenced the nature of general education within these institutions. Individuals such as Earl J. McGrath, who served as director of the Institute of Higher Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, is one such educator. As early as 1948, McGrath met with his colleagues in various disciplines at the State University of Iowa where he served as Dean of the College of Liberal Arts to prepare a volume which proposed new directions for general education within the liberal arts tradition. In later years at the Institute he edited a number of publications dealing with curricular innovations. And to name but one other educator who took as his domain of inquiry collegiate curricular innovations, there is the work of Lewis B. Mayhew.

In addition to the efforts of such individuals as McGrath and Mayhew, there are also accounts of actual experiments underway to redesign higher education in a wide range
range of institutions—from small so-called "progressive" institutions such as Antioch, Sarah Lawrence, and Bennington, to large land-grant universities like Meiklejohn's experiment at the University of Wisconsin and the General College experiment at the University of Minnesota.

Inasmuch as this research is concerned with the design aspects of general education curriculum theory and practice in contrast to the historical development of the general education movement as a whole, an analysis of several of the most paradigmatic examples of general education reform efforts that revealed special attention to the problems of design has served as a major source for identifying the persistent problems and issues that characterized such efforts.

A search of the literature of higher education supported Daniel Bell's finding regarding general education reform at Columbia, Chicago, and Harvard. He found that these three situations have provided models for general education in hundreds of colleges. Moreover, he asserts:

A history of their programs is essential not only to the understanding of the development of general education in the United States, but to the debate today about the future of the American college itself.3

An analysis of the general education reforms in these three paradigmatic cases reveals extensive data with regard to problems of design. The presentation of these cases and
the drawing out of the design dilemmas and the implications these have for an alternative theoretical base are presented in this chapter.

19th Century Conceptions of English Colleges and German Universities

Before an examination of the three schools is undertaken, an understanding of the educational setting, the context of late nineteenth century higher education, is vital. Throughout the eighteenth and the early and mid-nineteenth centuries, higher education was shaped and, in essence, defined by the religious liberal arts colleges. These institutions offered prescribed classical curricula which involved four years of study. This was a system of continuous moral and intellectual training which relied primarily on the study of Greek and Latin, basic mathematics, and the theological doctrine of the founding church group.

Students' conduct was closely supervised; the English in loco parentis was evident in the American college. Professors and college administrators all acted as substitute parents. In effect, the conception of higher education was based upon the English model, originally imported by the founders of Harvard who sought to copy the Cambridge college where most of them had been educated. The colonial college, unfortunately, did not have the wealth of the
English colleges; this, in turn, affected the instructional methods. Greater reliance upon classroom recitation instead of the more costly tutorial approach came to be the common pattern. By the mid- to late-nineteenth century, this pattern was taken as the model and copied by most of the denominational colleges and newly-established public colleges.

There are many accounts of the nature of nineteenth century recitation in these institutions. Important for this study is the recognition of the dominant mode of instruction and the accompanying expectations of the role of the college instructor:

Most recitations were conducted by tutors, the equivalent of the modern teaching assistant. Neither tutors nor professors were subject-matter specialists. Neither pursued original research. Their educational mission was not to expand the frontiers of knowledge or to train students to do so. Instead, they sought to transmit a cherished cultural heritage and in the process to train students to be diligent, obedient, fluent, and pious.4

This concept of education was prevalent during the late 19th century, the time period focused upon in the early periods of the paradigm cases examined in this phase of the investigation. As modern views of general education were evolving, the English model was placed in conflict with the German conception of higher education.
While the English model dominated the existing college structure in America, the German universities provided graduate training for most 19th century American academics. The German university, composed of four faculties, Law, Medicine, Divinity, and Philosophy, offered "vocational training" for the learned professions. A major transformation took place in the late 18th and 19th centuries, one that had significant implications for the historical development of general education curricula in the United States. In effect, the church-oriented disciplinarians who made up the so-called "lower faculty" became research specialists. The original conception of general education was "pushed down" into the gymnasia, and graduation from this institution became a prerequisite for university entrance. Jeffrey Blum makes this observation:

In the German universities there developed a conception of education that differed from the one embodied in the Gymnasium and the American denominational college. The effort to instill mental discipline by recitation and frequent examinations disappeared. The lecture continued to be an important mode of instruction, but its character changed. In seventeenth-century German universities, or in nineteenth-century American colleges, a professor was likely to read from a text and interpret it. Students copied down the information, memorized it, and repeated it in recitations. In nineteenth-century German universities, lectures were addressed primarily to questions of method; they were intended for students who would soon do research. No longer constrained within the
established classical curriculum, professors and students both had acquired the right to make new knowledge. Thus liberal learning, in the traditional sense of that term, faded from the university. Research and the generation of new knowledge became the major domain of the university. And in this sense, there was coherence in the German university education. The ability to create new knowledge, a characteristic highly prized by the faculty, became an objective the faculty attempted to fulfill in students.

When Americans began building their institutions of higher education, the large number of German-trained Americans and the advance of German science and technology justified the imitation of the German universities. The University of Chicago is an example of a transplantation of the German model. Columbia College illustrates yet another historical route to the achievement of university status. Jacques Barzun notes that Harvard's general education program proposal was the formal amalgamation of the German and English ideas into the distinctive American conception of general education. But from the early nineteenth century through the early twentieth century, tension between the conceptions of the German research university and the English liberal arts
college prevailed. They were polar opposites in the struggle to generate a fundamental conception of general education.

General Education at Columbia College

The origins of general education are as numerous as definitions of the term itself. Many view the 19th century exchange of articles between Huxley and Arnold as the seminal theoretical base. When general education aligns itself with "liberal education," then its origins stem from The Republic and Meno—or from the writings of Aristotle. But when one accepts a distinction between the two terms, Columbia becomes a pioneer in the field of general education.

A cursory review of the programs shows Columbia's history of curricular innovation: Contemporary Civilization (CC), Humanities, Honors-Colloquium; its Professional Plan; and more recently, the University Seminar and General Education Seminar. These courses and the ideas behind them have become symbols among members of the higher education community. One understands the righteous indignation felt by Trilling, Barzun, Bell and Buchler, as Harvard and Chicago announced their programs with no recognition of the work done at Columbia.
Columbia's program was at its highpoint, conceptually, in the late 1930's and early 1940's. The reformulation and re-establishment of general education programs common at the end of World War II had been in progress at Columbia College "experimentally" for almost twenty-five years and "actively and affirmatively" for more than a decade. In the 1940's Columbia was the "showplace" when the country was ready to look. Its twenty-five years of experimentation had resulted in the most comprehensive general education programs ever developed. Two year-long courses of Contemporary Civilization, together with Humanities A and B, and, although struggling for a unifying theme, two courses in Science—all formed the lower level general education program. The re-developed Colloquium on Important Books, originally John Erskine's General Honors course, was underway at the upper level. These successes merit special attention, but they also serve as case material which permits an examination of the problems confronting general education programs. Among such problems which will be discussed later are the inherent difficulties of staffing, space requirements, and student and faculty attitudes.

Daniel Bell speculates on the factors, "a curious mixture of parochial, socio-political, and philosophical motives," which led to the forming of general education at Columbia. From the history of the period, Bell describes
three "impulses" leading to the initial proposal, the 1917 request of John Erskine to set up a special course to read the great books. The three impulses: Columbia College's struggle against the German tradition of the university--favored by such individuals as Professor John W. Burgess and President Nicholas Murray Butler--a struggle being fought, often unsuccessfully, by colleges of arts throughout the country; the changing characteristics of the student body, particularly as the children of Jewish immigrants began to predominate intellectually; and the abandonment of a sterile classicism symbolized by the Latin and Greek entrance requirements--a classicism which aped the English model. From these forces Columbia College evolved, dedicated firmly to the tradition of the liberal arts rather than to professionalism. This is seen in the Contemporary Civilization and Humanities courses; both were geared to combat "cultural fragmentation" with "cultural coherence."

Thus not only was American university education in a state of flux from the dissonance between English and German ideals, but the basic conception of liberal education was being reformed as a new socio-economic student population entered undergraduate institutions. These three factors were clearly present in the rationale underlying the proposal for Erskine's Great Books course:
The intention in reading the "great books" was to inculcate in the student a humanistic rather than a professional orientation; to force him to confront a great work directly, rather than treat it with the awe reserved for a classic; and, in the contemporary jargon, "to acculturate" a student whose background and upbringing had excluded him from the "great traditions."

America's involvement in World War I caused Erskine's campaign for the new course to lie dormant. In 1919 permission was given to offer the course. The faculty limited enrollment to only those "honors" students in the junior and senior year; the Great Books course, which came to be known as General Honors, was offered the following fall. This served as a preamble for what was to develop.

The major event of 1919 for general education--indeed, what many view as the beginning of general education in the United States--was the creation of Contemporary Civilization. The origins of the course support what might be viewed as a reconciliation between the English and German university prototypes with their respective emphasis upon culture and scholarship. Reconciliation in this case led to a new synthesis in the forming of a uniquely American university, directed by the "spirit of Progressivism," which fully embodied in the ideal of public service "the preparation of young Americans for active lives of service."

... the universities in the United States achieved significant popular status during the years between the Spanish-American War and WWII when the spirit of what was called
Progressivism filled the land, a spirit which in one important manifestation revealed itself as a kind of middle-class sense of obligation, a readiness to bring American society to some new sense of its problems and its promises. The simultaneous spread of the Progressive spirit and of the university idea would of course tend to reinforce the service element of both.8

Two years earlier when Washington military leaders, having established the Student's Army Training Corps at Columbia and in colleges throughout the nation, asked the Columbia faculty to prepare a course in "War Issues," a committee headed by Frederick J. E. Woodbridge, Dean of the Graduate Faculties, accepted the task. A syllabus was submitted to Washington. Shortly thereafter the course was offered at Columbia and at all other Student Corps centers throughout the nation. While the War Issues course was being offered, involved Columbia faculty members were convinced that a course should be devoted to "Peace Issues."

Bell described the tensions that emerged from these two efforts in this way:

Thus the Erskine course on the "great books" and the Woodbridge course on War Issues shared in the ancestry of general education, both at Columbia and elsewhere. Yet the yoking of these two produced tensions and paradoxes that were not always evident to the practitioners to general education. The Erskine program, with its emphasis on the classics of Western thought, constituted, as Lionel Trilling has put it, "a fundamental criticism of American
democratic education," while the Contemporary Civilization course was an open and frank acknowledgment of the direct responsibility of the College to the stated democratic needs of society.9

What became the "highly respected grandparent of all the orientation courses," Contemporary Civilization attempted to present essential historical background so that students would have a better understanding of contemporary issues.

The course initially had the collaboration of professors from History, Philosophy, Economics, and Government. When the faculty, on January 20, 1919, resolved that "the requirement in Philosophy A and History A be replaced by a course in Contemporary Civilization," the identification of Contemporary Civilization as a philosophy and history survey was established. Actually, the course's organization revolved about three questions which, as intended, undercut any distinct affiliation with traditional disciplines. The interdisciplinary scope of these questions is evident: How have men made a living? How have they lived together? How have they interpreted the world they have lived in? In summing up the significance of this interdisciplinary approach, Justis Buchler stressed its contribution to an understanding of the importance of critical thinking and the interconnectedness of human issues.10
But all introductory courses run the risk of being seen as departmental offerings; Contemporary Civilization was no exception. The introduction of CC-B in 1929 even furthered the then flourishing belief that CC was an equivalent in subject matter content to the courses it replaced. In fact, CC-B did not replace a requirement but was instead an extension of the Lower College and original Contemporary Civilization concept. Buchler describes the causes of this distortion of the original idea. He asserts that the professors most directly involved were from the four departments previously mentioned. CC-A replaced requirements in History and Philosophy. At that time, perhaps due to unfamiliarity with the concept of general education, CC was seen as a survey course in History and Philosophy. CC-A naturally concentrated more heavily upon European thought. CC-B, with its content oriented toward "contemporary economic and political problems in the US," would inevitably be perceived as an economics and government offering. Combatting the stigma of survey and introductory courses, Professors Carman and Taylor describe the content and methods employed in Contemporary Civilization-B as follows:

Although the materials of the second year of the course fall traditionally within the special provinces of economics and government, the course does not attempt to teach the conventional concepts of economic and political
The method actually employed is that of analytical description of institutional affairs in their own terms and in terms which seem to present the most fruitful or provocative set of relationships among the various institutions which are studied.

The original intent of the Contemporary Civilization curriculum redesign effort was plagued also by the lack of appropriate course materials. Then, as now, major publishers prepared textbooks to serve as resources for traditional college courses in the recognized disciplines. As a consequence, the faculty members teaching in the new program were required to write their own materials.

With the success of CC and Erskine's Great Books course, it was inevitable that a complementary course in the humanities would be suggested. A course to parallel CC was proposed by the Committee on Instruction in 1931. The plan was debated for some time but, finally, on September 23, 1937, Humanities A was first offered to the students of Columbia through the collaboration of the departments of Philosophy, Latin and Greek, English, French, German, and Italian. For ten years, Humanities A dealt with the masterpieces of literature and philosophy, from Homer to the 19th century. Departments of Music and Fine Arts established Humanities B, an optional course, which covered the masterpieces of music and the plastic arts. Expanded from 2 to 3 hours in 1941, Humanities B became a required course for sophomores in 1947.
Although Humanities A replaced an Introduction to English Literature course, as did CC with History and Philosophy, it was not to be regarded as the analogue of English. As Buchler notes, "The question was not, of course, whether one requirement 'did' what another was supposed to do. It was whether the student should be grounded in a narrow or in a broad and human conception of literature, and whether he should base his college studies on initial contact with ideas or on an acquaintance with canons and forms." 13

Humanities courses gave rise, once again, to typical criticism of general education: "superficiality," "impossible to acquire competent staff," "impossible to administer," "at best, course perfunctory and excessively factual in character." But as Buchler states, "the surest way to defeat the growth and cripple the performance of students is to underestimate their capacities. The original staff of Humanities A . . . taught the course because of positive faith in the capacities of students." 14

It is important to note here the contrast between the intent and the teaching procedures of Contemporary Civilization and the Humanities course. The following excerpt from a lengthy discussion of these differences emphasizes both the commonness and the contrast. These observations are from a personal memoir of Professor
Upjohn who was directly involved in the innovation:

The two years of Humanities have this in common, that they are concerned primarily with the human product as product. And here they differ significantly from the approach of the Contemporary Civilization sequence. The novel, the philosophic structure, the temple, or the choral masterpiece are seen in Humanities as qualitative constructs, as unitary wholes bearing human value. Although their historical or analytical ramifications are by no means irrelevant, neither are these in the main focus of attention. In C.C., on the other hand, the reading is important primarily for its implications, whether conceptual or historical. It is for this reason that in C.C. the sources can function as selections. Men like Aquinas, Locke, Marx, or Freud are read, not as producers of individual systems, but in the context of their age, of history, and of contemporary viewpoints: the ideas they are called upon to express are in C.C. appropriated, criticized, appraised for their bearing on specific issues.

Professor Upjohn stressed the "overlapping" in the content of the courses and the way the different fields supported each other. These reflections of a professor involved in curriculum reform in general education are especially significant in that the issues they suggest arise time and again throughout the history of efforts to design more adequate programs of general education.

With successful programs functioning in the social sciences and humanities, thoughts turned towards the natural sciences. In 1933, Hawkes appointed a faculty committee to study the possibility of a comparable offering. A History of Science course, prepared through faculty
collaboration, had been offered to sophomores from as early as 1923. "But the course was in no way analogous to CC or General Honors, and did not provide the "third leg" of the "foundational tripod"—social science, humanities, natural science. A two-year course, Science A and B, prepared by the committee, was offered in 1934 as an optional requirement for students not aiming at professional scientific study. It ran until 1941, when the University's scientific facilities were diverted to the war effort. Proving to be less successful as a general education component, the study of a general science course was renewed in 1945.17

Reported in the Committee report, A College Program in Action, Buchler comments on this development as follows:

But so formidable did the committee (another 1948 committee) find the difficulties that had been discerned by the previous committee, that it felt forced to reject the latter's two outstanding recommendations, one of which would have organized it to be taught in its entirety by each member of the designated staff. The reality of the pre-professional requirements, the present highly traditionalized structure of science departments, and the apaucity of available personnel for so rigorous a job of teaching seemed to make the implementation of such recommendations remote, however desirable they might be under ideal conditions. The committee felt that a compartmentalized course taught by men of proved capacity was preferable to a highly unified course that threatened to be oversimple in the manner of the widespread survey of science.18
Buchler saw the difficulty in establishing "a systematic exposition of scientific matter for nonscientists" resting principally in the dominance of the "departments" within the University organization. The CC and Humanities depended upon voluntary departmental collaboration. This relationship developed first from the social science department, then the humanities, and not at all in the natural science departments. There is every evidence that the science departments continued to view the student as a specialist throughout his college career. A science program comparable to Contemporary Civilization and Humanities would call for a reworking of the traditional views of the several subfields within the science discipline. Such a reconceptualization did not develop.

Buchler's classic article, "Reconstruction in Liberal Arts," states that the conception of Columbia College and its undergirding conception of foundational education would be "incomplete and even distorted" without a clear recognition of three supporting systems within that institutional setting--the placement examination, the advisory system, and the professional option, or what became known as the Columbia Plan.

The main idea behind the placement examination was to find the student's appropriate level of study. The examinations were administered after a student was admitted to
the College. The increasingly diverse background of the student (during Dean Hawkes' tenure) seemingly mandated such an administrative tool. A student's placement exams prevented him from enrolling in courses in which prerequisite study was assumed to have been completed in secondary schools. Also, the examinations prevented a student from "starting at too low a level and thereby fruitlessly duplicating elementary study."

The men who advised in the planned advisory system were those individuals who actually knew the students and observed them in the classroom. Involvement of the faculty rather than a specialized guidance staff was a significant characteristic of the Columbia advisory system. Needless to say, increasing specialization in institutions of higher education have all but eliminated this kind of advising of students. The faculty advisors plan was inaugurated in 1904--"growing companionship and intimacy" between students and faculty and the faculty's faith in student's capabilities which had characterized much of the Columbia approach were demonstrated in this effort. There is no question but that it served as a major support system for the general education redesign in that institution.

In 1905, the plan of "professional option"--the Columbia Plan, was initiated. With three years of college
coursework a student could enroll in one of the university's professional schools (with the School of Law being the exception) and after the completion of the first year of professional training, receive an AB degree from the college. President Butler endorsed this move. He stated: "Any culture that is worthy of the name and any efficiency that is worth having will be increased, not diminished, by bringing to an end the idling and dawdling that now characterizes so much of American higher education." Buchler points out that when first introduced, the plan effectively encouraged students to take an additional year of work in the liberal arts, for in the early 20th century professional schools only required two years of college. But as four years became the normal length of pre-professional study, the plan paradoxically became an incentive for the student to accelerate college work.

The 1936 separation of Columbia College into upper and lower colleges and basic societal changes reflecting a move toward more specialized, technological roles were factors leading to the demise of the "foundational tripod" and the basic general education program. Following the separation, the lower division core program struggled against increased vocational and professional interests of the students and the nation at large. The competition to enter professional schools, when coupled with the department
wanting to offer more introductory sophomore courses so that junior and senior level work could be more advanced and specialized, were but two strong pressures turning student and faculty support away from Contemporary Civilization and Humanities.

Staffing of CC proved to be one of the first major breakdowns. Departments became increasingly reluctant to assign their distinguished full professors a general education teaching load. And, with the content having become "stabilized"—often more than it should have been but still "interdisciplinary"—the assignment to the more specialized assistant professors became increasingly difficult. Graduate students, usually those not qualifying for fellowships in their own disciplines, replaced the original staff of CC—a staff formerly composed of senior and well-qualified and interested junior faculty. Humanities and CC had no staff of their own. Belknap and Kuhns describe the staffing problem this way: "The program must go begging among chairmen of departments every year." These observers also point to the pressure upon these courses that came from the Columbia administration. Innovations of this kind simply caused a number of new administrative problems not found in the traditional offerings of well-established departments.
In 1959, the option of enrolling for either CC-B or several different departmental introductory courses was initiated for Columbia sophomores. According to Arthur Levine's *Handbook on Undergraduate Curriculum*, "this was done because the CC-B course lacked structure and cohesion, because social science departments wanted students to begin concentrating earlier, and because it was difficult to get faculty members to teach CC-B. By the mid-60's, the history department withdrew from CC-B and refused to provide faculty for it. Finally in 1970, with opposition to CC-B from students as well, the second year program was abolished."22

But some residue of the bold efforts to design a general education program persisted. For example, innovative efforts to establish interdisciplinary, problem-oriented seminars were taken in 1944 by Columbia's Faculty of Political Science. University seminar originator, Frank Tannebaum, reported on this effort:

> How much this feeling of discontent with the disciplines was a reasoned-out motivation in the emerging of the original idea of the University Seminars I do not know. More important was my awareness of a lack of relevant communication among members of the faculty, and between them and people in the community engaged in practicing the arts the university attempted to teach.23

Having roots in CC, the University Seminars were geared for faculty and not the undergraduate student. What made the
University Seminars so successful—being a "community of scholars," that is, working with an intellectual peer group—was an element which prevented student participation. There were no built-in provisions for student involvement. But, as the seminars grew in number, the effort ultimately benefited the undergraduate general education programs. An Office of the Program in General Education was formed and seminars and published seminar reports were issued. These reports culminated in the significant publication, *Traditions and Innovations*, which has regenerated nationwide interest in Columbia's general education program.

What warranted generalization can be drawn from an analysis of the general education curriculum development at Columbia College, the outlines of which have been sketched in the foregoing discussion—generalizations about contributions that provide some elements in a more adequate foundational base for contemporary general education curriculum theory and development—the focus of this investigation?

Clearly, certain problems emerge, problems that tend to be persistent, for example: the difficulty in staffing a program with specialized junior faculty; the increasing demands of specialization and professionalization at the upper division levels; the lack of appropriate teaching resources; the difficulty of defining overlapping and
interdisciplinary domains of knowledge; the need for full administrative support for such innovative programs that require reconceptualization of traditional departmental structure and decision-making with the institution.

Yet the contributions of the Columbia College paradigm are significant:

1. The effort tended to focus on "program" as contrasted with merely the rearrangement of courses;

2. It represented initially the voluntary collaboration of competent scholars working in ways that cut across traditional departmental barriers;

3. Institutional support systems evolved to provide more adequate services and a setting for the effort—the student advisory system, the early placement examination and the professional option;

4. A significant tradition of general education evolved which was to continue to have an influence on curriculum design in American education;

5. It fostered an early, embryonic version of alternative modes of inquiry which with continued refinement in the mid-1970's has
the potential for becoming a crucial element in general education curriculum design efforts.

6. Influential books and other resource materials necessary for an effective teaching in general education programs were written;

7. The Columbia Program provided a training ground for a number of educators who assumed leadership roles in higher education in the decades that followed its creation;

8. The program created new courses, not a collection of specialized courses designed for majors in the various departments.

The University of Chicago Experiment

Cited by Daniel Bell as "the most comprehensive experiment in general education in the history of American academic life," the University of Chicago's New Plan was, indeed, one of the most comprehensive and innovative redesigns of undergraduate education. The complexities of the classic Chicago College Plan are seldom understood in contemporary college administration and curriculum development. A large part of this lack of understanding is due to confusion caused by Chicago's close identification with the Great Books and St. John's program, and also to the extensive writing of Robert Hutchins and Mortimer Adler. A careful examination of the historical development of the
general education program in that institution reveals that the ideas and impetus for reform came from Harper, Burton, and several of the Deans--and not solely from Hutchins and associates, as many assume. In fact, though Hutchins became a major influence and leading spokesperson for the Plan, the actual foundations of the Chicago Plan were laid during the times and influence of William Rainey Harper, Chicago's first president. The experimental, comprehensive, theoretically-designed general education program at Chicago is made clearer by a brief overview of the origins of the university at large.

Described as "the first great statement of bureaucratic organization and symmetry, the University of Chicago was established to become the exemplar of the American university for the twentieth century. This view was held by many:

No episode was more important in shaping the outlook and the expectations of American higher education during these years than the founding of the University of Chicago, one of those events in American history that brought into focus the spirit of the age.24

The University of Chicago was established through the confidence, managerial acumen, and salesmanship of Harper and the massive financial support of John D. Rockefeller. Impressed by Harper's vision of university education--the promised freedom of inquiry and managerial
efficiency of the university--Rockefeller directed his endowment to the creation of a university in the Middle West. Harper "won" the Rockefeller support, earmarked for a Baptist, sectarian institution, over Augustus H. Strong, president of the Rochester Theological Seminary. Strong had wanted to establish a twenty million dollar sectarian school in New York City. Initially embittered by Rockefeller's decision, Strong voiced criticism representative of the period. He bluntly stated that college and university training, as proposed by Harper, could not take place at the same institution. This attitude, guided by the conceptions of the German universities and their American counterparts, Johns Hopkins and Clark, stemmed from a perceived split between research and teaching.

A great academic center, as proposed for Chicago, placed research first; distinguished investigators were seen as not having the training or the time to teach. Harper's personal background, an excellent researcher and great teacher himself, led to the established emphasis upon the importance of good teaching.

By vying for the support of local millionaires with that of Rockefeller, and thereby increasing the size of contributions on both sides, Harper proceeded to undertake the "greatest mass raid on American college faculties in history."
When he was finished he had collected eight former college or seminary presidents, including Alice Freeman Palmer of Wellesley; he had relieved Yale of five professors; he had swooped down on Clark University, torn by dis­sension, and flown off with a majority of the academic staff, including fellows, instructors, and fifteen professors.25

Harper's all-inclusive scheme of university education and organization, first publically discussed in the University Official Bulletin No. 1, was distributed almost two years before the university opened.

The miracle was opened to the public on October 1, 1892. The night before, Harper had said to a colleague: "I wonder if there will be a single student there tomorrow!" He need not have wondered. They came from 33 states and 15 foreign countries and provinces: 328 undergraduates, 210 graduates, 204 divinity students. What they found was a new model American university, one which divided the twelve months of the year into four academic quarters and invited its students to take a minimum three or an accelerated four; a university which divided the traditional four collegiate years into two equal parts—the first to be known as the junior college or academic college, where the spirit would be collegiate and preparatory, and the second to be known as the senior college or the university college, where the spirit would be advanced and scholarly; a university where a system of major and minor studies permitted a student to pursue one subject in depth while devoting less time to another.26

These kinds of proposals, radical at the time, have had such influence on higher education in America that they currently are quite commonplace in institution after institution.
The Chicago ideal proved "successful" to the Eastern skeptics, for Harper showed in his leadership of the new institution great skill and insight into the functioning of large organizations. It is important to note that Harper did not inherit a "crystallized" institutional structure. This gave him a kind of freedom Eliot and other presidents did not have. Frederick Rudolph states:

It may have helped to have been founded after the battles over Greek and electives, even in the East, had been decided, but yet there was something close to genius and magic in the way in which Harper substituted bureaucratic organization for the course of study as the focus of institutional consensus. The curriculum at the University of Chicago was quite as chaotic as elsewhere, but it did not seem so, and that was an achievement not just for public relations but also for institutional sanity.27

Despite this pragmatic framework and many significant administrative arrangements and despite the excellent quality of the faculty which had been recruited, there persisted an uneasy "lack of authority" at the university in the view of many.28

By the time of Harper's death in 1906, it was possible:

... for a student to enter the University of Chicago without examination on the basis of a high-school record containing a wide variety of courses; elect one of numerous programs, which were restricted only in having to satisfy "group requirements" (one science course, for example, from a variety of introductory science courses); work off prerequisites for advanced work in a departmental field; and receive the title of Associate in Arts after two years of work.29
After Harper's death, the programatic distinction between the Junior and Senior College lost much of its original functional character. Specialized studies gradually crept into the curricular privileges of the Junior College. In fact, Dean Lovett, in 1919, suggested the departmental registration reports of the Junior and Senior Colleges be combined, inasmuch as the distinction in his view was no longer a fact.

The quality of instruction was often subjected to severe criticism as increasing numbers of graduate students were assigned to teach Junior College courses. And despite the original intentions, in the following years the "autonomy of departments," emphasis upon research, the freedom of inquiry—all characteristic of the American interpretation of the model German University, contributed to the development of specialized education. This development served as a deterrent to the continuing evolvement of a genuinely liberal education curriculum.

One important development affecting future general education proposals did occur during this "low" period. In 1912, at the suggestion of Charles Hubbard Judd, head of the Department of Education, the University Elementary School eliminated the 8th grade. The great University Movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, epitomized in Chicago itself, inspired the belief that
collegiate education would be subsumed by other education institutions—an upgraded high school system and the research university.

Harper at Chicago, Butler at Columbia and Jordan at Stanford all assumed there would develop a major difference between American colleges and the great universities they saw as emerging. There was hope among these leaders that as the American universities would come to equal the quality of their German counterparts, the high schools would extend themselves upward, achieving levels comparable to the German gymnasia. Through academic excellence, the college would be subsumed. The actual development failed nationally due to varied causes:

... what such a notion failed to reckon with were the diversity which was fundamental to the American educational experience, the failing efforts of some colleges to achieve university status and the consequent necessity to remain a college, this duality of purpose and the cult of the average which would prevent the American high school from becoming a gymnasia.

A significant factor also in the failure of this concept to take hold in the United States was the ever-increasing growth of major land-grant universities. These institutions had a populist orientation of providing post-secondary school education for all who wished to attend. Their mission was a threefold one of teaching, service, and research. Tuition was minimal, making college education assessible to young people close to home.
The "6-4-4 pattern" of organization was supported by Harper from the university's conception but not realized until 1937. While the University tried to battle the traditional 8-4-4 pattern firmly entrenched throughout the United States, it was able, in 1912, "to take the first step towards shortening the time-span of its preliminary schooling."  

Renewed interest in undergraduate education emerged with the appointment, in 1923, of Ernest DeWitt Burton as president. Burton found the Junior College with a large World War I veteran enrollment and many poor teaching practices. Departments were using the Junior College as a training ground for their graduate students. Frodin observes that at the time that Burton took office, approximately 100 graduate students taught elementary courses. He also noted that the annual turnover in the staff of these courses was forty percent. Burton brought to his position the characteristic trait of educational experimentation: "the University is dominated by the idea of research and that such research must be carried on in all the social sciences, and surely not least in education."  

Burton went to the trustees in September, 1923, and asked for the formation of a commission on the future development of the Colleges. Dean Wilkins and Professor Henry C. Morrison were key figures in the work of this
commission. Henry Morrison was a distinguished scholar in the early so-called "scientific" study of secondary-school instruction and curriculum development. In 1924, the commission completed its report. Chief among its recommendations were the following:

... a plan of undergraduate development which was radical for the 'twenties but not unlike William Rainey Harper's unrealized "blueprints." The organization of eight years of general education at the University of Chicago beyond six years of elementary schooling was to be divided between an enlarged University High School and a (junior) College separated from the senior college, in which specialization began. A student was to proceed into the College when he had demonstrated his ability in the high school, but it was expected that the completion of half the total program would usually signify such readiness.36

The Commission further recommended that the College be separated from the existing quadrangle of the University. This was to be done through the construction of large residential units and an instructional quadrangle of buildings.

The report was opposed by the faculty at large because of their belief that it focused too heavily on the role of the colleges to the exclusion of the University. And, also, it is clear that the faculty did not have a clear understanding of the basic distinction between general education and specialized training. The Board of Trustees heard the report but took no action.
During this time, Chicago offered its first survey course, "The Nature of the World and of Man," one of a series of survey courses proposed by Dean Wilkins of Arts and Letters. The two quarter-long course was introduced in the autumn of 1924 by Horatio Neuman, Professor of Zoology. The survey course invited leading scientists to lecture on the nature of properties of matter, origins of earth, evolution of man and of the plant and animal kingdoms. Though the course was "successful," plans for other survey courses in the humanities, "The Meaning and Value of the Arts," and the social sciences, "Man and Society," did not have enough faculty support for their institution into the curriculum. The development of even one survey course was, in itself, considered to be a major feat. Wilkins' desire was to improve Junior College teaching by enlisting the best teaching faculty and this, along with the knowledge of the successful Contemporary Civilization course at Columbia, aided the first survey course's acceptance. Frodin noted the importance of the survey course in the development of general education:

Whatever the faults of the survey course, it was an improvement over the typical departmental introductory course for the needs of most students and a necessary development in general education at the junior college level. The junior college line of "cleavage" from the senior college, advocated so strongly by Harper, had, during the 'twenties, become a fact in 55 percent of the independent colleges, 80 percent of the endowed universities, and
90 percent of the state universities. As Boucher described the situation which brought forth the survey course: "It seemed that nearly every department framed its curriculum as though the intellectual sun rose and set within its boundaries, as though every worthy student must desire to specialize in that department, and as though that department had a life-long vested interest in every student who elected its introductory course.37

Succeeding Burton as President of Chicago was Max Mason, who continued also the reworking and experimentation of collegiate education. Mason appointed, in March, 1928, a Senate Committee on undergraduate education. The committee's report, presented May 1, 1928, was "a step toward the goal of resolving the character of collegiate education." Again, to cite Frodin's analysis:

(the report) posed the abolition of the existing system of counting credits both for admission to the Senior College and for the award of the Bachelor's degree and the substitution therefor of comprehensive examinations. The requirements for the Bachelor's degree were to be stated in terms of three comprehensive examinations, one covering the major field and two for minor fields, all of which might be taken whenever the student felt he was ready. The Junior College requirements were stated in terms of five comprehensive examinations: (1) English composition and literature; (2) foreign language; (3) natural science and mathematics; (4) social science; and (5) an elective that might represent the early stages of specialization in some field of particular interest to the student. The exact character and length of the courses to prepare for these examinations were not specified but were to be determined by the Junior College faculty. Establishment of a board of examiners was also recommended.38
The report was not acted upon because, on May 7, 1928, Mason announced his resignation. It instead was referred for further study by Junior College and Senior College boards. The two boards argued over the proposal for a year. The disagreements were not new nor uncommon for many general education programs—-the assumed and often real limitations of survey courses, the constraints of early specialization, and the difficulty of staffing the Junior College. But the inter-board disagreements soon disappeared after April 17, 1929, with the appointment of Robert Hutchins as the fifth President of the University. And with his November 19, 1929, inaugural address, Hutchins set the stage for the massive undergraduate reorganization that was to follow.

William S. Gray, in reflecting on the status of general education in his institution at the time Hutchins assumed presidency, commented on the organization which had emerged to foster both effective lower division aims and upper division purposes:

The time was ripe for the proposal of appropriate administrative changes. Thanks to his vigorous and constructive leadership, our new divisional organization was framed in the manner best suited to the attainment of our objectives at the junior college level and for the appropriate adaptation of some of the basic principles of the college plan to the upper-divisional and professional school programs.
Hutchins has been characterized as "a man with ideas" and he did not hesitate to exercise the complete executive authority granted to him in the official statutes of the University. A massive reorganization plan was his first priority. A number of factors helped him shape this plan. Among them were the recommendations of an outside committee of the General Education Board and a report of the Undergraduate Colleges Committee which suggested an irreconcilable attitude between the "generalists" and the "specialists." 40

It is important here to note again that despite this massive effort at reorganization, the innovations in general education for which the University of Chicago is known, and generally attributed to Hutchins, were well underway before Hutchins' appointment. Hutchins' opportune arrival, coupled with his ideas and his exercise of executive authority, sparked the faculty's feeling for institutional change. Hutchins insisted that institutional improvement could be accomplished only after massive administrative reorganization. In addition, he firmly established that the major educational objective of the Junior College was that of general education.

The "New Plan" (March, 1931), resulted from these efforts. It provided the organization of general education
most commonly associated with Chicago. A divisional reorganization in the College of Arts, Literature, and Science led to the establishment of five divisions, each with its own dean and budget. The College Division was responsible for undergraduate general education; upon completion of the College, students would enter one of the four remaining divisions for specialized study: Division of the Biological Sciences; Division of Humanities; Division of the Physical Sciences; and the Division of the Social Sciences. The college awarded an Associate of Arts (AA) certificate upon the completion of its program.

In 1932, the University took the unprecedented step of empowering the Dean of the College to make appointments without joint divisional affiliations. Thus for the first time an autonomous faculty unit was responsible for an institution's general education program. Interestingly, the faculty of the four divisions, who were in fact the graduate level faculty, remained responsible for the curriculum development of the last two undergraduate years. Thus with the established separate faculty, the divisions became more closely aligned to graduate education.

The separation also furthered the general belief that the first or introductory years of a student's undergraduate years were devoted to general education with specialized education to follow after the general education component.
Thomas calls attention to the significance of this fact:

The separation formally recognized and gave a form of legal sanction to an idea that had been widely accepted in principle since the middle of the 19th century, namely, that general education should, by virtue of its unique function, be prior to and a preparation for specialized education. By the same action it gave formal support to the idea that the last two years of the traditional American college were properly within the sphere of university rather than collegiate studies.41

This concept of the role of general education and its relation to special education is undoubtedly the most persistent and widespread idea in the entire realm of curriculum design in higher education.

Another innovative aspect of the New Plan was the institution of comprehensive examinations. Curriculum development for general education in the new divisional setting was centered more fully than ever before in the division itself. Boucher was appointed Dean of the College, and he, in turn, appointed a curriculum committee. This Committee endorsed the idea of the attainment of College requirements which were "stated solely in terms of attainment measures by comprehensive examinations."42 Thus examinations became the sole measure of educational attainment. To receive the College certificate, the student would have to pass seven examinations, five of which were required of all students and might be taken whenever the student felt prepared. In retrospect, however well-
constructed these examinations were, they fell short of fulfilling the intentions of the New Plan and the large, humane objectives of general education as these developed within the reorganization. In the last analysis, they were at best tests of factual information with some small provision for interpretation and individual expression.

This examination procedure led to two additional developments for American education. A separate Board of Examination, a University Examiner and a Chief Examiner, were established in March, 1931, and were responsible for "determination of policies to be used in the formulation and administration of comprehensive examinations" in the College, Divisions, and on request of the professional schools.43

Comprehensive examinations allowed for independent study on the part of students and did encourage students to accelerate their programs. To aid outside work, the faculty published a syllabus with appropriate bibliographical material and sample examinations for every course.

Perhaps even more important in the overall history of the development of a theoretical base for general education curricula was the College Curriculum Committee's statement of intention that "the ideal of experimentation" was to be a basic principle of the College.44 Curriculum development in that setting demonstrated a significant amount of this experimental stance.
Dean Boucher's description of the curriculum development activities illustrates the process underway in the College in 1931. He cited the large amounts of time, study, discussion and hard work that went into the effort. There are many detailed accounts of the curriculum that emerged from this collaborative effort. Bell summarized the most crucial aspect of the final outcome as follows:

The heart of the Chicago Plan... was the organization of all knowledge into a comprehensive number of fields which would give the student now the sum of factual knowledge in that field by its basic organizing principles. There were not survey courses.

The most significant aspect of this curriculum development effort is caught up in Bell's recognition of the strong emphasis on "basic organizing principles." This emphasis has all of the overtones of Jerome Bruner's call in the 1960's for increased attention to the structures of knowledge. The Brunerian concept holds that if the learner can come to recognize and use organizing principles, he or she will then be able to engage in inquiry within a field of knowledge. Such students will, in effect, be able to "find their way around" in a field and to solve new problems that emerge. Clearly, the Chicago faculty did not refine the idea (and probably only rarely its implementation in the classroom and seminar) to this degree. But note should be made that the germs of ideas
that later were to be called "inquiry approaches" and "learning by discovering the structure of the field" were there.

As in the case of the analysis of Columbia College's contributions, the question is: What generalization can be drawn from the general education curriculum development efforts of the paradigm which evolved at the University of Chicago?

All of the problems which characterized the introduction of curricular innovations at Columbia were present in the Chicago effort. They do, indeed, appear to be persistent problems in the development of more adequate general education curricula.

In the face of these common problems, the contributions of the University of Chicago paradigm differ from those of Columbia. The following generalizations reflect the most basic of these differences:

1. The effort at Chicago focused more fully on administrative reorganization.

2. Historical antecedents for general education were imbedded in the founding of the new university of which the overall tone was one of experimentation.

3. An examination system was developed to measure general education outcomes, an elaborate system which reflected the assumed rationality
of all learning and the "scientific" atmosphere of the university at that time.

4. In explicating their curricular objectives and the means for achieving them, the collaborative efforts of the faculty began to attend, in a preliminary way, to such ideas as the structure of knowledge and the distinctive modes of inquiry that characterized each.

5. Implementation of the curricular reform was characterized by strong executive leadership.

6. The resulting curricular innovations achieved widespread national attention in the press and other publications and were the subject of both professional and citizen debate.

Proposed Curricular Reform at Harvard

In contrast to the efforts to reform general education at Columbia College and at the University of Chicago, both of which resulted in significant program changes within those institutions, the paradigm at Harvard is theoretical in nature. In effect, its content stems not from praxiological principles derived from curriculum developments underway but from a major committee report, General Education in a Free Society, published in 1945. Much additional
refinement of the basic concepts was generated by the extensive debate which followed the committee report.

Daniel Bell accurately describes the circumstances underlying the Report when he states that the purpose was not primarily to reform the program at Harvard but "to formulate a complete educational philosophy for American society." 48

Political and cultural circumstances shaped the setting for the work of the Harvard Committee. With the close of World War II and anticipated veterans' enrollments, the complexities of large numbers of the "new types" of student did warrant a total rethinking of the undergraduate curriculum. Argus Tresidder describes commonly held academics' expectations of the returning veterans' educational demands:

The returning veteran, accustomed to swift, stripped instruction in the basic studies of warfare, perhaps taught under military auspices in streamlined courses in mathematics, languages, and history, will be antagonized by the confusion of ideals in liberal arts colleges. He wants a college degree because it will be important to him in earning a living, but he wants specific skills and a steady point of view, which he will find more readily in an engineering or commercial or medical program than in the liberal arts. 49

But further, in the words of one observer, the Report "represented an effort on the part of the nation's greatest
university to confront the social and political forces of mid-century America and to write a prescription for sustaining the liberal tradition with a curriculum that recognized the legitimacy of individual interests and talents while it at the same time established a common bond of general learning." It was only fitting that Harvard would take the initiative and leadership role, for was not Harvard the innovator of the elective system—the curricular structure which many felt led to the difficulties then currently confronting higher education? Indeed, the Harvard Report, or the Redbook as it was often called, proved for many to be just that document, the "bible" of general education.

When Harvard spoke, the country listened. In fact, the country was ready to listen before Harvard was ready to speak. The main points of the report were "leaked" by the press before the agreed August 1, 1945, release date. The July 23 New York Times front-page coverage demonstrates the widespread interest and recognized importance of the document. Immediate editorial reaction to the Redbook was described in the Harvard Service News as "largely colorless and unanimously approving." Though, reported by the News, "Representatives of foremost educational thought in America, leaders at Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Chicago, and St. Johns, polled by the Service News this week replied
in a majority of cases that they had not yet studied the
Harvard proposals sufficiently to comment."51 Yet a
response was not long in coming once the content of the
report was disseminated.

The initial reaction of educators was often sharp and
bordering on the polemic. Mortimer Adler, for example,
expressed a peculiar combination of outrage and indif-
ference:

All the Report does is show the way the wind's
blowing . . . . Harvard moves slowly, it's an
old man. What I really object to is the fuss
Harvard's made over this. It is not a land-
mark, or a milestone, or anything of the kind.
But it's nice to have you trailing along
with us.52

To place such criticisms as Adler's and the more
reasoned debate about the Report which followed, some
delineation of the nature of the report itself is necessary.
Appointed by President Conant in January, 1943, the twelve
members of the Committee on "The Objectives of a General
Education in a Free Society" worked continuously for two
years, meeting at least once a week with periodic sessions
of several days' duration. With a $60,000 appropriation,
indicating "the unusual magnitude of the group's task," the
Committee formulated four major proposed curricular
changes for the Harvard undergraduate program. The four
proposals were:
1. Three general courses to be required of all undergraduates
   A. The Humanities: "Great Texts of Literature"
   B. The Social Sciences: "Western Thought and Institutions"
   C. The Natural Sciences: "The Principles of Physical Science" or "The Principles of Biological Science"

2. Three other courses were to be elected from a larger group in which most existing college departments would be represented. Seven courses, including English A, of the 16 courses required for the degree would be of the "general education type." None of these courses was to be in the student's field of concentration; only one was to be allowed in his area of study.

3. English A was to be limited to two class hours per week during the first term of the Freshman year and was to be continued in connection with general education courses (rather than given separately) during the second term.

4. Tutorials were to be reserved for candidates in honors in their junior and senior years, with occasional exception for particularly gifted sophomores.

The authors of the report attempted to justify the importance of a liberal education. The justification stemmed from a commitment to a "free democratic society" which became the focal point of their theory base. After World War II, individuals were concerned about the future of democracy, especially in light of "the apparent success of the totalitarian regimes" in generating commitment among their youths. Thus, the Redbook proposed newly-conceived courses intended to introduce all students to the great heritage of Western culture. Henry Wriston, writing about the temper of the times in which these four
proposals were made, expresses something of the urgency felt by many educators:

A great many people, suffering from hysteria, or from democratic fatigue, or from cynicism, are talking about the necessity for indoctrination. That is the mode in Germany, Italy, Russia, and elsewhere. The fixations involved in such methods of mental regimentation are the precise opposite of the concept of general education of which we are speaking. Their permanence is the permanence of shackles forged about the mind, inhibiting it rather than releasing it for free and creative thought and expression.

In assessing the significance of the Harvard paradigm, it is essential that one keep in mind the concerns that Wriston describes.

The Report's proposals were in sharp contrast to Harvard's existing general education program. Bell draws on a description of the existing program from statements made by the Doty Committee:

Before 1945 Harvard operated with a rather complex distribution requirement. Departmental courses were divided into three areas: natural science; social science; arts, letters, and philosophy. These areas were then subdivided so that eight sections emerged, and the student was required to have a minimum of one full course in each, of the four sections, representing all three areas. The requirement was both difficult to understand and easy to evade. The sections were heterogeneous units and the system was so loose that almost any collection of courses would meet the requirement.

The proposed courses were to be distinguished from the traditional basic departmental offerings although they were
to be centered on the subject matter which was the domain of the existing departments of the University. The Report did not give credit to any of the pioneering work to establish programs at Columbia and Chicago. In this sense, the effort can be said to have been ahistorical. But an analysis of the proposed content reveals much that was similar to that which evolved at both Columbia and Chicago.

The faculty resolution "supporting in principle" the proposed changes actually undercut the basic intentions of a general education program. In a first consideration by the Harvard faculty, the vote, which represented "the result of five months of discussion and deliberation," conditioned the Report by approving it in principle and then taking exception to the three specified lower level general education courses. The faculty resolution stated, "that in the lower level general education courses there shall be not less than two nor more than four alternative courses in each (of the three) areas." Thus, the idea of a common shared experience, typically an integral aspect of general education, was undermined from the very beginning. These alternative elementary courses that were approved became the so-called "great man" courses. Such introductory courses did not provide the common, unifying experience
sought in the original report. The courses involved no collaborative effort and became the private domain of eminent professors who chose to teach them. If the professor was unavailable or decided not to teach, the general education course was not offered.\(^56\)

Although a majority of faculty members voted to adopt the basic educational reforms of the Redbook, the subsequent support and implementation did not reflect the overwhelming 135 to 10 vote. And with this lack of faculty support for actually implementing the proposal, negative reaction was voiced by students. The Undergraduate Organizational Committee on the General Education Report deplored "the apparent disregard of student opinion shown by the Administration and the Faculty of Arts, Letters, and Philosophy in the consideration of the General Education Report."\(^57\)

Aside from their objection to lack of participation, students objected to the proposed curtailing of tutorials. Such tutorials were to be made available only to honor students in their junior and senior years. The topic was of such concern to students that in November, 1945, a special committee of the Student Council was formed "to consider" the limitations of tutorials. The group published two reports, "First Report of the Student Council Committee on
the General Education Report" and "Limitation of the Harvard Tutorial System," the first including surveys of the tutorials and adviser systems conducted in December, 1945. Ultimately the students did accept the limitation of tutorials; they felt the curtailment would strengthen the overall program. But the reports cite the importance of tutorials as being not the amount of material presented but the way—the instructional method—in which it is presented. These reports indirectly reflect the students' respect and concern for the liberal arts. The March, 1946, report discusses the "fundamental conditions of a university college which naturally tend to handicap a tutorial system." The Student Council Committee on General Education Report urges that tutors be hired to counteract the tendency of the regular faculty member to be more concerned with their research than with teaching. Thus, as late as 1946, we still see signs of the tension between college teaching and university research, the ideals of English and German higher education.

At the time of the Redbook's release, the faculty, similarly, had its reservations of the tutorial proposals. This attitude was expressed in their decision to delay action on this proposed tutorial change.

Aside from their objection to the lack of participation, student objections continued to center on the proposed
curtailing of tutorials. Such tutorials were to be made available only to honor students in their junior and senior years. The tutorial system was originally initiated with the establishment of general exams. The senior "divisional" examinations were designed for an entire subject and "determined" the thoroughness of the student's mastery of the subject. Divisionals were first adopted by the Division of History, Government, and Economics in 1912-1913. Examination results indicated that students needed some form of guidance and individual instruction in order to satisfactorily pass the divisionals. Thus, upon a sophomore's declaration of concentration, he was assigned a tutor in his field, a faculty member who then became his advisor in all his studies.

Originally, tutors were not of a subordinate rank, and many tutors gave course instruction as well. Their tutorial load was proportional to their classroom teaching load. In 1945, The General Education Committee reported a proposed change in tutor status--with tutorial efforts delegated to teaching fellows, annual instructors, and faculty instructors, i.e., young and relatively inexperienced members of the staff who were not on permanent appointment. Traditionally, the distinguishing feature between tutors and other members of the faculty was the method of instruction which had evolved and not scholarly or academic background of the individuals serving in this role. This
distortion of the original intent of the tutorial system, coupled with the increased economic burden of the special instruction, led to the proposed curtailment.

The controversy over the proposed elimination of tutorials, highlighted the basic issue between the historical German approach versus the English system of education. Clearly, the tutorial was Harvard's modification of the English mode of instruction. The termination of such an obvious and traditional symbol that, in a sense, "stood" for Harvard, may have been a more basic factor in the opposition of both students and faculty than the economic factor which was important in the view of those administering the program in the institution.

This allegiance to an established college tradition and its role in the support or opposition to curricular reform is furthered documented in the 1939 Student Council Report (vide. Appendix A), a report conspicuously overlooked by the Conant Committee. An August 30, 1945, Harvard Service News article, suggesting that the Harvard Report was a compromise between the 1939 Student Council Report and a 1939 University Committee on Distribution report, further suggests an oversight in the reform efforts. The 1939 Student Council Report criticized Harvard administrators for "the penetration into the liberal college of university functions" and the failure to provide "a common ground
which educated men can share." The Council then proposed five introductory courses, compulsory and interdisciplinary, which would be "broad, flexible, and un-dogmatic": two in natural science, two in humanities, and one in social science. One can understand more fully the student support and acceptance of the majority of the Redbook course proposals when it is seen that they were reflections of their basic recommendations of six years earlier. In fact, suggesting an increased general education component, the 1939 Student Council Report criticized existing introductory courses for being essentially designed for students planning to major in that specified area. The 1939 Council Report precipitated a "hastily-organized" University Committee on Distribution report. This group proposed a new distribution plan which divided the curriculum into three areas: natural science, social science, and arts, letters and philosophy—with one required course in each area. The Student Council Report clearly demonstrates that the students were aware of increasing a specialization and were unsympathetic to the basic conception of college education as it had come to be institutionalized at Harvard in the years immediately preceding World War II.

One must not fault the Harvard Committee or President Conant for the lack of institutional change. In one sense, the difficulties of initiating such a program overshadowed
those at both Columbia and Chicago. But many of the persistent problems encountered in both of those institutions also prevailed at Harvard. Professors were not trained to undertake interdisciplinary teaching. Their courses were centered on specialized research in their own disciplines. Curricular materials were not readily available. The organizational structure of the university did not support such a venture. And in addition to these persistent problems, there was the issue of giving up the traditional tutorial program.

But having acknowledged these limitations to practical curriculum development in a specific setting, it must be emphasized that the document, General Education in a Free Society, gave new life and freshness to the entire general education movement. In fact, it substantiated the movement and the term as a major education idea of the Twentieth Century. If general education was desirable and respectable at Harvard, then it was respectable anywhere. In effect, it proved to be a so-called landmark treatise. Its significance rested not on the change it brought about at Harvard but on the controversy, discussion and debate that it generated.

A widespread response to the Harvard Report at the time of its publication was that the Redbook said "nothing," that it was "an eclectic melange." In an attempt to
reconcile the opposing positions of Aristotelian rationalism and instrumentalism, no position (or position of leadership) resulted except an eclectic, neo-humanist, traditionalism, which seemed unsuitable for such an important and influential document. Such a position was taken by Boyd H. Bode, a philosopher of education at The Ohio State University. This lack of position was reflected in such passages of the Report as the following:

The true task of education is therefore so to reconcile the sense of experiment and innovation deriving from science that they may exist fruitfully together, as in varying degrees they have never ceased to do throughout Western history.

Education can therefore be wholly devoted neither to tradition nor to experiment, neither to the belief that the ideal in itself is enough nor to the view that means are valuable apart from the ideal. It must uphold at the same time tradition and experiment, the ideal and the mans, subserving, like our culture itself, change within commitment.

The Committee took the leading educational philosophies of the time, represented in the work of Robert M. Hutchins and John Dewey, and attempted to draw out "the best" of both positions. It is unfortunate that Harvard attempted a reconciliation in the first place, and even more unfortunate with the selection of Hutchins and Dewey. Unquestionably, Hutchins and Dewey were leaders of educational schools of thought, but the historical traditions of
general education were further obscured by this simplistic confrontation of polarities. As the foregoing analysis of the general education developments the historical paradigms at Columbia and Chicago clearly demonstrates, the issue was not one of philosophical rationalism versus naturalism. The tension in practical institutional settings as curriculum development efforts were undertaken was between the English collegiate ideal and the German university conception and their subsequent influence upon the emerging American higher education system.

The founders of general education in America were not Hutchins and Dewey—the leading spokesmen of the 1940's, but Harper, Ernest D. Burton, Max Mason at Chicago, and Butler, John Burgess, John Erskine, Frederick J. E. Woodbridge, and Herbert Hawkes at Columbia. Barzun's critique raises the question of the ahistoric outlook of the Harvard Committee:

One is almost tempted to conclude that, having accumulated a staggering mass of evidence, the committee could only by-pass it to reach their goal. But in doing so they apparently lost sight of what their report truly signifies. It signifies the final break with the German tradition of higher learning imported into the United States in the eighties, and the tacit recognition after twenty-five years that a substantial sum of native ideas, pragmatically worked out, fit our conditions best.

What Harvard "proposes" is a truly American undergraduate curriculum, equidistant from Oxford and Heidelberg, and maintaining the
perpendicular between them. Here, again, had the reporters been more interested in educational history, they might have found in the writings of the late President Lowell the full doctrine and the first lineaments of such a college.63

The effort to develop a general education curriculum at Harvard based on General Education in a Free Society contrasts sharply with the historical accounts of curriculum development at Columbia College and the University of Chicago. The Harvard venture was primarily a theoretical undertaking. It did produce in that institution a grouping of courses in three large areas, an approach called a "broad fields core" by curriculum specialists. Of importance to this investigation, however, are the critical exchanges of ideas about the theory underlying the proposal, ideas represented by the exchanges, for example, between Demos and Taylor, both philosophers engaging in curriculum thought. Taylor's philosophical position is analyzed in greater detail in Chapter III inasmuch as it relates not only to the Harvard efforts of 1945 but also to the 1978 proposal to develop a general education core.

The theoretical issues raised in the Harvard paradigm and the controversial exchanges which followed serve as basic elements in the generation of a more adequate theoretical base for the design component in general education curriculum reform.
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II


5 Ibid., p. 265.


7 Ibid., p. 13.


9 Bell, The Reforming of General Education, p. 16.


12 Ibid., p. 108.
13 Ibid., p. 118.
14 Ibid., pp. 118-119.
15 Ibid., p. 121.
16 Ibid., p. 121.
18 Buchler, "Reconstruction in the Liberal Arts," p. 60.
19 Ibid., pp. 16-18.
20 Ibid., p. 80.
24 Rudolph, The American College and University, p. 349.
25 Ibid., p. 350.
26 Ibid., p. 351.
28 Ibid., p. 201.


30 Ibid., p. 37.

31 Rudolph, The American College and University, p. 443.

32 Ibid., p. 444.

33 Frodin, "Very Simple, but Thoroughgoing," p. 36.

34 Ibid., p. 41.

35 Ibid., p. 41.

36 Ibid., p. 43.

37 Ibid., p. 43.

38 Ibid., p. 47.


40 Frodin, "Very Simple, but Thoroughgoing," p. 49.


42 Frodin, "Very Simple, but Thoroughgoing," pp. 50-51.

43 Ibid., p. 52.

44 Ibid., p. 52.
Cornelius S. Boucher, in Frodin, "Very Simple, but Thoroughgoing," p. 53.

Bell, The Reforming of General Education, p. 31.


Rudolph, Curriculum, p. 258.


Ibid., p. 3.


Bell, The Reforming of General Education, p. 46.


59 First Report of the Student Council Committee on the General Education Report, p. 3.


61 General Education in a Free Society, p. 50.

62 Ibid., pp. 50-51.

CHAPTER III

CONTEMPORARY EFFORTS TO REFORM GENERAL EDUCATION: THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE DESIGN REALM

Introduction

General Education in a Free Society gave new life to what can appropriately be called a "movement" in higher education curriculum reform. With the Harvard Report as a catalyst, many new general education programs were instituted and traditional efforts improved. In the mid-1950's, however, general education programs declined sharply.

Daniel Bell points to institutional causes as the "major erosion factors" of the general education movement:

... the primary reasons were fundamentally institutional. These were: the rise of professionalism; the expansion of the graduate schools; the emphasis on disciplines; the introduction of the idea of training; apprenticeship to training (vocational in terms of even the best kinds of intellectual careers). And one had, then, the centrifugal elements introduced by these institutional pressures; the strengths of the departments against the college, the expansion of graduate education, and the emphasis on research—all of which pulled people away from general education and into these other areas.

In the 1950's, the field of science came of age. New discoveries caught the public's imagination; scientists were in great demand. Thus, the discipline which proved to be most difficult to integrate into imaginative design
efforts grew and flourished. And the interest in scientific advancement strongly endorsed specialization. It was commonly felt that trained scientists should become specialized so that they could continue their "pursuit of scientific discovery." In addition, national shortages of engineers, doctors, psychologists, and teachers, along with a more conservative political climate, the cold war, and public sentiment for the practical, all served as deterrents to educational experimentation.  

The impact of the Eight-Year Study is a case in point. One of the most important educational experiments of the 20th century, the Eight-Year Study was all but forgotten by the generation of 1950's secondary educators. Needless to say, a major recommendation of the study was the establishment of a core program, a curricular concept very similar to the more highly refined contemporary general education theory.

The launching of Sputnik, and the subsequent "Sputnik Scare," stands as a high point in the specialization-technical knowledge movement. When scientific inquiry, fostered by specialization, turned its attention to the problems of a more adequate general education, the basic tenets of the liberal education tradition did not appease the analytic, scientific mind. Normative questions about the "nature of knowledge" were not appropriate educational foundations for the prevailing positivistic attitude.
In contrast, the mid-1960's brought widespread dissatisfaction with the then prevalent curriculum structure—a format dominated by highly specialized study. Student activists called for greater freedom of choice and defined the merit of subject matter in terms of its "relevance." In many institutions free choice and relevance became, in effect, the new foundations of education. Before the end of that decade, however, these ideals were shattered by misapplication of the elective concept and the dominance of traditional modes of evaluation and grading. The credentialing role of colleges and universities had endured, and the framework of specialization still characterized traditional approaches to curriculum design. Subject matter offerings continued to be fragmented into countless, specialized courses while graduates were expected to uphold traditional high standards.

The last several years of the 1970's are marked by a resurgence of interest in general education. An analysis of two efforts that best characterize this resurgence will (1) serve to give a description of the current state of the field, and (2) provide additional data for or discussion of an alternative theoretical base for general education design yet to be generated in this investigation. These two efforts are the 1978 Harvard Core Curriculum
Proposal and the general education proposals made in the Carnegie Missions of the College Curriculum report.

To understand these two works in relation to the contemporary state of the field, a fuller explication of the theory base underlying general education is required. This extends the theoretical issues implicit in the three historical paradigms presented in the preceding chapter. The efforts of two individuals throw light on general education curriculum theory as it relates to aspects of design--Daniel Bell's study reported in The Reforming of General Education and Harold Taylor's reasoned philosophical defense of general education and its significant implications for curriculum design.

Following this examination, a further probing of two significant curriculum theories for general education is made in an analysis of the proposals of Philip Phenix and King and Brownell. This phase of the study, then, analyzes two dimensions of the contemporary state of the field of general education--curriculum development currently underway in an institution and theoretical proposals made to provide a more adequate knowledge base for curriculum design in the more comprehensive reform efforts.

In a final section, reflections on a 1979 general education conference at Bard College are reported. This conference demonstrates some of the most serious problems
involved in translating general education curriculum theory into practice. It also serves to underscore the lack of an adequate conceptual structure to support genuine innovations in the realm of curriculum design.

The 1978 Harvard Core Curriculum


Like the Red Book a generation ago, the report released this week is likely to have widespread influence throughout American higher education. Virtually every major liberal arts faculty in the country is involved in a reassessment of its undergraduate curriculum, and most, like Harvard, are moving in the direction of restoring distribution and other requirements that disappeared in the 1960's and early 1970's.3

In 1974 Henry Rosovsky, dean of the faculty of arts and sciences, began developing a reform proposal which went to the "faculty at large" for debate March 14, 1978, and was adopted May 2, 1978, with a vote of 182-65. In November, 1976, Rosovsky reported to the faculty his guiding principles for general education, while the faculty Task Force on Core Curriculum released its own report on how
to translate Rosovsky's goals into curricular offerings. In May, 1977, the faculty endorsed the effort to strengthen general education requirements and directed Rosovsky to continue and to make detailed recommendations. Rosovsky appointed five faculty committees which were assigned to make proposals in their respective academic areas. With the May, 1978 faculty acceptance, the reforms were to be phased in over a three-year period, starting in 1979. All students entering Harvard in 1982 will fall under the curricular jurisdiction of the Core.

The Core will replace the present general education program. General education now requires that a student take approximately ten courses distributed evenly among the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, plus one additional course in expository writing. The areas are broad, and a student selects the ten courses from some 2,600 un-integrated titles offered in the Harvard catalogue. Government professor, Stanley Hoffman, states:

General Education courses are good. The problem is that they have no rationale behind them. The program suffers from middle-age spread; there is no criterion for inclusion and no principle for exclusion. The need now is not for a broader education, but for one that is less fragmented.  

The 1978 Core Curriculum's rationale stems from the Dean's report for 1975-76, entitled "Undergraduate Education: Defining the Issues." The tenets which underlie the
proposed Core Curriculum are as follows:

1. An educated person must be able to think and write clearly and effectively.

2. An educated person should have a critical appreciation of the ways in which we gain knowledge and understanding of the universe, of society, and of ourselves. Specifically, he or she should have an informed acquaintance with the aesthetic and intellectual experience of literature and the arts; with history as a mode of understanding present problems and the processes of human affairs; with the concepts and analytic techniques of modern social science; with philosophical analysis, especially as it related to the moral dilemmas of modern men and women; and with the mathematical and experimental methods of the physical and biological sciences.

3. An educated American, in the last third of this century, cannot be provincial in the sense of being ignorant of other cultures and other times. It is no longer possible to conduct our lives without reference to the wider world within which we live. A crucial difference between the educated and uneducated is the extent to which one's life experience is viewed in wider contexts.

4. An educated person is expected to have some understanding of, and experience in thinking about, moral and ethical problems. It may well be that the most significant quality in educated persons is the informed judgment which enables them to make discriminating moral choices.

5. Finally, an educated individual should have achieved depth in some field of knowledge. Cumulative learning is an effective way to develop a student's powers of reasoning and analysis, and for our undergraduates this is the principal role of concentrations.
Thus, the report states:

The underlying conception of the Core Curriculum is a minimum acceptable standard of individual education focusing on how we gain knowledge and understanding of the universe, of society, and of ourselves. The core is not meant to stand alone; conjoined with three years of other work, it will provide a solid and shared base of general and liberal education for all of our students. The Core Curriculum is an amalgam of diverse intellectual approaches, major substantive areas of knowledge; and important basic skills. The proposal differs both from present General Education and past systems of distribution requirements. Although the quantity of nonconcentration requirements will remain relatively unchanged, the categories of General Education will have been altered to reflect shifts in fields of knowledge and in approaches to learning and made more specific in purpose according to our priorities. And the present proposal has the further distinction, as opposed to distribution schemes, of calling into being courses especially designed or adapted to meet its aims.

The Core plan specifies course requirements in ten sub-areas within the five broader areas, and provides course criteria for the Core courses. The sub-areas of the Core are Literature, Fine Arts; Music and Contexts of Culture--within Literature and the Arts; Historical Orientation; Historical Process and Perspective--within History; Social Analysis; Moral and Political Philosophy--within Social and Philosophical Analysis; Physical Science and Mathematics; Biological and Behavioral Science--within Science and Mathematics; Western Europe (including language); or a major non-Western culture--within Foreign Languages and Cultures.
Other proposals included that a nonconcentration requirement in expository writing be established in specific relation to core course offerings; and that the present Committee on General Education be abolished and replaced with a Standing Committee on the Core Program, with six subcommittees; and a Standing Committee on Nondepartmental Instruction. Dean Ropovskv is to appoint committees to implement the program. "Eventually," states Ropovsky, "a list of from 80 to 100 'core' courses will be developed. Students will choose about a quarter of their undergraduate program from among those courses."

While administrators nationwide praised the Core, undergraduate student leaders at Harvard opposed many aspects of the proposal and especially the methods used in the development of the proposal. Students objected to their lack of representation on the Core subcommittees and questioned whether students would be appointed to the proposed Core standing committees. A comment from the March 7 student column characterizes the student response:

Last week members of the Faculty Council insouciantly ignored a request by the CUE (Committee of Undergraduate Education) and the ERG (Educational Resources Group) to provide for such student representation, and also turned their backs on a host of other recommendations including the establishment of a departmental by-pass mechanism. This merely added insult to injury. The total indifference of the Faculty Council to student opinions can do nothing but foment a somewhat cynical and defiant attitude among
students. It becomes difficult for students to discern the differences between liberal Harvard and their equally paternalistic high schools back home. Representation on these committees would be a token of the acknowledgement that students have influence on the choice of courses they are required to take.

Another objection of student leaders, reminiscent of the late 1960's, centers upon student freedom. The March 8 editorial, "Reject the Core," protested that the ten areas in which students were to be given choice were overly restrictive. Not only did students object to the restraints placed upon their selection of courses, they also pointed out the restrictions placed upon the faculty:

The report carefully stipulated how professors must structure these courses, what the aims of these courses must be, and a host of other requirements that would restrict professors teaching core courses from presenting the course material in an innovative and individualistic manner. A standing committee on the core curriculum would monitor the core courses to insure that these courses were kept in accord with the aims of General Education as elucidated in the core report.

Thus, professors and students alike will be affected by this usurpation of individual decision-making by the Faculty and the core subcommittees.

The students were further concerned that the counseling relationship between professors and students might diminish and that the general education courses might come to be taught by graduate students.
The Core Curriculum is only a poor substitute for the good advice and counseling that would direct, but not coerce students to attain a balanced education. And the Core will not solve one of Harvard's fundamental problems: the dearth of close associations between students and faculty members.

But the administrators paid little attention to the opinion of the students. Recognizing that freshman seminars could accommodate only 35 percent of the class and that sophomore tutorials not taught by faculty had been less successful than the junior and senior counterparts, President Bok saw the Core as a method of strengthening the initial two years of study.

What students deserve is an opportunity in each of their first two years to take some portion of their program in the form of seminars or small discussion courses, taught by professors and the frequent opportunities for written work and faculty critique. This goal could be achieved by expanding the number of freshman seminars, by developing additional core courses with small enrollments, or conceivable in other ways.

The Core Curriculum is a significant contemporary attempt to rethink the foundations of general education. Missing, however, is an adequate theoretical base to undergird the effort. Harvard's Core stipulates a "common ground" for its students which consists of a confused amalgamation of "learning abilities" and "modes of inquiry." The Core does solve some administrative dilemmas arising from the current general education distribution requirements. But once again, the efforts are basically
ahistorical in that they do not build upon the most cogent general education theories of years past. In effect, there is no further refinement of theory as Harvard moves to implement and develop Core courses. As a consequence, the entire undertaking is clearly prone to the serious shortcomings of much so-called curricular innovation. It could be said that one cynical observer such efforts often accompanied by new ceremonies result in merely moving the dry bones from one plot in the cemetery to a freshly dug grave.

The Carnegie Missions Proposals

While the Harvard Core program was being conceptualized and initial steps were being taken to implement it, the Carnegie Foundation was issuing a series of reports on higher education. These reports have undoubtedly served as resources for curriculum redesign insofar as curriculum development in higher education has made any use of relevant curriculum knowledge.

In many respects, the efforts of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education have all but defined academic pursuits in higher education. In late 1977, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching released its "curricular triology": Curriculum: The American Undergraduate Course of Study Since 1636, by Frederick Rudolph; Missions of the College Curriculum:
A Contemporary Review with Suggestions, a commentary by the Foundations; and the Handbook on Undergraduate Curriculum by Arthur Levine.

The latter two works comprise what many academics view as a definitive statement for curriculum in the 1970's and 1980's. The Missions of the College Curriculum, self-described as "a comprehensive, policy-oriented treatment of curriculum problems and possibilities in American colleges and universities," is therefore the focus for this phase of the study. Although Missions deals with a wide range of issues and problems, only one of which is general education, reflection on how the report treats such an important curricular matter is useful in assessing the approach the study takes to other related topics. Too, it reveals what might be viewed as the "Carnegie position" on general education, a position implicit in several of the other reports.

Clearly, Missions's timeliness and its prestigious backing suggest that it will influence the thinking of those engaged in reconceiving general education. Change says that Missions is "must reading for any academic professional worth his or her name"; and Choice is quoted: "The rethinking of the concerns for general education in Chapter 8 are probably the most significant thoughts on this crucial area since the report of the Harvard Committee, General Education in a Free Society (1945)."
1979, Chronicle of Higher Education review by Charles Adams states: "... the Carnegie Foundation's Missions has great potential value for both the curricular journeyman and the apprentice. It should be read and used as a resource by legislators, faculty members of educational policy committees, and academic administrators."\(^{15}\)

A careful examination of the report, however, raises serious questions about whether or not the report provides an adequate base for curricular redesign of general education in colleges and universities. In the Preface, the authors state:

"We start from where we are. . . . We begin with current practices. . . . We do not, however, attempt to discuss in any depth the relation between historical developments and current curricular practices nor to examine the connection between the curriculum of today and the contemporary cultural and intellectual climate."\(^{16}\)

At the outset, then, Mission's research commits itself largely to principles based on the tabulation of current practices, the realm of "what is." This intent is clear in its subtitle: "A Contemporary Review." One would expect, therefore, a review of current practices. In addition to those current practices, however, one finds subsequent suggestions for action, those "firm conclusions and related recommendations for action," which rest upon very questionable grounds. For example, we see the authors address the issue of change and make speculations for the
future with little attention to the past or without any attention to basic value questions. Yet, the recommendations are quite normative in nature in that they are assertions about what "ought to be."

Valid proposals for the redesign of curriculum at any level are clearly both descriptive and prescriptive, or normative. This is to say that they cannot avoid the "what ought to be" value questions. To do so would seem to assert that everything "out there" somewhere in culture is equally educative. No one assumes that those who collaborated on this report would support this assertion. Yet, the Missions report does not come to grips with this tough foundations problem.

Each of its chapters, thirteen following an orientation chapter, discusses a particular aspect of curriculum such as external influences, electives, basic skills, the world of work, and the like. Most chapters have brief historical overviews of these aspects. Resources viewed as useful for further investigation in each of these areas are identified. But the fact remains that the basic sources of material for discussion and projection of recommendations are data arrived at through extensive tabulation of current practices--what is going on "out there." Social scientists, even those working within the traditional natural science paradigm, would call this an example of
"dust bowl empiricism." The most thoughtful of them would be skeptical of direct extrapolations about what ought to be from such data sources.

If Missions is representative of authoritative proposals for new directions in higher education—and its widespread endorsement tends to suggest that it is—then colleges and universities are unlikely to move into the 1980's with anything like a bold, new vision appropriate for a new decade. Missing not only from this Missions report but also from the scene at large are the insight and vision that characterized some of the leaders who in the past have exerted profound influence on higher education and, in turn, college curricula. One is reminded of Andrew D. White, Nicholas M. Butler, William Rainey Harper of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as of Hutchins, Stringfellow Barr, Conant, and Harold Taylor in more recent times. These were scholar-leaders who took a larger view of the nature of education and in that context made significant proposals for curriculum development and reform.

In contrast, Missions seems to undermine the importance of a broad perspective. In its preface, it tends to dismiss historical, philosophical and cultural bases. Cogent, powerful expressions of need and directions formulated by thoughtful scholars or experienced college presidents seem to have little or no place in the review. Credence is given
instead to the tabulation of catalogues or questionnaires. At its best, this approach results in data similar to that collected by Howard Bowen, which collection is presumably endorsed by the report. It states:

In order to develop a schematic foundation for his extensive study of the consequences of American higher education, Howard Bowen examined more than 1,000 goal statements in "writings of noted educational philosophers and critics of the past and present, reports of public commissions and faculty committees, and statements of leading educators in speeches, articles, and institutional reports" (H. Bowen, 1977, p. 53). From these statements, he has compiled a "catalog" that includes more than a score of 17 categories of "goals for individual students."

The Missions report suggests that Bowen's findings should not "necessarily form the basis of any specific institutional mission statement" but that they do "suggest the range of subject matter that deserves consideration in framing such a statement." 17

This approach to finding a solid base for curriculum change is reminiscent of the activity analysis movement that was in vogue in the 1920's and early 1930's. One is reminded of the work of W. W. Charters in the 1929 Commonwealth Study of Teachers. Charters, in the name of being "scientific," tabulated and categorized 1001 competencies that "good" teachers should have. These were based on the specific activities good teachers were observed to be performing at that time. Without some knowledge of how inadequate the Commonwealth Study and others like it have
proved to be as a base for curriculum development, it was inevitable that the gross inadequacies of the approach would be perpetuated fifty years later.

Yet another example further underscores this presumed "scientific" approach. Arthur Levine's *Handbook on Undergraduate Curriculum* defines types, components, and content of general education programs from the 1976 Carnegie Council Catalog Study. One must question the reliability and validity of these statements—statements which reflect "practical realities" of education and the realm of "what is." Indeed, the *Missions* report, itself, warns that missions statements "should be made in clear language that avoids the sales rhetoric often encountered in the introduction to college catalogs and recruiting brochures." Yet, Levine tends to draw upon such data as a sound base for formulating and implementing curricular policy and change. He continues to use a tabulating approach even in his effort to define the term "general education."

But in the broadest sense, Levine and the *Missions* authors seem not to be aware of a number of alternatives that now characterize some of the most significant research and theory building efforts in the realms of political and social science theory. Or if aware, they have chosen consciously to bypass or deny the relevance of such efforts
for the field of higher education and more particularly for curriculum reform at all levels.

References are made to general education throughout the volume, but Chapter 8, entitled "General Education: An Idea in Distress," centers on it directly. The authors assert that general education is a "disaster area" and "on the defensive and losing ground for more than 100 years."

A clue to many of the problems one finds in the discussion of general education in this chapter and of its treatment in the report as a whole is found in the definition they formulate:

General education is a mediating influence that, through institution-wide requirements, ensures that all students obtain, from the many courses and programs and institutions may make available, some knowledge of the ideas and culture that were once themes of the total liberal arts college. It does so by providing learning that:

1. Builds skills for advanced studies and lifelong learning
2. Distributes time available for learning in such a way as to expose students to the mainstreams of thought and interpretation—humanities, science, social science, and the arts
3. Integrates learning in ways that cultivate the student's broad understanding and ability to think about a large and complex subject.21

To criticize but one aspect of this definition—namely, the direct causal relationship posited between content and manifested student behaviors, as seen in such expressions as "ensures that all students obtain"—is to underscore the simplistic conception of the view taken.
The failure of many current efforts to achieve "accountability" is based on such an assumed relationship. Jacques Barzun called such activity "educational nonsense." It undoubtedly contributes to the widespread cynicism that many college professors feel toward any kind of curriculum development effort, much less general education reform.

The commentary in the report also distinguishes between the various components of general education. It is implied that curriculum planners must take these into account and provide coordination among the components in order to accomplish the specified learning outcomes. For example, one component cited is "advanced learning skills." Immediately, the authors question how advanced should the skills be and to what degree should secondary education provide these foundations for general education. The report recognized that some high schools are indeed providing such instruction, but that this matter "cannot be left to chance."

Colleges have an obligation to make clear to the high schools which skills they expect their students to acquire before they are admitted. In addition, they should make clear which of the skill subjects they offer might also be taught at high schools and what the criteria are for recognizing completion of such instruction as satisfying college requirements.
The potential for widespread disagreement among the various colleges and state boards of education is not acknowledged. But to engage in a modest understatement, such matters could prove troublesome should action be taken on these recommendations. The ease in which this "obligation" could become competency-oriented is noticed when the report states:

\[
\ldots \text{the advanced learning skills components of general education are particularly well-suited to instruction in nontraditional modes. Such programs can be competency-based even when other parts of the curriculum are not. Many of them also can be adapted easily for personalized self-instruction, audio-tutorial presentation, and presentation in a series of brief learning modules.}^{24}
\]

The recent history of competency-based efforts adumbrates the trouble one might expect in this highly oversimplified proposal.\(^{25}\)

Persistent theoretical issues of general education go unaddressed in the Missions report. The dilemma of "breadth vs. depth," a topic which would dominate any thoughtful treatment of survey courses; the general education design criticism of "permanence"; the curricular issue of balance; the "utility" of a general education; the basic purpose of a general education: these are but a few of the crucial issues. These and others are implicit in the statements and proposals of Missions. But instead of addressing "the issues" directly, the authors merely cite
alternative programs. It is assumed then that administrators can make a selection from among the alternatives without giving careful thought to foundational issues. This is not the "policy-oriented" treatment of curriculum problems that Missions identified itself as taking.

Finally, Missions does not examine the relevant knowledge base thoroughly enough to warrant the most extreme of its general education recommendations. In the conclusion to the general education chapter, this "advice" is offered:

If colleges cannot define what they intend to accomplish in general education, cannot specifically describe how it will benefit the students who engage in it, and cannot deliver an effective general education component, they should seriously consider eliminating it entirely.

In summary, it is clear that the Missions report does not attend to the design problems of general education curriculum reform. It bypasses any historical analysis of such problems and issues and it fails to make use of an emerging field of curriculum theory that could function as a theoretical base for coping with design matters. The Carnegie Missions report is typical of the contemporary curriculum literature that focuses on general education curriculum reform in higher education. Relatively few proposals are yet forthcoming in the literature of secondary school curriculum. One may assume that in the next
several years there will be an avalanche of secondary school general education proposals.

In essence, the Carnegie reports do not offer a significant platform for college curriculum reform in the 1980's and beyond--especially curriculum reform that would provide for a redesign of general education. Objections to Missions of the College Curriculum may be summarized in the following three points: (1) the contemporary general education literature does not attend adequately to theoretical and historical foundations for curriculum change, neglecting thereby significant alternative modes of inquiry that are emerging; (2) the proposals for future action are unwarranted extrapolations from surveys of contemporary practice; (3) the efforts ignore the specialized curriculum knowledge of professional educators, perpetuating further the gap within the community of scholars who are concerned with curriculum reform.

Bell's Reformation Proposal

In 1963, David Truman, Dean of Columbia College, commissioned Daniel Bell to study the general education program at Columbia and to make appropriate recommendations. Bell, then Professor of Sociology, is cautious of the applicability of his study, for his statement warns: This book is not a study of the American college, or an assessment
of 'general education' in higher learning. It is an essay on a single institution, Columbia College, and its problems." However, the insightfulness of the report, published in 1966 as The Reforming of General Education: The Columbia College Experience in Its National Setting, with Bell serving in his capacity of "a committee of one," was immediately recognized by the Columbia faculty.

David Truman writes:

In such circumstances liberal education may be misconceived and misguided, but its potential relevance for the student and his society has never been greater.

Because Professor Bell's report tackles such problems as these, in settings that extend beyond Morningside Heights and in a fashion certain to provoke comment, the faculty of Columbia College has given its consent to publishing the document before its own deliberations have more than begun. It does so only in the hope that it will thus contribute to discussions on other campuses but also in the expectation that those discussions will assist its own.

Unfortunately, the faculty response to the report did not live up to the quality of the report itself. Lionel Trilling reported the lack of widespread discussion and support as evidenced in poor attendance at faculty meetings called to discuss the report.

Despite this lack of faculty concern, The Reforming of General Education proves to be one of the most significant conceptions of general education of the 1960's. In many respects, it became the "redbook" for the 1970's as
well, taking the role the Harvard Report had played earlier in the immediate post World War II years.

Aside from the "telic" reforms of the report, Bell compiled the most succinct, yet comprehensive, reviews of the history of general education at Columbia, Chicago, and Harvard. In so doing, he presents an analysis also of intellectual issues which influences general education.

The most effective review of his efforts was made by Bell, himself, with eight years hindsight in his 1973 address to Columbia's Seminar on General and Continuing Education in the Humanities entitled "A Second Look at General Education." Bell cites three different emphases in his text, all of which impinge on his conception of appropriate curriculum design. He attempted to use the various disciplines as the foundational element in his design. He viewed integrative courses as an introduction to the training in a discipline and the "application of this discipline to diverse subject matters in a field." When the student had achieved these experiences proposed for the second and third years, the "third-level" was introduced into the overall design:

The third tier—which is the most radical innovation I propose in the curriculum—is not a set of general education or survey courses, or courses of the type called "great issues." Nor are they primarily "interdisciplinary" courses, which give students a passing knowledge of presumably new approaches. Third-tier courses, limited within the triadic division I have used,
will give students a sense of how his major subject can be applied to a problem area, or will demonstrate the broad conceptual foundations of the discipline he has acquired.31

The second major emphasis of the work was that of "conceptual inquiry," or "modes of inquiry"—an approach that could serve as "a methodological, but not a substantive, basis for the unity of general education."32 Significantly, what did evolve was the idea that conceptual modes of inquiry could serve as the organizing feature of the curriculum. The content still centered upon the disciplines, but the manner in which this material was conceptually organized became an organizing feature of the curriculum and therefore a topic of study and reflection. This is, in fact, the third emphasis of Reforming General Education, that of self-consciousness. To summarize the last two points, Bell writes:

The distinctive function of the college must be to teach modes of conceptualization, explanation, and verification of knowledge. As between the secondary school, with its emphasis on primary skills and factual data, and the graduate or professional school, whose necessary concern is with specialization and technique, the distinctive function of the college is to deal with the grounds of knowledge: not what one knows but how one knows. The college can be the unique place where students acquire self-consciousness, historical consciousness, and methodological consciousness.33

Bell continues his review, citing three intellectual underpinnings to his work. One was his controversial conception
of triadic patterns of knowledge, or the perceived distinctive in the modes of acquisition of knowledge. He illustrated this conception by noting the differing modes of learning in such fields as mathematics and humanities. 34

A second underpinning was the emphasis on conceptual renovation. "It was this emphasis on selectivity and re-ordering (of experience) that I tried to join as the basis of the notion of conceptual inquiry," he states in explicating this idea. 35 In one sense, conceptual renovation underlines Bell's definition of "liberal." Selectivity and reordering of experience, explitly within the Dewey tradition, continues to provide a "freshness" and openness to the subject matter, thereby freeing curricular experience from dogma and indoctrination. Bell writes:

When a subject is presented as received doctrine or fact, it becomes an aspect of specialization and technique. When it is introduced with an awareness of its contingency and of the conceptual frame that guides its organization, the student can then proceed with the necessary self-consciousness that keeps his mind open to possibility and to reorientation. All knowledge, thus, is liberal (that is, it enlarges and liberates the mind) when it is committed to continuing inquiry. 36

The third "intellectual base" for Bell's work was the importance of history as a method of presenting the major themes of human dilemmas. He viewed the study of history so conceived as having five functions:
1. To redress the passion for the abstract by emphasizing the concrete, thus demonstrating a social situation in its manifold complexity and actuality and showing "that the world is intractable as well as malleable. . . ."

2. To provide a "vocabulary of reference" for the historical imagination, both to stretch the imagination and to forestall the limited (and sometimes false) analogies that can be invoked to justify or explain events. . . .

3. To emphasize the role of context in establishing the meanings of ideas. . . .

4. To identify the relevant antecedent events that have shaped the present. . . .

5. To be a source for comparative analysis. . . .

Bell makes another important contribution to a theoretical framework for general education in his clarification of the relationship between general education and special education. He places great emphasis on the way a subject is introduced rather than on the broad categories "general" and "special."

This brief probing of Bell's proposals shows the character of the theory that supports his views of general education. It is a striking contrast to the atheoretical nature of both the Harvard Core proposal and the treatment of general education in the Carnegie reports.

Harold Taylor's Philosophy

To place both the Harvard Core effort and the Carnegie Missions report in a theoretical context, Daniel Bell's "reformation" proposal has been examined. Yet another basic
dimension of such a context emerges in the work of Harold Taylor. Taylor, trained as a professional philosopher, became president of Sarah Lawrence and engaged in significant curriculum innovation in that college. Throughout this practical curriculum development work, he also continued as a philosopher intent on generating a more effective rationale for general education. He was, and continues to be, both a theorist and a practitioner, performing thereby a role similar to that of Bell.

In the dialogue that developed following the publication in 1945 of the Harvard Report, Taylor exchanged views with Raphael Demos, Sydney Hook, Horace Kallen and Claude Puffer. This exchange was published in the *Journal of Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* and proves to be a significant theoretical exchange of ideas on the nature of general education.\(^\text{38}\)

The Harvard Report had attempted to "draw the best" out of the philosophical positions of both Robert Hutchins and John Dewey. Taylor found this to be an impossible task. He was especially critical of Hutchins and certain that Aristotelian rationalism could not be merged with Dewey's instrumentalism. He asserted that Hutchins always took an either-or dualistic position quite different from the major tenet of Dewey's philosophical base. As a consequence there was always polarity in his discourse.
Having carried the art of sweeping statements to one of the highest levels it ever reached in the public discussion of cultural issues in America, Hutchins was able by reason of his gifts in exposition and command of the public media to create what amounted to a national polarity in popular thought between the progressive views of the philosophical and educational theory of John Dewey and the classical views of the Western tradition. His achievement was to make a kind of souring public wrestling match between Dewey, the common man's friend and everybody's intellectual, and Aristotle, the all-time heavyweight champion of Western thought.

In one of the exchanges with Demos, the opposing position of Taylor with respect to the Harvard Redbook is further apparent:

The Harvard Report rests upon an implicit body of assumptions, regarding most of which I am suspicious. It is squarely in the middle of the genteel tradition in American thought. It assumes without proof, for example, a neo-calvinist doctrine of human nature, a dualistic theory of perception, a faculty psychology, a rationalistic theory of history and culture, and a modified eighteenth century universe. It is this body of implicit assumptions which I find inadequate or obsolete, since it does not take advantage of the insights for some time in the work of creative thinkers in biology, physics, psychology, medicine, aesthetics and other fields.

Yet another aspect of Taylor's criticism of the Harvard Report centers on its assumptions about the nature of history. The Report tended to assume that tradition would inevitably provide the standard for what was "good" in education. Taylor proposed instead that the student become an active agent in clarifying his values in an evolving
historical context.  

In keeping with his basic philosophy, Taylor questions the Report's emphasis on cognitive development, the assumption that "growth of the kind we call liberally-educated will necessarily occur through intellectual disciplines devoted to such skills." In contrast, he asks the educator to recognize the importance of the "impact of immediate experience," the immediacy of ideas:

When young people have immediate experience of intellectual and social values, through reading, discussing, and doing those things which are important to their own needs and abilities, knowledge becomes a part of the system of values by which they live. It does not remain as a system of concepts included in the college curriculum. In whatever kind of educational system he is involved, the student's knowledge will deepen, and its breadth will increase, only as a result of personal effort by the student himself to achieve his own maturity and responsibility.42

Taylor also had trouble with the Redbook's traditional separation of subjects even though an effort had been made to group them into broad fields. He wrote:

The divisions we make are merely ways of referring to and emphasizing various aspects of the field of reality. When separated into formal disciplines whose inter-relationships are unclear, and studied in isolation of one discipline from another, they serve to train the intellect in ways which are often inappropriate to the achievement of general understanding.43

As Taylor suggests, for educators to propose curriculum activities which would in fact elicit these "immediate
experiences"," the educator must seek out the needs of the students. Seeking out student needs requires the direct involvement of undergraduates in the curriculum development process. This was the crux of student objection to the 1945 Harvard Report. The Undergraduate Committee on the General Education Report deplored "the apparent disregard of student opinion shown by the administration and Faculty of Arts and Sciences in the consideration of the General Education Report."\textsuperscript{44} It is interesting to note that the students in 1945 did not object to increased curriculum requirements as did the Harvard students to the 1978 Core Curriculum.

The Taylor criticism most characteristic of his work is the assertion that the Harvard Report represents "a rejection of creative music as an integral part of the liberal arts curriculum." The fields of musicology and art history were considered appropriate for a general education; the performing arts were not. Demos expresses the dominant view on this aspect of the report:

\begin{quote}
I am not sure that you can make good artists at the same time that you are training them for a general education. The arts require a single-mindedness of devotion and an intensity of concentration which, if granted, would not leave enough time and energy for the other more general studies. ... it is hardly feasible to mix the training of the critical and the creative powers together in one program of education.\textsuperscript{45}
\end{quote}
This continues to be a major issue in the redesign of any general education program.

In 1980, Taylor maintains as vigorously as in his earlier statements that participation in the performing arts heightens one's awareness as a member of the audience. Thus, in addition to the enjoyment from the amateur's aesthetic expression, the amateur, more sensitive to the nuances of performance, addresses the intellectual and analytical aspects of art at a more sophisticated level. Taylor continues to see the role of the creative arts as a way to provide immediate experience, a source so vital to his conception of general education content.

Moreover, Taylor sees the arts as a method for developing the faculty of enjoyment, a faculty quite different from the commonly held instructional expectations of analysis and history of aesthetic objects. He asserts:

Unless the faculty for enjoyment can somehow be developed, the statement of historical fact and analytic truth will remain irrelevant to the education of the whole personality. It would be wise, therefore, to introduce the criteria of enjoyment, use, and need, in order to choose the studies for our college youth, since the relation of thought to action, when examined empirically, seems to be one which moves through action and enjoyed experience to further thought and knowledge. We can then arrange a curriculum and a method to strengthen education for its social purposes.46

Despite his efforts over the years to generate a sound theoretical-philosophical base for general education
curricula, Taylor reflecting in 1969 on the general education movement was not optimistic about the prospects. He was concerned that teachers were still presenting "the materials with all the connections made." The challenge of the 1980's that Taylor holds out to both curriculum theorists and practitioners is one of building a rationale based on the philosophical assumptions he helped to clarify almost forty years ago and which he has continued to refine in his professional role of educator.

**Phenix's Realms of Meaning**

Most current books and reports devoted to curriculum make at least a passing reference to general education, but few develop a well-articulated theory or express a basic philosophical position to undergird general education. The work of Philip Phenix is an exception. In the generation of a sound conceptual structure for the redesign of general education, therefore, his work merits careful study. Phenix is a professional philosopher who has taken education as his field of study. Within this broad field he has given special attention to curriculum theory. Two of his publications reflect the major ideas he has formulated--*Education and the Common Good: A Moral Philosophy of the Curriculum* and *Realm of Meaning: A Philosophy of the Curriculum for General Education*. These two volumes will be examined in some detail.
Early in the first volume, Phenix clarifies one basic tenet of his view, namely, that neither the organized subject fields nor the psychology of personality furnishes the criteria for deciding the content of general education. He claims that the basic criteria for selecting general education curricular experiences must be a moral criterion inasmuch as education, in his view, is clearly a moral undertaking:

... where the term "moral" refers to purposeful conduct based on consideration of values. Intellectual and esthetic responsibility, right choice of work and recreation, conservation of natural and human resources, and so on, are all moral issues.

Having taken this position, Phenix is aware that the basic question of whose values shall prevail is a crucial question in curriculum planning. In his response to this issue, he asserts that a distinction must be made between values based on desire on interest and values based on objective worth. He clarifies further this distinction by asserting that:

There is a decisive difference between wanting something and affirming its worth [italics in original] for about any want it is always possible to ask whether or not it is worthy, about any desire whether or not it is desirable, about any interest whether or not it is right.

This position takes Phenix into a consideration of the matter of what "good" is in a moral sense. He is con-
vinced that there are objective standards of worth upon which some universal agreement is possible. This places his philosophical position in class relationship to that of John Dewey who held that "the educative process is all one with the moral process, since the latter is a continuous passage of experience from worse to better."51

Dewey, too, was convinced that standards for making the moral judgments involved in such a process could be formulated through the democratic social process both in education and in affairs of society. Indeed, his entire philosophy stemmed largely from this premise. Phenix expresses the relationship this way: "Democracy is the social expression of belief in objective qualities of goodness and of common loyalty to them."52

Phenix stresses what many social critics have observed: that some kind of radical simplification is essential if mankind is not to be smothered by the endlessly multiplying mass of things to be known and done. Unless such simplification can take place, education is faced with a pervasive meaningfulness that characterizes contemporary society. For Phenix, the answer lies in "focusing education on values."53

From this position regarding the central role of values in education, Phenix moves to his assertion of the paramount importance of general education. In part, he writes:
General education is concerned with what a person needs to know and to become as a human being, not merely as a cog in the corporate mechanism. Generality does not preclude high concentration. It does preclude the narrow pursuit of knowledge and skill without concern for their relevance to the whole pattern of truth and right.54

He continues to expand the idea of generality in education by stating that true generality, as he views it, is necessarily profound because it involves a consideration of complex relationships, the discernment of fundamental relevancies, and the exhibition of value premises.

In his Realms of Meaning, Phenix delineates more fully the nature of a general curriculum design which would fulfill some of the purposes he views as basic. His definition of general education, "the process of engendering essential meanings,"55 has been widely disseminated as a classic alternative to the conventional wisdom of curriculum.

Providing this definition of general education, Phenix then identifies six curricular realms which he argues are realms in which fundamental patterns of meaning emerge from the analysis of the possible modes of human understanding. He names these six realms: symbolics, empirics, esthetics, synnoetics, ethics and synoptics. The entire volume elaborates in detail the nature of each of these six realms.
Broadly characterized, symbolics comprises language, mathematics and various types of nondiscursive symbolic forms such as gestures and rhythmic patterns. Empirics includes the sciences of the physical world and of living things. Esthetics contains the wide range of arts in which "meanings are concerned with the contemplative perception of particular significant things as unique objectifications of ideated subjectives." Synnoetics embraces what Polanyi called "personal knowledge." This relational knowledge is concrete, direct, and existential. Ethics is the fifth realm. For Phenix, this includes "moral meanings that express obligation rather than fact, perceptual form or awareness of relation." The sixth realm is synoptics. It refers to meanings that are comprehensively integrative; history, religion, philosophy are disciplines which combine empirical, esthetic and synnoetic meanings into coherent wholes.

In this exposition of his philosophy of curriculum, Phenix again documents the meaninglessness that characterizes contemporary society and emphasizes the fact that the function of general education is to help students find meaning in the six realms he has delineated. Important in this process is his criterion he holds that the selection of curriculum content from these realms must be such that it exemplifies the "methods of inquiry and
the modes of understanding in each of the realms" (italics in original). 58

In addition to this criterion, Phenix points to the importance of having each student and his professors belong to a community. 59 The six realms he projects suggest six communities of scholars. In each so-called community he asserts that the fulfillment of meaning, as he visualizes an outcome of general education, must honor the integrity of the person. This means, in his view, that the studies must form an interrelated whole. Phenix rightly asserts that the criteria used to fulfill these outcomes of curriculum are necessarily overlapping. 60

He also attends to the distinctions that might be drawn between general education and specialized education. While admitting that hard and fast lines between the two components are difficult to draw, he points to an important difference:

The significant distinction is between studies intended to develop kinds of understanding (not particular understandings) that everybody needs simply because he is human and studies intended to develop kinds of understanding that only some people need in order to fulfill certain particular individual or social needs. 61

It is clear from this overview of Phenix's proposal for a general education curriculum design that he projects not only a curricular design in which the six realms are viewed as curricular areas rich in their potential for meaningful
experience, but also that he identifies certain of the processes involved in translating this design into instructional practices. Underlying his concept of these processes is a rationale similar to that developed by Alfred N. Whitehead in which imagination plays a very crucial role.

**A Rationale Claim:**

**King and Brownell**

In addition to Phenix, two other educationists have shared a major responsibility (since the publication of their volume in 1966) for developing a rationale for general education which has been widely discussed and debated whenever curriculum theory questions regarding general education have arisen. King and Brownell propose a rationale for the general education component of curriculum that merits examination in any assessment of alternatives. In their own terms, they "build a model of the modern world of knowledge and use it to devise a theory of curriculum." To achieve this end, they offer this definition of a general education curriculum: "A planned series of dialogues among teachers and students."

They then proceed to examine five claims that have traditionally been made on the curriculum. Since all efforts to develop more adequate curricula in higher education tend to be characterized as manifestations of
one or more such claims, it is useful at this point in
the study to discuss in detail these claims as King and
Brownell lay them out, analyze them, and then criticize
each.

First is their identification of the curricular claim
for "occupational man." The explication of this claim
moves from an analysis of contemporary society's heavy
emphasis on occupational roles as a measure of success
and social mobility. In effect, marketable knowledge
and skills become the most significant outcomes of this
perspective. Such a view has the further undergirding of
the Protestant "work ethic" which supports faith in the
fact that an individual's highest character is developed
through hard work.

As King and Brownell point out, the irony of this
curricular view is that "the more training an individual
has at the expense of liberal education the poorer is
his prognosis with regard to advancement, social position,
and opportunity for contributions to society."64 They
sum up their case against the occupational claim this way:
"When occupational and professional training shortcircuits
liberal education, the education of the person qua person
is reduced; his ultimate worth is denied."65 And, finally,
they identify the most dangerous outcome of a dominant
emphasis on the occupational and technical:
When the claim for occupational man is made prime, the control and definition of the curriculum move inevitably to the consumers of manpower—the industries, the military, the government, and the professional school. The economic establishment becomes the pied piper. . . .

King and Brownell then move to an examination of the claim for political man on the curriculum. In tracing this historical influence, they observe that there was an "early wedding of state and education by Greek philosophers—the use of education to sustain the state to shape its citizens or subjects to its power, to instill loyalty to it as the chief good." In modern times, this political press on curriculum continues as marked shifts in the influence of church and family have taken place elevating thereby the influence of government of the state.

With the political claim often goes the value orientation that certain disciplines are more valuable and therefore should be given priority. A case in point is insistence on mathematics and science because they are seen as crucial to national survival. Often, in colleges and universities this priority is reflected by selective grants of money to such fields, with resulting influence on the design of curricular offerings. Clearly, the political claim cannot result in a well-balanced general education.
What can be said for a widespread "social" claim on the curriculum? Here, as with the other two claims, King and Brownell examine the consequences. They note that "in the United States the claim for socialization on the content of the curriculum has been persistent. From de Tocqueville to D. W. Brogen, European observers have noted the use of formal studies as a force for the development of a common culture."

The danger of this as a dominant claim on general education curriculum rests in the fact that approaches to education emphasize the socially and politically useful arts to the near exclusion of the speculative and philosophical. In a certain sense, the end result is what David Riesman and his associates identified as the highly "other-directed" individual. This prototype described a person who always took basic value positions with his "radar out" first to see what others were thinking, what was socially acceptable.

Without extensive argument, King and Brownell dismiss the claim for religious man on the curriculum of general education. Their major thesis is that such a perspective permits education to develop only within a single value frame—namely, that of the particular religion. Clearly, it is difficult to project a liberalizing, open-ended curriculum within such constraints.
These curriculum theorists then move to a careful analysis of a fifth claim—namely, the claim for intellectual man on the curriculum. In an extensive explication of their analysis, they assert that this should be the "prime" claim on a general education curriculum. This, in fact, is their contribution to the contemporary curriculum theory field.

They start with the proposition that man is a symbolizing animal. Cassirer, Langer, Ernest Becker, Barzun and many others develop fully this assertion. From this basic proposition, they move to a position of which the following is typical:

Through the intellect come the expressions of individuality which mark each of us. For centuries man's inner thoughts and private dialogue which create consciousness of self have been attributed to his mind. The consequence of intellect for each of us is knowledge that we are selves.69

But they expand the traditional view of the nature of intellect to encompass the kind of knowledge Michael Polanyi calls personal knowledge which honors "tacit knowing."

As the dominant value orientation for general education, they assert that intellect broadly conceived

... has transcended its society, more freely in free societies than in others. Intellect has become, through its organization of all that is known and its search for the unknown, the best and perhaps the only bridge to meaning. The intellectual perspective of man brings other perspectives into new form.70
In effect, King and Brownell are asserting that the intellectual claim interrelates all of the others with understanding and gives a base for criticism of them that no other approach provides.

Having established this position, King and Brownell then turn to some of the other complex issues that characterize all efforts to develop more adequate general education curricula. Drawing on Casserir, they note that in contemporary times, there is no longer a concept of wholeness to the nature of knowledge. Instead, the fabric of knowledge is torn and fragmented. In effect, the philosophy of knowledge that once gave a directive role to education and curriculum as well has disappeared. But the significant curriculum problem remains: how does one find unity in the various diverse realms of knowledge.

King and Brownell propose a resolution to this problem in their proposition that there be a human focus for knowledge with the unity of the person as an end not a means. They draw upon the work of Mumford, and Kallen, among others, to support this position.

These theorists then proceed to define disciplines metaphorically as "communities of scholars who share a domain of intellectual inquiry or discourse." They assert, further, that such a definition has three distinct advantages for curriculum planning over more traditional
views of the nature of disciplines. It minimizes the misleading dichotomy between scholarship in the field and teaching or learning in the field. Moreover, the dynamic, inquiring character of the field is emphasized. And, finally, it preserves the idea of the continuing existence of a group of competent scholars.

To summarize, King and Brownell propose the community of discourse as a theory model for developing general education curricula. They clarify an extension of this position:

While the curriculum is an analytically and systematically planned series of encounters, it is expressly incomplete without the teacher and student, without their active involvement in the dialogue and discovery which characterizes all of the practitioners of the discipline wherever they may be.75

The community of discourse concept requires that the college or university student involve himself as a neophyte community member and the professor as a veteran "discourses." Such a relationship King and Brownell assert is the central core of a general education curriculum which makes its basic claim on the development of the intellect.

The 1979 Bard Conference

To investigate further the present state of the field of curriculum theory and to discern its relationship to
curriculum development efforts actually underway to redesign general education in colleges and universities, this writer participated in a January, 1979, conference at Bard College. It was assumed that such a conference might also serve as a kind of "testing out" situation for some of the hypotheses which were beginning to emerge from this research. The conference did, indeed, provide such an opportunity.

The theme of the Bard Conference was "What Ought to be Taught? The New Movement in General Education." A sub-theme centered on the impact of the general education movement on high schools and colleges. Individuals on the program came from Harvard, Chicago, Columbia, the parent institutions of classic general education programs. Other institutions with a record of experimentation such as Antioch and Amherst were also represented. Here at Bard was the initial promise that general education curriculum questions could, at last, be viewed in an historical perspective.

Many definitions of general education emerged from the presentations and small group discussions. Yet, the speakers showed no knowledge of curriculum theory nor or historical efforts to develop general education. For example, no one mentioned Daniel Bell's seminar work or other significant efforts to develop a basic rationale.
The discussions were serious and at times heated. But the tenor of the comments were primarily administrative and quantitative rather than theoretical. Stanley Hoffman's comments at a large session were characteristic. He was seemingly unaware of the massive criticism of the Harvard Redbook at the time of its release. He tended only to talk of the current "political difficulties" of the Harvard Core reform effort:

What was clear was that the Red Book notion of simply traditional Western history, past-oriented liberal education, was no longer sufficient. What was not clear was the one vision that could take its place. So we all listened to fascinating debates about the rationale with a capital "R," and having listened to all of those debates, we ended up with a compromise. If you don't believe in compromise, the exercise we went through is, of course, very mediocre and very simple. Committees never produce something transcendent. No committee will sound like Mr. Hutchins or Thoreau. Still, the result was not simply log rolling although there was some of that too.76

In other words, what we ended up doing, and this is one of the reasons why the scheme has come under attack, is effect a compromise between various approaches: skills plus the kind of basic knowledge which most members of the faculty could agree on as being essential for somebody who graduates from a college in the 1970's, plus that element of values, if you like, or character if you prefer.77

If individuals based their position on the state of the field only on the content of what was assumed to be a major conference on the subject of general education with
participants who were thought to be in the midst of reform, they might be convinced that compromise and detente were the only alternatives open to current curriculum reform in colleges and universities. Moreover, their experience at the Bard Conference might well support the criticism that curriculum reform in the decade of the 1980's will continue to be ahistorical and atheoretical. Curriculum design questions and issues simply were not discussed at the conference.
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III


17 Ibid., pp. 155-156.

18 Ibid., p. 156.

19 Ibid., p. 181.


24 Ibid., p. 169.

26 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Missions of the College Curriculum, pp. 184-185.


32 Ibid., p. 8.


34 Bell, "A Second Look at General Education," p. 5.


36 Ibid., pp. 170-171.

37 Ibid., p. 8.


42 Ibid., p. 231.

43 Ibid., p. 231.


49 Ibid., pp. 4-5.

50 Phenix, Education and the Common Good, p. 5.


52 Phenix, Education and the Common Good, p. 7.

53 Ibid., p. 19.
54 Ibid., p. 106.


56 Ibid., pp. 6-7.

57 Ibid., p. 7.

58 Ibid., p. 11.

59 Ibid., p. 268.

60 Ibid., p. 269.

61 Ibid., p. 272.


63 Ibid., p. 2.

64 Ibid., p. 7.

65 Ibid., p. 7.

66 Ibid., p. 8.

67 Ibid., p. 12.

68 Ibid., p. 17.

69 Ibid., p. 21.

70 Ibid., p. 23.

71 Ibid., p. 51.
72 Ibid., p. 62.

73 Ibid., p. 68.

74 Ibid., p. 68.

75 Ibid., p. 123.


77 Ibid., p. 9.
CHAPTER IV
PERSISTENT DESIGN DILEMMAS AND
AN EMERGING THEORETICAL BASE

An analysis of the three case studies of classic
general education programs made in Chapter II and the
critical examination of the theoretical bases underlying
contemporary general education proposals, the focus of
Chapter III, both repeatedly bring to the surface a series of
persistent curriculum design problems that must be faced in
any effort to generate more effective general education cur­
ricula. It will be recalled that curriculum design as used
here refers to the pattern of relationships which exist
among the elements that give structure to a curriculum.

These problems are best conceived as the manifestation
of educational dilemmas which emerge in general education
theory and practice. By their very nature, these issues
are interrelated in any comprehensive, holistic theory, or
indeed, in any genuinely effective curriculum development
effort.

Yet, a theory base adequate to serve as a guide for
curriculum development in institutional settings, to
function as a conceptual framework for curriculum research,
and to lend itself to further research efforts by raising
significant, yet unanswered questions in the design realm—the major goals of this investigation—requires identification and explication of each of these dilemmas as if they were distinctive and separate one from the other. Such an undertaking is the task of this chapter. In effect, the conceptual "unpacking" of each critical issue will become an element of the emerging theoretical base. This base is to be seen as an alternative to the conventional wisdom of the field. The intent, then, is to state each dilemma and to delineate several of the most crucial of the design problems it presents. An alternative theory base for coping with these dilemmas will be formulated and the foundational underpinnings for such a base identified. This alternative theory can then serve as a conceptual structure for general education curriculum reform—reform that attends to design problems and projects innovative solutions.

The Depth vs. Breadth Dilemma

An issue which plagued the historical general education programs—Columbia, Chicago, and Harvard—was the problem of depth vs. breadth. Critics of these programs often cited the comparative "shallowness of content."¹ The typical general education survey course was so comprehensive that its treatment of subject matter tended to be superficial,
they asserted. This conception of subject matter inevitably dicotomizes course objectives; one must sacrifice depth of content for breadth of subject matter or vice versa.

Many educators have resolved this issue by separating the idea of general education from the intent of a comprehensive liberal education, by justifying it as a component of the undergraduate education solely in terms of its function of providing the necessary breadth. In short, this so-called resolution bypasses the issue of providing desirable depth. Under such an approach, the "major," a more significant component, is assumed to provide the depth.

Such a concept of design components clearly does not provide a viable solution, even though this proposal is suggested in Arthur Levine's Handbook on Undergraduate Curriculum. Course offerings of the general education component so conceived still run the risk of superficiality.

In terms of an adequate design for general education, this problem became more complicated with the so-called "information explosion" of the 1950's and 1960's. In this period, the emphasis upon breadth as a desirable dimension of education subsided significantly. This was, in part, because depth, or concentrated study, was so applauded for its potential for advancing scientific discoveries. Even secondary schools were urged to drop ideas of breadth and
concentrate on turning out young scientists and mathematicians. Moreover, the curricular task, always difficult, now seemed overwhelming. Robert McEwen's 1959 Pitcairn-Crabbe Foundation Lecture reflects the prevailing view of that period:

The explosion of knowledge, the tremendous growth of our knowledge in recent years, and the acceleration of its rate of growth call for more and more people with specialists' skills and training. Ours is a time when the growing edge of knowledge in the laboratory or the scholar's study is knife-edge sharp, focused on problems which can be understood only by the relatively few who know a great deal about a sharply narrowed subject field.

But fortunately for curriculum reform, other views were beginning to be expressed. Conspicuous among these was the proposal that general education content be conceived in terms of the dominant modes of inquiry that characterize the various fields of knowledge. This approach became an alternative often proposed to resolve the depth vs. breadth dilemma. Daniel Bell had advanced the concept in higher education in the 1960's. And Jerome Bruner's widely-acclaimed volume, *The Process of Education*, had done much to disseminate widely this idea. The idea itself, however, can be traced back to the origin of general education or even to Matthew Arnold's concept of "integrative functions."

The abstraction took various forms in proposals for reform. The Harvard Redbook's "learning traits" have been
discussed previously, as has Bell's conceptual inquiry approach. Chicago's emphasis upon the "structure of inquiry" as described by Franklin Patterson is characteristic of the way this approach developed there:

The basic principle is that in each field of specialization the emphasis would be on the structure of inquiry as it becomes manifest through subject matter. The underlying proposition is that by developing experience in the process of inquiry in a special field, students would understand the principles of description, exposition and argument that are applicable in other subjects as well.4

When this approach was effectively implemented, the learning of facts became less important. Education became increasingly a matter of learning how to learn and how to identify the range of perspectives that made up the full world of knowledge. Thus, breadth of subject matter became more realistic and achievable if one opted for the modes approach instead of the traditional view of content as a comprehensive array of facts expanding each decade in geometric proportions.

The Balance Dilemma

Underlying the idea of general education as a liberating experience for the learner is the assumption that this experience will have "balance," i.e., it will provide experiences which cut across the full range of organized cultural heritage. If a systematic presentation of subject matter appears ineffective as an approach--and the foregoing
discussion of the modes of inquiry suggests a significant alternative—how can one be assured that significant domains of experience are not overlooked? Or, what is there to prevent the general education curriculum from being skewed in only one direction? These are questions that typically arise when the balance dilemma is recognized.

A.C.D. Peterson raised the question of how one selects specific content from all of the possible sources; he concluded that such a selection could not be based on assumptions about the importance of certain selected bits of knowledge. An effective general education curriculum theory must attend to this dilemma.

Four distinctions are frequently made of organized "cultural content" in an effort to help cope with such issues as achieving balance. For example, one might visualize systematically organized fields as scientific inquiry. Their primary concern is the development of theoretical explanations quite apart from any practical applications. The applied, or technical, fields stand in contrast with the major goal of guiding the work of individuals engaged in practical tasks viewed as important by society. Balance, then, would involve experiences selected from both categories.

Traditionally, such fields as physical science are seen as distinct and qualitatively different from the creative
arts and the humanities. The former, it is assumed, draw
more fully on cognitive learnings and the latter, on the
affective and aesthetic realms. Again, balance from this
perspective suggests a curriculum that recognizes both as
resources.

Yet another dichotomy has historically functioned in
efforts to cope with the balance dilemma--namely, the
dualistic view of "common sense" knowledge vs. professional
knowledge. The common sense domain involves the everyday
wisdom of citizens who go about their daily lives solving
the many problems of family living, business affairs, and
the like. The professionals, in contrast, have specialized
technical knowledge and a special language. Balance could
be achieved, some assert, by guaranteeing that the
curriculum provides both.

A fourth version of the nature of organized cultural
experience is what some sociologists term the contrast
between "explicit" culture and "implicit" culture.
Explicit culture conforms to recognized goals and values
that are commonly recognized in the society at large.
Implicit culture, as the term suggests, is not ordinarily
recognized. Yet it also gives direction to individuals' actions and societal decisions.

These are but a few of the many ways that culture is
categorized by schools and, in turn, curriculum developers
drawing on cognate fields. Yet no one of these—all of which are limited by dualisms that deny their interrelatedness—has really solved the balance problem either in historical attempts at general education curriculum reform or in contemporary proposals.

Implicit in this dilemma is the acceptance of the relationship among knowledge, exposure, and learning. A critical also is the view of the importance of schools as the center for learning. No research study has been able to establish the direct relationships that exist among these factors.

Typically, the importance of schools as centers for learning is overemphasized in discussions of balance. At issue is the educator’s implicit assertion that everything must be taught in schools. One could assume that no learning takes place elsewhere. Henry S. Commager accuses American higher education of undermining the significance of outside-of-classroom experience. Post secondary education suffers, he asserts, from the delusion that everything must be taught:

We seem to think that because all knowledge is the province of the scholar, every university must take all knowledge for its province. We assume, therefore, that the university must teach not merely every subject, but every subdivision of every subject. . . . This academic megalomania is peculiarly American; no European university, as far as I know, suffers from this disease. All of this assumes that libraries are not available, and
that students are incapable of learning anything for themselves. It assumes that education is quantitative rather than qualitative, and that there is some relation between the number of courses offered or fields covered and the quality of education.6

Perhaps Commager overstates the situation, but the point is that American colleges and universities tend neither to recognize nor encourage learning outside the jurisdiction of their classrooms.

Currently, there is increasing interest in adult education and a more basic involvement of the community even in higher education. As a case in point, a general education project underway at the Ohio State University was described at two national conferences: in 1979 at the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and in 1980 at the conference of the American Educational Research Association. This project is an experiment with the use of festivals in a university-community oriented general education program (vide Appendix 2). It represents an effort to create educational experiences outside the classroom that have the potential for extending in-class experiences across conventional departmental and subject-matter lines. In this sense, these beyond the classroom experience provide an alternative solution to the persistent problem of balance.
The Utility Dilemma

The utility dilemma is concerned with the function and "usefulness" of general education. All educational programs are required to "justify" themselves. Such a requirement often places even highly effective general education programs in a difficult, if not impossible, position. Over the years, general education has often been viewed as having a Platonic philosophical base historically associated with liberal education.

The pursuit of knowledge, according to Plato and his contemporary disciples, rests upon the assumption that the activity of the mind, by nature, is the pursuit of knowledge. Thus, its accomplishment satisfies the mind and thereby attains its own appropriate ends. With individual aspirations for the good life, knowledge--an essential ingredient in the good life--is, by its very nature, good. In turn, the relationship between knowledge and reality affects the conception of mind. The mind, through the pursuit of knowledge and proper use of reason, recognizes basic principles and apprehends the "essential nature of things": reality. Thus life, experience and cognitive thought can lead to a perspective of ultimate truth. Hirst, the British philosopher who is interested in problems of curriculum, cites three justifications for this conception of education:
First, such an education is based on what is true and not on uncertain opinions and beliefs or temporary values. It therefore has a finality which no other form of education has. Secondly, knowledge itself being a distinctive human virtue, liberal education has a value for the person as the fulfillment of the mind, a value which has nothing to do with utilitarian or vocational considerations. Thirdly, because of the significance of knowledge in the determination of the good life as a whole, liberal education is essential to man's understanding of how he ought to live, both individually and socially.  

We need not here develop a critique of classical idealism. What is of importance is the realization that the justification of utility—making the subject material relevant—is not at issue with this conception of liberal education. Liberal education is, for such a view, a freeing of the mind thereby allowing it to function according to its own nature.

The idea of making general education serve some utilitarian end violates this conception of education. The explication in Chapter III of King and Brownell's theory of curriculum is an excellent example of contemporary philosophers' defense of the "rational claim" as the only warranted claim for general education.

Yet, in a society that demands accountability and tends to recognize only ends and operations that are deemed functional and useful, the dilemma assumes real importance in any curriculum reform proposal. In the view of critics such as Newmann and Oliver, the "Great Society" approach
dominates. This prevailing perspective makes schooling a mirror of society.8

In contrast to this prevailing value orientation, Newmann and Oliver propose a "missing community" based on an alternative set of values. Among the criteria used to create such a community is that which holds that membership in the community and the education of community members is valued as an end in itself, not merely as a means to other ends.

This view is furthered in yet a different expression in Charles Wegener's conception of liberal education in the modern university setting. He writes:

... a liberal education ought not so much to complete as to initiate a process: it should be an effort to create a habit of reflection as an integral part of the life of the mind. One might put the basic objective of liberal education very simply by saying that it is an attempt to create a sophisticated intellectual... The purpose is to stabilize that habit by providing practice and effective devices for practice. At its best, a liberal education ought to be a moment of transformation in the life of a growing mind--a moment in which it becomes conscious of itself and its powers as such and of the problems of assessing their fruitfulness and their limits, as well as their relation to the human enterprises they both constitute and serve.9

The point to be made here is that any effective general education reform effort must attend to this dilemma.
The Realistic Expectations Dilemma

Evaluation is a difficult problem in any aspect of education. But in general education, it involves even greater difficulties. What are the reasonable expectations of general education? This is, perhaps, the most useful way to confront the dilemma.

A vocal critic of this aspect of education is Jacques Barzun. His comments sharpen the problem:

The error began with the replacement of the word pedagogy with the word education. Pedagogy is not a beautiful word, but it sticks to the point of teaching. It denotes the art of leading a child to knowledge, whereas education properly refers to a completed development, or the whole tendency of the mind toward it. A person is taught by a teacher but educates him, or herself, partly by will, partly by assimilating experience. The educator's egotistical urge to blur this distinction is at the root of our present predicament. Thinking that we can give an education, we make wild claims and promises and forget to teach what is teachable.10

Clearly, Barzun would be the very last person to fall into the trap of achieving ends and outcomes by making them specific and utilitarian. The Carnegie Commission proposal, in contrast, calls for "specific outcomes" and a delivery system to assure that these are produced.11 Barzun takes the position that we should establish "known limits" and be accountable for them. He asserts, however, that a major responsibility rests with the student who must finally assimilate or make meaningful his or her experience.
One analysis of how this dilemma might be partially resolved warrants discussion. It is the proposal made by Charles Hampden-Turner\(^2\) to account for developing individuals and the cultural context in which they find themselves. Hampden-Turner uses the analogy of a double helix to express this relationship, one spiral of the helix overlapping with its counterpart on the other side of a central axis. His analogy handles effectively the recurring issue of the relationship of the individual to his milieu, environment, or social setting. Dewey, of course, resolved the issue by avoiding an either-or locus and asserting thereby that the social setting is an extension of the individual. If one were to assume a relationship in general education expectations analogous to the double helix often used to depict the DNA model in biology, there would always be a valid relationship between the learning taking place in the individual and the teaching involved in making available to the learner potential general educational experiences. In effect, there would always be "built into" the process a relationship between the two. Harold Taylor's philosophical position presented in Chapter III clearly supports this view of the relationship. Hampden-Turner asserts obtains between teacher and learner.
Sources for an Alternative Theory

The foregoing discussion demonstrates that the current efforts to reform general education in colleges and universities continue to be plagued with unresolved dilemmas, the most persistent of which have been identified. Historical attempts to redesign general education in institutional settings offer some clues as do the most thoughtful proposals made by critics and theoreticians. Yet there is no clear philosophical-theoretical base either in the literature or in practice. Despite this current situation, this investigation clearly supports the fact that sources for an alternative theory are emerging. In a Kuhnian sense, the field of general education might well be viewed as on the verge of undergoing a major paradigm shift.

One such source is found in what might accurately be described as a major reconceptualization of the field of curriculum theory, a field which has largely been bypassed, as this study has demonstrated. The nature of this reconceptualization warrants an explication for it provides, in a large measure, the context for the theoretical proposals that emerge from this investigation.

Curriculum studies were established as a specialized sub-field in education in many institutions in the 1930's.
Yet the first book to give professional attention to curriculum development as a process, Franklin Bobbitt's *The Curriculum*, appeared in 1918. In the period between 1918 and the time of the important Eight-Year Study, 1932-40, the field was dominated by a technological rationale exemplified in the writings of Bobbitt and W. W. Charters. A factory model, paralleling the scientific management studies underway in business and industry was characteristic of this period. Callahan describes this approach as "the cult of efficiency."\(^{13}\)

Ralph W. Tyler entered the field as evaluator for the Eight-Year Study and produced the significant monograph\(^ {14}\) which established the so-called Tyler rationale. This rationale continues in 1980 to be the base for the conventional wisdom of the field. Tyler asked four questions: What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? How can one determine whether these purposes are being attained?

Most curriculum theorists would hold that the Tyler questions are appropriate ones to be addressed in curriculum development. Yet, as Kliebard and other critics point out, it is Tyler's proposed process that came, in practice, to be linear and technological, reflecting the dominant values of society. Tyler, himself, served widely as a curriculum
advisor to colleges and universities. In effect, his approach, like that of Bobbitt and Charters, became a product-oriented undertaking.

In the decade of the 1970's, the production model and the Tyler rationale, in particular, have been criticized by a number of theorists within a group known as the Reconceptualists. This name was given to these individuals by William Pinar at a University of Rochester conference held in 1973 and in a published collection of representative essays. Although there is a wide range of differing approaches among these individuals, and they are not in any sense an organized group, certain common features are clearly emerging from their efforts. Curriculum theory conferences have been held each year, and a number of publications including a journal have entered the field.

Klohr was invited at a 1974 conference to identify some of the major characteristics of the Reconceptualist view. He identified nine such characteristics: a holistic, organic view is taken of people and their relation to nature; the individual becomes the chief agent in the construction of knowledge, that is, he/she is a culture creator as well as a culture bearer; the curriculum theorists draw heavily on their own experiential base as method; curriculum theorizing recognizes as major resources the preconscious realms of experience; the foundational
roots of this theorizing lie in existential philosophy, phenomenology, and radical psychoanalysis; they also draw from humanistic reconceptualizations of such cognate fields as sociology, anthropology and political science; personal liberty and the attainment of higher levels of consciousness become central values in the curriculum process; diversity and pluralism are characteristics both of the social ends and the means proposed to attain those ends; a reconceptualization of supporting political-social operations is basic; new language forms for example, metaphors, are generated to translate fresh meanings. Clearly, not all individuals in this group display all of these characteristics in their work but, in general, their efforts as a whole can still be characterized by these descriptors.

In 1980, many of the ideas of the early group of individuals have been refined and extended. There has emerged a spirit of criticism of the technocratic, empirical rationality that guides traditional mainstream curriculum theory. A dialogue between individuals working within this critical spirit, now frequently called the "new sociology of curriculum," and those who still defend the mainstream principles of curriculum development continues. Participation in this ongoing exchange, which has involved individuals such as Maxine Greene in a central role has served, as one significant source for the generation of an
alternative theory, the prime purpose of this investigation.

Basic Dimensions of an Alternative Theory

Maxine Greene, the William F. Russell Professor in the Foundations of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, is a dominant figure in this resurgent effort. She takes what might best be described as an existentialist-phenomenological view of the nature of reality and, in turn, education. Among the several crucial curriculum concepts that derive from this stance is her idea of "wide-awakeness." Greene views this as a necessary state both for the student and the teacher. Further, she states:

Fundamental to the whole process is the building up of a sense of moral directness, of oughtness. An imaginativeness, and awareness, and a sense of possibility are required, along with the sense of autonomy and agency, of being present to the self.17

Greene makes much of the idea of being present to the self. This idea is also characteristic of the thinking of a number of other theorists in the group identified as the new critics of curriculum theory. The responsible role such an idea has for teachers in colleges and universities is emphasized by Greene in this way:

I believe this can only be done [achieve wide-awakeness] if teachers can identify themselves as moral beings, concerning with
defining their own life purpose in a way that arouses others to do the same.  

In effect, she is claiming that teachers must reveal themselves as learners engaged in becoming more fully wide awake if they are to influence learners to become more so.

A second major concept developed by Greene is significant as a source for an alternative curriculum theory--namely, her idea of "multiple realities." This she takes from the phenomenological perspective by Alfred Schutz who visualized reality as consisting of various "provinces of meaning" distinguished from each other by the cognitive style or the mode of attention peculiar to each one. Given this view, and it is one that is clearly emerging as an alternative theory in this investigation, curriculum becomes a setting designed to provide students an opportunity for experiencing reality in these various provinces of meaning. Confrontations with his or her developing self in dialogues with a teacher-scholar who is also involved in such confrontations constitutes the situation Greene posits as a necessary condition for producing what she calls wide-awakeness.

Concepts such as "wide-awakeness" and "provinces of meaning" carry with them more than simply the creation of new terms as vehicles for old curriculum ideas. They
do serve as strong supporting foundational bases for the idea of "modes of inquiry" that was generated in the interplay between general education curriculum theory and the most promising efforts to redesign programs in colleges and universities. In this respect, they are related to significant historical developments in the field even though they are also contributing to a distinct paradigm shift in theory. They become, therefore, basic elements in the generation of an effective alternative theory for general education.

To extend further Greene's ideas into this matrix, we find her commenting specifically on the problems of liberal education:

In the resurgent literature on liberal arts education, the primary emphasis (after the complaints about illiteracy have been uttered) is on keeping the liberal studies alive, defending the tradition against vulgarization and attrition, enhancing the higher literacy, keeping the lights from sputtering out. Very little is heard about students' idiosyncratic searches for meaning or about their youthful assessments of the way things are and ought to be. Very little is heard about renewal or about the possible connections between liberal education and a transformation of the common world.20

What emerges is a much stronger sense of "collegiality" between teacher and student in any general education context. Greene adds a new dimension to the theory of general education. This dimension includes conviction, commitment and love. She draws often on Hannah Arendt's term "newcomer" in her conception of education, explaining that we
must not expel young people, but rather, as teachers, take them into a shared world as we would a newcomer. This taking in of newcomers as an act of teaching involves, as Greene sees it, a central process of revealing:

*It makes a difference* [italics in original] to experience for oneself the 'whiteness of the whale,' to investigate the history of children in this country in response to one's particular question, to feel Michelangelo's Captives struggle out of their rock. It expands one's universe to hear Kierkegaard's stern and ironic voice, to greet the seasons with Vivaldi, to apprehend the fragmented gestures in the made scene in Giselle. . . None of these experiences, as I have suggested, is 'natural.' They are made possible through instruction, through a revealing of the common world.21

A commitment on the part of the teacher is called for, one which goes beyond the prevalent conceptions of accountability or the reaching of certain specific prescribed behavioral goals. In Greene's view, professors involved in general education must first reveal themselves as learners. They may then turn to their students and welcome them as newcomers to the liberal arts:

. . . the presence of the liberal arts (or what Arendt chose to call the 'common world') may intensify the sense of personal presentness, as it diversified the potential perspectives through which experience may viewed. To be aware of these as perspectives, with their own history in space and time, to become aware of their changing relationship to human interests and concerns is to avoid the subjection certain critics fear. And it seems to me that part of our welcome to the
newcomers, part of our loving them is a willingness to nurture wide-awakeness and to keep alive the spirit of critique.22

A Reformulation of the Educative Process

Imbedded in any curriculum theory is a fundamental conception of the nature of the educative process. Drawing on such concepts as Greene's wide-awakeness and multiple realities and on modes of inquiry drawn from an historical analysis of general education efforts, this study turns now to an examination of a supporting base in this realm which is clearly central. This examination has led to the ideas generated in Ross L. Mooney's research at The Ohio State University.

From the 1950's to the present, Mooney has studied the nature of creativity and has related his findings to the field of education as a whole. Mooney finds a striking parallel between the artist at work, the scientist at work, and the teacher teaching and the learner learning.23 This parallel is of significance in this investigation because a major premise in traditional general education theory is the assumed alignment of particular modes of inquiry within each separate field of study. A typical example of this view is found in Peterson's statement:

General education might be defined as one which develops the powers of the mind to operate in the four main modes of human experience, the
analytical (as in mathematics and syntax),
the empirical (as in the social and natural
sciences), the moral and the aesthetic.\textsuperscript{24}

Phenix, Hook and Kauffman all make this assumption.\textsuperscript{25} And
Bell's triadic pattern is a prominent example of aligning
specific perspectives with specified areas of study. This
thesis supports the traditional rationale for the triadic
split of knowledge—the arts, the social sciences, and the
natural sciences.

In contrast, Mooney asserts that a significant range of
modes is discernible within any one of the disciplines.
Aesthetic modes are not confined to the arts and humanities,
and the empirical perspective is not solely within the
sciences. Labanotation and "effort-shape analysis" in dance
and content analysis in music theory are clear evidence of
the empirical and analytical in what are commonly viewed as
esoteric art forms.

Richard J. Bernstein, the philosopher of science who
has done much to interpret Jurgen Habermas' work, makes a
plea for a range of different interpretation and research
perspectives in the social sciences. His major work dealing
with the structure of social and political theory ends with
the assertion:

\textit{In the final analysis we are not confronted with exclusive choices: either empirical
t}heory or interpretative theory or critical
t}heory. . . an adequate social and political
t}heory must be empirical, interpretative, and critical [italics in the original].\textsuperscript{26}
Mooney's work in creativity research documents the integral, common characteristics of method and attitude among the different disciplines of knowledge. He finds also these relationships in the act of teaching and in the relationship between teacher and student. It is this "commonality of method" and Mooney's "transactional, reciprocal relationship" between teacher and student that have profound implications for the development of general education experience.

Mooney often uses a diagram to depict the educative process which he has found to parallel the creative process.27 His graphic presentation resembles two infinity symbols overlapping at the center where the educative transaction, or the creative action, occurs. A crucial aspect of his model is its demonstration of the fact that the transaction involves internalization within both the teacher and the student. His work with the perception laboratory at Ohio State patterned after the Adelbert Ames, Jr. laboratory at Hanover, New Hampshire, supports this phenomenological thesis. This is in sharp contrast to the traditional concept that the educative process involves only an action on the student by the teacher.

We see how Greene's philosophical extension of the concept of collegiality to encompass a "welcome of newcomers"
is supported by Mooney's empirical research into the nature of creative acts. Also clear is the relationship such a view has to Harold Taylor's insistence that the performing arts be given a central role in general education curriculum content.

**Content Themes in Curriculum Design**

Stated earlier in this chapter was a conception of a general education curriculum that seemed to be emerging from this investigation. It bears repeating here inasmuch as it now stands on an even firmer base generated from a further analysis of the educative process. A *general education curriculum is a setting designed to provide students an opportunity for experiencing reality in the various provinces of meaning.*

It should be clear at this point in the study that "experiencing reality" differs markedly from the conventional cognitive learning. And "provinces of meaning" differs significantly from the traditional ways of dividing up the cultural heritage to make it accessible as a general education content.

But the problem of providing a more effective curriculum design cannot be left at this level of abstraction. Basic design elements must be identified in order to translate these abstractions, however valid, into curricular experiences within institutions or into new arenas involving
such institutions in different relationships with their surrounding communities. The basic design element which fulfills this important function in the alternative theory proposed here is the content theme.

The content theme posited at this point in the study meets the following criteria of effective general education curriculum design:

1. The design must provide structure, but at the same time, must be open-ended for teacher-student involvement in the generation of structure.

2. The structure provided must relate to human lived-in experience.

3. The range of potential experiences must be such that multiple provinces of meaning are possible.

4. The design must lend itself to continuous reformulation and updating.

5. The design should be sufficiently flexible to attend to the persistent dilemmas that have characterized general education efforts.

It is held that the concept of content themes proposed here meets all five of these criteria. In essence, a content theme is one of a number of major efforts an individual has made to find meaning in his or her life, in effect, to "make order" out of it. It is assumed that an analysis of the lives of thoughtful individuals such as,
for example, Lewis Mumford, Jacques Barzun, Margaret Mead, Norman Cousins, Archibald McLeish, to name but a few, will reveal a number of such themes in the lives of each.

These themes, then, will serve as organizing centers in the provinces of meaning which give structure to the general education curriculum design. Inasmuch as they are derived from the idiosyncratic, lived-in experience of individuals, such themes will have the personal dimension not found in the abstract realms proposed by Hirst, Phenix and King and Brownell. Yet, they will provide a wide range of alternative experiences for students and teachers in each of the provinces. Moreover, they will provide a living model not to be emulated, but to serve as a kind of prototype. In this respect, the content themes differ markedly from the so-called Great Books approach advocated by Mortimer Adler and demonstrated at St. John's College under the leadership of Stringfellow Barr.

A schema for a general education curriculum development effort can be visualized in the process depicted in Figure 1.
Content themes derived from an analysis of an individual's life and work in context

An examination by teachers and students of these themes in the various provinces of meaning

Confrontations with a range of multiple realities

New levels of wide-awakeness and heightened consciousness for both the teacher and the students

Concern for the consequences of their beliefs and actions for themselves and for the lives of others

Figure 1. Content Themes in the General Curriculum Development Process

A general education offering which makes use of content themes could be a part of a course sequence organized within the traditional framework of departmental courses. More effective would be a sequence of experiences approximating the orientation course which Fitts and Swift proposed as early as 1928 before the term orientation course degenerated into an insignificant survey which no department of a university wished to claim. The more effective
orientation setting would be much like the original Harvard tutorial in which both teachers and students would participate in an ongoing discourse with the content themes they had generated providing initiating structure.

In a thoroughgoing curriculum reform, general education making use of content themes could best be fostered in a continuing seminar offered throughout the student's undergraduate years. This curricular organization might well be viewed as a reformulation of the nature of a general education core. It would make possible a basic integrating function. Lawrence Cremin sees some such general education vehicle as being also a vital part of graduate studies, regardless of however specialized they might be. His view is a logical extension of the thesis advanced in this study.

Doubtless there are many other specific forms of curriculum reorganization that could support the use of content themes as structure for general education. These would differ from institution to institution depending on a number of factors unique to their settings and traditions. The detailed extrapolation of such is beyond the scope of this study.

Summary

Proposed is a redefinition of the "content" of general education and a process for its generation and implementation
in teaching that differs markedly from the historical and contemporary mainstream efforts. The claim is made that the design element, content themes, offers a fresh approach to the resolution of the persistent dilemmas identified early in this chapter. Moreover, it meets the five criteria of effective curriculum design elements. The further claim is made that such an approach can be implemented in an institutional setting of the typical college or university. The next phase of this research, reported in Chapter V, demonstrates a prototypical effort to identify content themes and to suggest how they might function effectively in a general education curriculum structure in ways that reflect the philosophical-theoretical base formulated here.
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IV


18Ibid., p. 51.

19Ibid., p. 173.


21Ibid., p. 636.

22Ibid., p. 635.


27 Mooney, Mooney's Public Papers.
CHAPTER V

CONTENT THEMES: A TRANSLATION OF DESIGN THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Introduction

Thus far in this investigation, it has been demonstrated that the classical historical efforts to redesign general education at such institutions as Columbia, Chicago, and Harvard failed to cope with the persistent dilemmas identified in the preceding chapter, although they did generate certain basic ideas about general education curriculum design that could lend themselves to further refinement. The most prominent contemporary effort as well, the proposed Harvard Core, has failed to resolve these dilemmas. And the treatment given to general education in the widely discussed Carnegie Reports on Higher Education has been shown to lack a substantial theory base. Finally, a national conference held in 1979 to examine new developments in general education, the Bard College Conference, reflected either an historical perspective or a theoretical base adequate for a rigorous examination.

But the claim has been made and substantiated that alternative modes of inquiry are emerging in the field of
curriculum theory, modes that have significant promise for generating a sound theoretical base for general education curriculum development. This theory base would build upon certain of the experiences in the classic efforts yet would extend and refine their undergirding conceptual structures. The ideas of Greene and Taylor are major contributions to this proposed alternative, and the Mooney model of the nature of the creative process as reflected in the confrontation of teacher and student is also basic. Upon this emerging theoretical base was posited the concept of content themes as an element in curriculum design (Figure 1, p. 173).

This chapter now turns to a further explication of the nature of content themes. The effort may be seen as an attempt to engage in what Robert Merton, the sociologist, calls middle-range theorizing. Such theorizing involves developing bridges between theory at an abstract level and sets of related ideas and concepts that may be used in practical situations. Curriculum development activities clearly depend in a large measure on such middle-range theory.

The intent is not to develop the design for general education in a college or university but, rather, to demonstrate in a prototypical case how one structure necessary for such a design might emerge through the use of content themes. The outcome of the curriculum development process
would clearly differ depending on the institution and on
the individual and groups involved.

Norman Cousins is the individual whose life and ideas
have been selected for this analysis of content themes.
He is an appropriate subject inasmuch as his career reveals
that he has, himself, long been interested in general educa-
tion and inasmuch as he is an exemplar of an individual with
a general education. Moreover, his writings have consider-
able autobiographical content.

This effort to "unpack" content themes from Cousins'
lived-inexperience is based on a close reading of all of
his published works and on personal interviews, as well as
personal correspondence over a period of two years. This
undertaking is, in no sense, a psycho-biography in the manner
of Erik Erikson. Nor is it an effort to identify causal
relationships between events in Cousins' background and his
major ideas. Rather, its major function is to identify
themes which have the potential richness to provide general
education experiences for teachers and students seeking
meaning in the "multiple realities" of a wide range of
human experience and culture, meaning that will foster the
"wide-awakeness" that should characterize effective general
education. In the traditional concepts of curriculum
development, this process might well be termed as "develop-
ing structure."
It should be noted that other individuals could have been selected, and in curriculum development efforts using this approach, other such selections will be made and should, indeed, be encouraged. David Conrad's study,¹ for example, of the educational writings of Lewis Mumford suggests one possibility, as does John T. Holton's analysis of the ideas of Jacques Barzun.²

To report on the task set here, six sections follow: Cousins' background and education, his professional career, the *Saturday Review* years, his philosophy and views on education, the identification of content themes, and the function of content themes.

**Cousins' Background and Education**

Cousins was born in 1915, in Union, New Jersey, the son of Samuel and Sara Barry (Miller) Cousins. Little is publically known of Samuel and Sara Cousins. A carpenter by trade, Samuel was "virtually wiped out" by the 1930's depression. One gets the impression he worked himself into a managerial position in the building industry, for Cousins talks of how his father was "not too proud to work with his hands" after the depression had taken its toll.

The Cousins' household prized knowledge. This was a family which recognized the importance of intellectual pursuits but "who were not showy about it." The Cousins'
did provide an intellectual ambiance, or what Norman Cousins calls the greatest privilege of all: the freedom of choice and the material of choice. One sees Cousins coming from the home of "the common men," a 1930's ideal depicted in Richard Pells' *Radical Visions and American Dreams*. Perhaps this solid background influenced his championing "literature for the masses," for Cousins could have easily pursued an intellectual career within the culturally removed stations of academia.

Reared in New York City, he attended its public schools. In the few short biographical accounts, it is always stated that English was Cousins' favorite elementary school subject, with reading and writing being favorite pastimes. But little is formally known of Cousins' college studies except that he started at Columbia College and, after two years of course work, transferred to Teachers College. This was commonplace for many Columbia students.

Cousins was at Teachers College during the depression years. Taking outside employment to help support his family, Cousins could no longer finance his education. This financial predicament occurred after he had completed some course work with Teachers College faculty, for Professor William Kilpatrick, seeing the promise of the student, "went out on a limb" and made an arrangement with the administration so that he could continue to study at
Teachers College without tuition fees. But this also meant without academic credit. As a consequence, Norman Cousins never received a baccalaureate degree although he did later reimburse Teachers College for the unpaid tuition. Since he had taken many more courses than required for a Master's degree, Teachers College encouraged him to administratively sort out his work so that they could confer a degree. But, as Cousins put it, "I rather liked the idea; the freedom appealed to me." The result has been endless, misinformed statements about Cousins graduating in several different years. He never made an issue of this.

With the relaxation of formal degree requirements, Cousins was able to enroll in courses in philosophy, political science and social foundations of education. And enrollment at Teachers College allowed him to have access to an outstanding body of teachers. In fact, his admiration for Dewey and the Teachers College faculty led him to state that "TC had the finest assortment of philosophic minds there has ever been in any one place." Cousins greatly admired Professors Dewey, Kilpatrick, Counts, Rugg, Childs, Watson, Englehart, Russell, and Raup. Donald Cottrell, their colleague on the Teachers College faculty, reports that the faculty saw Cousins as an individual of unusual promise; Kilpatrick's waiving tuition requirements
when Teachers College was under financial limitations support this opinion.

Cousins must have left lasting impressions upon the Teachers College faculty. Both Kilpatrick and Rugg asked Cousins to speak and represent their students at testimonial dinners given in their honor, Kilpatrick's 90th birthday and Rugg's 80th birthday. Cousins refers to this as two of the "nicest things ever to happen to me."

What attracted Cousins to the Teachers College faculty was not an identification with the field of education but, instead, the eclectic nature of the professors. Cousins saw the Teachers College faculty as activists who were deeply committed to creative knowledge and original thinking. "TC was saying that the mind was capable of absorbing great complexities; moreover, the mind was capable of making correlations that enabled it to come up with new synthesis. Every situation required its own synthesis."

Cousins was attracted to the creative pluralism of the faculty. He saw this "not as a meaningless assortment of ideas, but as a realization that individual problems were individual."

Exciting to Cousins was the opportunity to be able to get close with the men and hammer out ideas together. As influential as the faculty was on Cousins' thinking, he felt the professors did not see themselves as models. They
shunned pretension. "They did not assume a role of model, they were too relaxed for that. They ignited minds, but did not create schools of their own. They were not Socratic types. The men of TC resisted all labels and schools of thought." Cousins saw Dewey and his colleagues as wanting to talk about life; they were concerned with more than the field of education. They were interested in the world of ideas. It was a terrifying time—people were living near the "edge"—it was a true test of their ideas.

Cousins never considered becoming a teacher. He was not interested in education professionally as much as he was interested in the phenomenon of education. His interest was in the foundations of education as it related to the classification and interpretation of knowledge. In essence, Cousins used the study of education as a method of organizing experience.

**His Professional Career**

Cousins' journalist career included transforming a struggling magazine into a prestigious forum of books, ideas, world affairs and general culture. Throughtout his many *Saturday Review* editorials, his loyalty to education is apparent. Cousins' underlying motivations as editor are expressed in the passage:
To work with books and ideas; to see the interplay between a nation's culture and its needs; to have unfettered access to an editorial page which offered quite literally as much freedom as I was capable of absorbing--this is a generous portion for any man.4

And it was from this forum, the editorial page of the Saturday Review, that Cousins' views and beliefs became known and respected by many throughout the United States. As one would expect from a "concerned citizen," Cousins often assumed the role of an "adversary journalist." In fact, he saw this as a duty and felt fortunate that he had the opportunity. Throughout the years his editorials "campaigned against the indiscriminate use of insufficiently tested miracle drugs, publicized the harmful effects of fluoridation, argued for an investigation into and possible ban of cigarette advertising, urged the federal government to make a substantial commitment to space exploration, warned against the 'growing casualness toward violence in entertainment,' rallied support for pollution control (questioning the excessive military budget and spending), and condemned American intervention in the Dominican Republic and in Indochina."5

Cousins' most famous editorial, and the one initiating the most sustained debate, was "Modern Man Is Obsolete," a plea for the practical, peacetime use of atomic energy. As one reads this "passionate plea," and hears Cousins describe his feeling while writing the editorial, the
distinctions between objective and subjective meanings merge. Though published twelve days after the first atomic bomb was dropped on Japan, August 6, 1945, the essay was written in its entirety when he first learned of the bombing. Later that year, the essay was expanded into a book under the same title and published by Viking Press. Modern Man Is Obsolete reached an estimated 40,000,000 people and was widely viewed as "one of the most prophetic statements of its time." As a result of its overwhelming popular reception, Cousins also spoke in a world forum, making more than two thousand speeches at home and abroad. He later refined his argument for nuclear control and world government in two publications, Who Speaks for Man and In Place of Folly.

In addition to being viewed as a leading spokesperson for nuclear control, Cousins gained international recognition as an unofficial "behind-the-scenes ambassador." His success in organizing the Dartmouth Conference, a series of cultural exchanges between American and Russian academicians, writers, and scientists, led Pope John XXIII to ask Cousins to meet with Khrushchev and negotiate the release of two imprisoned Roman Catholic cardinals, Cardinal Joseph Slipyi of the Ukraine, and Cardinal Joseph Beran of Czechoslovakia, who had been interned under Stalin's regime. This diplomatic role expanded as Cousins traveled
between the Vatican, the White House, and the Kremlin, bearing messages that culminated in a Soviet-American nuclear test ban treaty. The Improbable Triumverate is the written account of Cousins' adventures in this realm of international diplomacy. At President Kennedy's suggestion, Cousins helped organize the Citizens' Committee for a Nuclear Test Ban to galvanize public and legislative support for the controversial treaty. When the U.S. Senate ratified it in September, 1963, Kennedy publicly thanked Cousins for this vigorous support, and Pope John awarded the journalist his personal medallion. Cousins was also given the Eleanor Roosevelt Peace Award in 1963, the Family of Man award in 1968, and in 1971, the UN Peace Medal.

Cousins has organized several humanitarian projects, most notably the support for victims of Hiroshima. Following a 1949 visit to Hiroshima, he launched a "Moral Adoption" program for Saturday Review readers, who financially supported approximately 440 children orphaned by the atomic bombing. Encouraged by that response, he brought 24 young Japanese women, The "Hiroshima Maidens," to the United States for medical treatment in 1955. In 1958-1959, he initiated a similar program for the "revens-brueck Lapins," 38 Polish women who had been mutilated by medical experiments at the Nazi concentration camps at
Ravensbrueck, Germany, during World War II. Both projects were entirely funded by Saturday Review readers. In 1968-69, Cousins sought Saturday Review readers' support for the project "Aid to Biafran Children," which airlifted children out of Biafra so that they could receive medical help.

The Saturday Review Years

Cousins took a position as an education writer on the New York Evening Post in 1934. He left the Post to succeed John Chamberlain as book critic for the magazine Current History, a monthly journal of world affairs. Current History was established by the New York Times Company in 1914 to carry "source" news on the war and on the international situation. In 1936, the Times Company sold the magazine to editor-publisher Merle Elliott Tracy, former columnist for the Scripps-Howard newspaper, and John Casman. Cousins endearingly talks of Tracy as "one of the most remarkable men I have ever known."

M. E. Tracy was, indeed, remarkable and seemingly very influential in Cousins' thinking. Born in 1879, Tracy was educated at Boston's Perkins Institute for the Blind (1891-97). He headed Current History for a four-year period (1936-39) and had two publications to his credit: Our Country, Our People and Theirs, 1938; and New World Challenge to Democracy, 1940. Though Tracy's blindness
"distinguished" him among the New York newspaper group, his encyclopaedic memory is what most impressed Cousins. As Cousins states, Tracy had a literal knowledge of the 7th edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Despite his handicap, he kept up with world events on a daily basis. Few men I have known have had as wide a range of knowledge."

With blindness and an encyclopaedic memory, his unique approach to current events affected Cousins' concepts of learning and his approach to factual knowledge. Through the many evening discussions between the young Cousins and Tracy, Cousins saw new ways of learning which were influential during this time of his "re-education."

Throughout Cousins' tenure at Current History, he worked successively as book reviewer, literary editor, and managing editor. When Tracy, after four years, sold the publication to E. Trevor Hill, the offices were moved to 420 Madison Avenue, home of the newly-located offices of the Saturday Review of Literature.

Cousins had known Henry Seidel Canby and Amy Loveman through Current History's annual non-fiction book award. And with both magazines housed in the same building, it was inevitable that the staffs would come into frequent contact with one another. It was during this time that Cousins became friendly with Canby, Loveman, William Rose Senet, Christopher Morley, Harrison Smith, George Stevens,
and other members of Saturday Review of Literature's staff. When Stevens resigned the editorship in December, 1939, to head the New York office of J. B. Lippincott, Hal Smith and Amy Loveman asked Cousins to join the Saturday Review of Literature staff as executive editor. "Cousins accepted immediately, despite some lingering doubts about his lack of stature in the literary world." He felt the Saturday Review of Literature needed a leading literary figure to top its masthead. Executive Editor Norman Cousins at age 25 did not offer the stature of an Henry Canby. He drew up a list of potential editors, among them Carl Van Doren, Edmund Wilson, Clifton Fadiman, and Van Wyck Brooks. Canby, Smith and Cousins "dutifully made the rounds" inquiring of interested takers.

The men we approached were highly qualified but also highly rational. I suppose we much have seemed a little foolish in our effort to persuade them to accept what must have seemed a certain invitation to a bankruptcy party. The answer in every case was no. They were of no mind to engage in a tilting contest with creditors, however genial.11

Thus Cousins said he "got the job because no one else wanted it."

To understand something of the context that shaped the young editor's life, one must understand the literary scene in New York City at that time. The Saturday Review of Literature grew out of a literary supplement of the New York Evening Post. Henry Seidel Canby, a Professor of
English at Yale University who had distinguished himself in academic circles for his work in literary criticism, "much of it on the Yale Quarterly," agreed to start a literary supplement for the Post, a supplement which "would have complete freedom and would receive a considerable measure of front-office support." Canby saw it as an excellent vehicle for a scholarly review of literature:

The New York Evening Post, dean of American newspapers, but frequently regarded by the irreverent as a dean emeritus, wished to establish a weekly literary supplement of high quality and worthy of its long tradition of intellectual leadership. That was my new job. . . . The Post was probably the best-written, certainly the most scholarly, newspaper in New York, or indeed, in the country. It was a high-minded and a deeply responsible paper, but it was about as popular as the anti-saloon league. Nevertheless, there could have been no better foundation upon which to erect an independent, scholarly, and responsible review of literature and current books.12

The three members of the Post staff assigned to the new supplement, The Literary Review, were Christopher Morley, recently hired columnist; William Rose Benet, former Post copy boy and poet; and Amy Loveman, researcher and assistant librarian. Canby describes the situation as one in which these individuals "developed abilities they did not know they possessed."13

Though the Literary supplement was receiving recognition throughout literary circles, the Post had difficulty competing against other New York evening papers, the New
York Evening World and the New York Sun. In 1924, Thomas Lamont, president of J. P. Morgan Company and publisher of the Evening Post, sold the newspaper to the Curtis family organization of Philadelphia. Cyrus Curtis quickly rejected the idea of a special section on books:

According to one version, probably apocryphal, Cyrus K. Curtis arrived in New York one Saturday, shortly after acquiring the Post. Emerging from the Wall Street subway at noon, he observed the Wall Street brokers as they picked up the New York Evening Post and ejected the literary supplement with a single flip of the wrist, thus giving Wall Street what was known as its "Saturday book look." He proceeded to the offices of the Post nearby and made known his decision to discontinue the special section.

Canby and his associates were left to start an independent literary weekly of their own. Financed by Thomas Lamont and through the "hospitality and publishing facilities" offered by Canby's former Yale students Britton Hadden and Henry R. Luce, founders of Time, Inc., the first issue of the journal appeared on August 2, 1924. With Time, Inc. as publishers, Luce was listed as president and Canby as vice-president. Canby was also listed as editor; Amy Loveman and William Rose Benet were associate editors, and Christopher Morley was contributing editor. The group had wanted to call the magazine just Saturday Review, but a British publication had legal claim to that name. They called it Saturday Review of Literature, its title
until 1952, when it dropped the "of literature" without fear of litigation.

In the following 17 years that Canby and Harvard social historian Bernard DeVoto held the position of editor, the Saturday Review of Literature printed "conscientious book reviews and literary discussion by well-known authors along side its editorials, its erudite and whimsical columns, its evaluation of detective stories, and its famous columns of personal advertisement in which the lonely sought pen pals, the unemployed sought situations, and sellers of unconventional goods and services sought buyers." 15

But by 1938, Saturday Review of Literature's financial condition was in dire straights. Lamont was forced to reduce his subsistcy, Luce and Hadden had long since amicably severed ties with the Times relocating in Cleveland, and DeVoto's tenure, starting on September 26, 1936, had lasted only one year and five months. Managing editor George Stevens, former vice-president and staff editor of W. W. Norton and Company, became the new editor, March, 1938. Canby described the depressed situation as almost hopeless and spoke of preparing a suitable obituary. 16

It was at this time that Harrison Smith, book and magazine publisher, purchased the Saturday Review of Literature. Smith took the magazine into his own publishing
office at the 420 Madison Avenue address. Cousins talks of Amy Loveman, Henry Canby, Bill Benet, and Chris Morley all squeezed into a single office barely large enough to hold their desks. Editor George Stevens had an adjoining office. Two secretaries completed the staff, placed in the combination passageway and file area. As Cousins describes, "it was a tight squeeze."

Even with Smith's attempt to reduce overhead, *Saturday Review of Literature* continued to have economic difficulties. Their close relationship with the Book-of-the-Month Club proved to be instrumental in helping the magazine survive. Harry Scherman, president of Book-of-the-Month Club, had been a long-time friend and associate of the *Saturday Review*, stemming back to 1926 when Canby was asked by publisher Rober Hass to be chairman of the board of judges of the "new enterprise" to be called the Book-of-the-Month Club. As Cousins remembers, "at one time or another, Canby, Christopher Morley, and Amy Loveman were as prominently identified with the Book-of-the-Month Club as they were with the *Saturday Review of Literature*. This could be, in part, from the identity and sense of pride the *Saturday Review of Literature* took in being part of the Book Club. Canby writes:

> In all my experience as a teacher, a writer, a critic, and an editor, I have never had so satisfactory a sense of accomplishment in what our ancestors would have called the furtherance of good literature as in my more
twenty years on the Book-of-the-Month Club. I would have got more academic prestige, perhaps more intellectual prestige, if I had given all my time to a professorship or to the editing of a literary journal obviously not run to make money; but the conviction of superior longterm usefulness of the Book-of-the-Month Club remains.\footnote{18}

Canby's sense of conviction and pride in the Book-of-the-Month Club was recognized by Scherman and others, and when the Saturday Review of Literature was near the brink of financial collapse in the late 30's (1938), one of its many times, Scherman came to its aid. Scherman was acknowledged as one of the nation's most talented writers of direct-mail promotion.\footnote{19} And on behalf of Book-of-the Month Club, Scherman not only wrote new subscriptions mailing pieces for the Saturday Review of Literature, but he also could have the magazine, without charge, use the Book-of-the-Month membership list. The resulting 50 percent increase in new readers was, according to Cousins, the one act that saved the life of the magazine at a critical time.

This was the setting in which Cousins was hired. Seen by the field of journalism as "the big change in policy" with the hiring of a young editor, Cousins added articles on American culture and other features to the traditional literary discussions. He introduced radio and television columns, inaugurated a supplement devoted to review of phonograph recordings, and periodically brought out special issues.
Canby and Harrison Smith saw the young Cousins as precisely the right person for the editorship—an unpretentious individual trained as an historian and educator, with the capacity and the creative skill for the "new times."20

New York City's claims to leadership of American culture were based in large measure on book and magazine publishing. The magazine world, formerly dominated by "the muckrakers," fell to the Young Intelligentsia. And in the period of rising technical costs and unsolved distribution problems, the magazine became a major organ for the dissemination of ideas.

During the 1920's and 1930's, a number of magazines refused to conform to mass tastes. Written and edited for a discriminating minority, they provided a haven for writers, a haven from the pressures and concerns of the marketplace. These magazines of literary experimentation and criticism, magazines like Poetry, Little Review, The New Masses, Nation, were labeled "Little Magazines." Hundreds of these little magazines flourished after their twentieth-century renaissance of 1910.

Although readers of the little magazines regarded the Saturday Review of Literature as hopelessly middle-class, the Saturday Review of Literature affected reading tastes and helped shape the thinking of an influential segment of
the population. All indications show that it was Canby's intentions to avoid the social, political, and cultural orientations taken by the little magazines. Canby and his associates had faith in the "common man," and it was toward these interests the Saturday Review of Literature would be directed. Canby states:

I had shaken off some pedantic ideas and no longer yearned to publish articles that only scholars could understand, and which no one, not even scholars, read.21

These basic policy decisions had been made long before the hiring of Cousins; the decisions were made when the literary ideologists, Trotzkyites, and Little Magazines were voicing their fiercest criticism at conservative figures like Canby.

Canby's response to his critics became the foundational base for not only the Saturday Review of Literature but for the "industry's" reviewing policy:

A magazine, I decided, must have either a policy or an idea; or have both, in which case the emphasis would be sure to fall on one or the other. I had no objection to the policy magazine so long as the policy did not interfere with the job of making a good magazine.22

Canby did not see his ideas as particularly original, but instead, felt they were housed in the basic Jeffersonian belief in "the necessity of education for a successful democracy." As opposed to the orientation taken by
those "dogmatic fellows on the Little Magazines," Cousins felt that the reader must know how and what to read before taking sides. Thus while being labeled conservative, the Saturday Review of Literature decided its chief function was that of intelligent teaching. Vigorous polemics would be left to professional writers and professional readers of the Little Magazines:

Indeed, the ruling purpose with me, whether in college or on the Book-of-the-Month Club or the Review, has been the passing on of sound values to others, which is one reason why I have taken little part in the critical controversies of the so-called "Little Magazines." 23

Canby was sympathetic with those journalists who, while writing with a sense of conviction and specified ideology, attempted to work through pressing issues of the day. But he was equally "puzzled and skeptical:"

Change was coming, but it did not seem wise or right for a magazine like ours to shift the emphasis from the fine products of a summary period in order to proclaim a new age which clearly had not arrived. 24

When Norman Cousins talks of optimism—"accomplishing an essential purpose," perceiving connection between the individual, the world, and ideas— he seems to be describing the former editor and staff of the Saturday Review of Literature:

What was most characteristic and important about Dr. Canby and his associates was their sense of connection and responsibility to the period in which they lived. Their
purpose was to perceive the vital balances of their age.

If Saturday Review of Literature's editors stood aloof from anything it was the debunking that was then in such high fashion. They were too busy forging connecting links between past and present to be tempted into irrelevance of cynicism. . . . This insistence on a rounded and reflective view of life made a profound impression on me when I came to Saturday Review of Literature early in 1940.25

Journalists' optimism and confidence stemmed from the recognition of their own importance. Editors of widely circulated journals saw themselves in a position to inform and influence the general public. Canby realized his "importance" and recognized his "purpose." This was evident in the establishment of the Book-of-the-Month Club, which played a significant role in the cultivation of general culture at a time when few agencies existed for that purpose.

In 1942 Everette Lee DeGolyer purchased the magazine and became the chairman of the Saturday Review of Literature's Board of Editors. And "hard-driving" business manager Jack R. Cominsky left a business and advertising position at the New York Times in order to take over the Saturday Review of Literature's vice-presidency and business and advertising directions.

Founder of Amerada, one of the nation's largest petroleum development companies, DeGolyer served as owner of the Saturday Review of Literature for a fifteen-year period. Never taking profits from the magazine, he
transferred his business interests to *Saturday Review* employees once the magazine proved to be relatively financially independent. This transfer occurred shortly before his death in 1956. Cominsky managed all the business intricacies of the fledgling magazine, leaving Cousins free to establish and initiate policy. But Cominsky's business senses entered this arena of magazine policy. An example was his belief that the diversification of advertising was the strongest assurance for editorial freedom. Cousins attributes to Cominsky the recognition in which the staff developed for realistic planning.26

In 1980, *Saturday Review* masthead carries Norman Cousins as Chairman of the Editorial Board. Each issue has the famous "N.C." editorial dealing with some significant issue or problem of the day. It is beyond the scope of this research to trace in any detail the editorial career of Cousins beyond the point in which it has already taken. The intent has been to sketch the context in which Cousins, the man, thought and worked; the womb, so to speak, in which his major ideas were gestated.

**Cousins' Philosophy and Views on Education**

From the foregoing account of Cousins' career, certain philosophical traditions are apparent. Cousins' faith in the "penetrating power of ideas," his acceptance
of established institutions as the avenue for social reform, his constant searching for more lines of argumentation: these, along with many other characteristics, would put him within the mainstream of the Progressive tradition. He also falls within the domains of traditional humanism. Cousins places himself in this tradition when he describes, and tacitly supports, an American tradition of philosophy in contrast to European existentialism.

He supports the view of an individual "who knew how to transform ideas into institutions, who had grown up in a tradition that had regarded search for progress as an enduring and positive obligation, whose intellectual underpinnings came from the transcendentalist thinkers and from James, Pierce, and Dewey, and who believed that historical logic supported the idea of a positive frame for human events." 27

Cousins, in response to an increasingly widespread interest in Existentialism, posits his own philosophical position which he calls Consequentialism. This line of thought "relates man to all other human begins--the living, the dead, and the unborn--and also to relate them to the universal order." His position supports the common definition of a general education. Cousins talks, for example, of the need for complete integration--"integration of intellect, conscience, knowledge, and experience." 28
When discussing the Age of Acceleration, Cousins calls himself a "gradualist." But if one does step out of the conventional philosophical traditions in order to describe Cousins, as he has done himself, the term most characteristic of his thinking is "optimism." His 'credo' comes from the Saturday Review editorial, "Is It Possible to Be an Optimist?" The nature and importance of the topic warrants the reproduction of the article (vide, Appendix C).

A detailed analysis of the credo reveals Cousins as a humanist in the Deweyan tradition but with an extension of Deweyan thought into a realm that falls within the domain of existentialism. In effect, his values parallel those of Harold Taylor and Maxine Greene whose philosophical theoretical ideas were delineated in Chapter IV.

Cousins' poor health, his continual bouts with disease, could be seen as a factor in his ability to "perceive the lines of connection between" the individual and ideas. Two specific instances can be cited.

Cousins' childhood was marred by bad health. He was a very frail child and was quite underweight; at age 10, he weighed only 50 to 55 pounds. Due to inadequate x-ray procedures, doctors misinterpreted normal calcification markings as tuberculosis markings. The mistaken diagnosis resulted in Cousins spending six months in a tuberculosis sanitarium. He reflects on the experience as a "philosophic..."
exercise." No doubt it was an important experience during his formative years.

As Cousins talks and writes of his time at the tuberculosis sanitarium, one recognizes the beginnings of his pronounced faith in the "goodness of man" and his acknowledged interest in "the power of the mind in overcoming disease." Cousins saw a natural division among the sanitarium patients. In what became an "empirical experience," he saw children who were determined and confident to get better, and those who resigned themselves to "prolonged and even fatal illness."31

Those of us who held to the optimistic view became good friends, involved ourselves in creative activities, and had little to do with the patients who had resigned themselves to the worst. When newcomers arrived at the hospital, we did our best to recruit them before the bleak brigade went to work.32

It became obvious to Cousins that those confident to recover did, in fact, recover.

Cousins' time at the tuberculosis sanitarium was not solely an experience in the preciousness of life. The young, frail child had to cope with the severe cruelty and gang warfare representative of any similar institution. Cousins talks of groups of bullies who would pick up a child in the middle of the night and, in zero degree temperatures, drop him off in the middle of a woods, one mile from the sanitarium. Cousins was submitted to these
types of initiations, as were all newcomers to the sanitarium. It was within this setting that Cousins displayed initial signs of leadership. He found that the children would rally behind him because of his concern for them. After a few months, Cousins became a leader for the children, and "out of the laws of basic human response," won over many of the bullies. He was able to moderate substantially the cruelty towards newcomers. In latter months, when others attempted to "reinitiate" Cousins, two of the bullies came to his defense. As Cousins states, the idea of fixed positions did not stand the test of the sanitarium. "Human behavior could be modified, and in this instance it was done through the genuine concern for others." 33

A more recent example (of a life-situation which could, perhaps cause one to take an optimistic posture) is Cousins' battle with ankylosing spondylitis, a collagen disease causing progressive disintegration of the connective tissues of the spine and joints. When first diagnoses, Cousins refused to accept the prognosis and, with the aid of his doctors, designed his own program. Described in detail in the New England Journal of Medicine, Cousins took massive doses of vitamin C and re-read humor writers of the period--White, Thurber, Wodehouse. He learned that the doses of laughter had an anesthetic
effect, providing hours of pain-free sleep. Cousins' treatment of vitamin C and laughter did prove successful. He writes:

I reasoned that if negative forces like tension and stress could weaken the body to the point where it could succumb to germs, then positive forces--joy, love, faith, hope and laughter--might have the opposite effect. . . . No one can tell me that our ability to overcome depression does not result in positive biochemical changes in our body. We can program ourselves to live. 34

These are but two examples drawn from Cousins' life that would serve as a source for what some would assert as a rather simplistic meliorism in Cousins' philosophical position. A similar criticism has often been made of John Dewey's work by the group of "revisionists" who deny the humanist tradition.

Norman Cousins' career has not focused solely upon the field of education. But while providing the leadership and editorial direction of a major cultural arts magazine, Cousins has been able to exert significant influence upon the educational material of "the masses' the common man." The common man, Everyman, had the potential to become "the rounded man" knowledgeable in the art of living. Providing cultural material for Everyman (what Cousins has called the greatest privilege: the freedom of choice and the material of choice) and guiding his interests and tastes was the fundamental goal
of the *Saturday Review*. Thus, Cousins' role as journalist was actually that of a "community educator." Indeed, Cousins saw himself in that role.

Cousins' educational views are implicit in everything he has written. But they are, perhaps, most explicitly expressed in the detailed account of his own "re-education" which he titled "An Adventure in Ideals."

Writing in 1949 against a background of the immediate post-World War II years, Cousins drew heavily on his autobiography to identify the impact the world of ideas had had upon his life and his thinking. In that particular year, he was deeply concerned with what he viewed as an "almost relentless deterioration in the health of the world." Moreover, he was disillusioned about the prospects for establishing a world government backed by what he envisioned as the "spirit of universalism." But despite this setback, one of many in his "adventures in ideals," he remained steadfast in his humanist view of man and to a view of the world which in his words "hungers for ideals."

This humanist view which permeates all of his writing and, indeed, his life is perhaps best expressed in such a passage as the following in which he asserts:

... that man need not lose command of his destiny, that he has deep within him the resources of courage, conscience, and the spirit to shatter his predicament, and that
he can transcend the complexities and perplexities that bedevil his existence if he can but raise a standard high enough for everyone to see and rally around. 38

Time and again, in an analysis of Cousins' ideas in search for content themes, this humanist view of the nature of man is found to undergird his thinking.

This piece of writing reveals the basic sources of his values. He begins this autobiographic journey with an account of the personal memories he had of the effects of World War I on individuals and their families. These years were his formative childhood years. They were followed by the severe economic depression of the 1930's. This period profoundly affected his world view. 39 He saw himself, and indeed his generation, as "propelled into a world which was as reluctant and unprepared to receive us as we were to become a part of it." 40

Cousins summarizes this period as one in which he, as well as other young people, were being "intellectually static in a politically dynamic world." This brought about for him a "sense of separation" from his time. He sees this as the dominant mood of his college years and the 1930's.

It is at this point that his re-education begins. He recalls the deep impression the accounts of Gandhi's life and work in India had on this re-education process.
Gandhi was the dramatic proof that the individual need not be helpless against massed power—that he need not be overwhelmed by any supposed inexorabilism or fatalism, that there was scope for free will and conviction in the shaping of society, that history could be fluid, not fixed, if men were willing to transcend their egos in order to merge themselves with the larger body of mankind.41

The growing recognition of this humanistic power of the individual—that man was much more than a straw in the cosmic wind of history, was a crucial factor in pulling Cousins' thinking out of a mire of futility that characterized the times. For example, he came to see Emerson's writing and its strong undercurrent of idealism in a new light.

But more importantly, he recognized that although he had been "well-educated" in the traditional sense of that term, that he had never really even learned to read, that is, to read creatively with insight. This recognition led him to examine all aspects of his education. He found it to be deficient in many respects. He generalized about this deficiency as a situation in which higher education was not fulfilling its larger purpose.42

From this, he characterized his own schooling:

I had been educated in everything except the meaning and purpose of education itself. It was like a wheel with beautiful spokes but no rim. If there was real integration to all the educational compartments in which the various studies were located and isolated, I was never apprised of it.43
With this kind of soul-searching reflection on his past education, Cousins began to generate his own integration. He became, in effect, his own self-teacher and curriculum maker.

It is important to note he recognized the crucial need for the individual to perceive an integration among the various fields of knowledge and organized disciplines. He identified one approach he took to achieve this: "the lateral method." He writes:

The lateral method (as contrasted with the traditional vertical or chronological ladder) could break down compartmentalization and enable you to observe the interaction of events and ideas. You would use them as your principal frame of reference, selecting a certain period and then searching in many lands for common elements of common problems, and most importantly, the interconnections that affected mankind as a whole.44

Cousins then demonstrates how he employed this mode of thinking to reorder his understandings about Greek civilization and its relationship to both the problems of the early days of America and of contemporary society. He reflects on this phase of his re-education:

The history of early Greece and the Constitutional period of American history had a profound effect on my thinking. It gave me a sense of purpose and usefulness to my fast developing interest in and concern with the philosophy of universalism, for it added political form to ideological substance and served to translate important aspects of universalism into their direct political expression.45
This reflection is basic to an understanding of the nature of one of the basic content themes of Cousins' work. He furthers this when he reports that he attempted "to apply the lessons of federalism" to his own time in analyzing the decline of the League of Nations and to a fuller understanding of the Second World War. Of his analysis of World War II, he states:

We were fighting because of two words—"interrelationship" and "interdependency"—perhaps the two most important words of the twentieth century. For interrelationship and interdependency wound through every aspect of the lives of nations and those of their people.

This view led Cousins to see the war as a challenge to him and others—"the challenge to define values worth preserving and enlarging, as well as to define the conditions which might make those values possible."

It was in this value context that Cousins came to yet another turning point in his re-education—the confrontation he faced in the bombing of Hiroshima. This struggle, as he admits he tried to "sort out my fears and hopes," is reflected in his famous editorial in *Saturday Review* in which he proclaimed that modern men had become obsolete.

Cousins makes clear that he did not mean to take a pessimistic view of modern man and society. Some readers made that interpretation. Rather, he wanted to underscore
the urgency of the world situation. He states:

I never wavered in my confidence in the capacity of men to eliminate war and build a just peace, as well as to make whatever changes in himself that were dictated by the new problems and opportunities; what I tried to do was to emphasize that capacity rested on decision, and decision on recognition of the challenge.  

This view seemed a "logical expression of everything I had learned during my re-education," Cousins concludes.

It comes as no surprise that Cousins draws upon his 1943 statement when he was asked, in 1967, to write about "The Nature of a Humane Society."

Year by year individuals are shaped by the sights, the sounds, the ideas around them. Consciously or not, we are forever adding to or subtracting from the sum total of our beliefs, or attitudes or responses, or whatever it is we mean to say that clearly defined philosophies are inevitably subordinated to the total impact of individual experience.

In essence, "Meaning, Purpose, and Belonging in Life," becomes a re-examination of Cousins' earlier work while also being fused with "The Age of Acceleration" and Celebration of Life. Indirectly, the selection of material becomes Cousins' own summary of his educational thinking.

In the context of the 1960's, Cousins stresses the hope and need for the "worldwide emergence of the articulate and communicating citizen." The hope is that this individual, the ubiquitous Everyman, will find "both unison
and resonance in calling for safety and sense on earth." But Cousins recognizes the arising problem—the literate Everyman must then speak and have others to listen.

What Cousins portrays is the precarious position of modern man, precarious because of the incomprehensible rate of change, and the problems this raises for education. But, once again, the most reliable characteristic of Cousins' work surfaces—his faith in the individual to meet the challenge. This faith is rooted in the belief in the power of ideas and education. Like Dewey, he believes in the "method of intelligence." 54

Cousins discusses the effects of the pace of change. He observes that the rate of accelerated change in the past twenty-five years (c. 1967) created a "tendency towards disorientation" which resulted in the accompanying anxiety and impaired human observation and comprehension:

The connection between the acceleration and man's anxiety has been widely observed and documented. . . . Less fully identified and scrutinized is the fact that ultimately the acceleration produces irreverence. Men in increasing motion cover ground but have none to stand on. Values take on a free-floating quality, the disconnection makes for distortion and an unfamiliarity that breeds contempt. It is not just a matter of reflecting values; it is a matter of being disconnected from the things that give rise to values. 55
He finally suggests an education much like the one he took upon himself to "remake."

Man has already transformed nature; are we to say he is unable to transform himself. Is it reasonable to believe that a species that has demonstrated a capacity to lift itself off its planet is unable to raise its sights in devising a rational future? If awareness of the consequences of the present drift leads to a design to avert them, the Age of Acceleration can lead to an Age of Balance.56

Perhaps more than any of the many ideas that might be abstracted to analyze the relationship between Cousins' philosophy and his views on education, the following two explicit statements are most representative. The first underscores his passionate and continuing plea for education to be used as an experience for understanding the nature and need for peace and world law:

In short, man has evolved in every respect except his ability to protect himself against human intelligence. His knowledge is vast but does not embrace the workings of peace. Because he attaches importance to a rounded view of life he studies history, philosophy, religions, languages, literature, art, architecture, political science. Because he is concerned about his well-being he studies anthropology, biology, medicine, psychology, sanitation. Because he is interested in technical progress he studies chemistry, physics, engineering, mathematics, sanitation. But he has yet to make peace basic in his education. The most important subject in this world is hardly taught at all. The basic principles involved in creating a situation of safety, the effective limits of national sovereignty; the fundamental elements that must go into the making of world law—unless these are pursued and
understood, nothing else he knows will do him any good. But such knowledge is not now a fixed and essential part of the educational goals he has set for himself.57

The second explicit statement centers on his views of the need to see educational experiences in their relatedness and in their potential for developing a "whole man"--his platform for general education:

The Whole Man has an understanding of the interconnections and interrelationships within the entire province of organized knowledge. He is not concerned with the futile war now going on in education between specialization and general study, for he knows that there need be no conflict between the two. He knows that the individual requires both--specialization for the requirements of research, general knowledge for the requirements of living. He knows that over and above specialized training there is a vast area to be cultivated in making a new science of integration--a science built on the interdependence of knowledge. It stands to reason that if we are living in an interdependent world, we must educate for interdependent living.58

The Identification of Content Themes

Throughout all of Norman Cousins' work there is the expressed urgency and importance of becoming socially aware. This, more than any other theme is the basic embodiment of Cousins' writing--developing a social conscience. He writes of the importance of this in his own re-education and relates education and action to social values;
Just as earlier I had to reexamine my own place in society, and the potentiality of the individual for ethical action, so now I reexamined my ideas on the nature of society itself, on the potentialities within the group for ethical ideas and action, and in general, on government as an organism with a metabolic rate of its own, a conscience of its own, and a life cycle of its own.\footnote{59}

These re-examinations led to his positions on atomic energy, and his countless articles which dealt with all aspects of politics.

Cousins always seemed to be socially "wide-awake" in any community. This side of his life--with M. E. Tracy and at the Saturday Review--was sketched earlier. The situation was similar during Cousins' years at Teachers College. He describes various issues confronted by the faculty and students: the dismissal of a cafeteria worker for joining a food worker's union, "flag acts," loyalty oaths, New York City's Superintendent dismissal of WPA teachers for participating in a civil liberty demonstration, ROTC, political purges in the Soviet Union. Cousins writes: "Scarcely an issue involving civil liberties or human values in general would arise anywhere without reverberations at Teachers College."\footnote{60}

He sees social conscience as a prerequisite for the fullest possible development of individuals in all fields. In his speech, "Age of Acceleration," Cousins calls upon artists to cut across national boundaries and
ideological lines, and to provide a sense of stability by addressing the issue and pending problem of acceleration. All individuals should participate, according to Cousins, in "this transcendental confrontation." But the artist's work takes on additional dimensions in his view which holds that artists are able to penetrate when everything else seems to fail.61

Cousins' portrayal of Teachers College is characteristic of the second, but closely related, content theme that manifests itself in his life and his thinking. Cousins writes: "I think I may have said enough to indicate that Teachers College in the mid-thirties was a forcing-house of intellectual and political activity." In short, Cousins' work stresses the importance of activity and participating in service to the community. In a very real sense, Cousins' entire career symbolizes this ideal. The guiding principles of the Saturday Review are the embodiment of service-action for the community.

In his lived-in experience demonstrated by these two closely related content themes, we see the significant relationship Cousins' underlying values bear to Dewey's requirement that an effective, democratic way of life be judged by the social consequences of one's actions. Cousins underscores this "last step of the intellectual process" as being overlooked, in the editorial, "The
"The Default of the Educated Man." The "seemingly trivial" form of social participation-writing letters of opinion to government officials--becomes a forum for Cousins to stress participation and service:

One of the attributes of a truly educated man in a free society is his awareness of the way that society functions. Yet an astonishing illiteracy exists among otherwise intelligent, educated people about the workings of public opinion. Letter-writing to officials is part of the phenomenon of public opinion.62

These two content themes are so closely related that it is impossible to separate them. This, of course, is Cousins' message for the educated--Everyman is part of a larger community and therefore must be socially aware and active. But knowledge and awareness are only the first step: the educated are not the academics far removed from society (as H. S. Canby described) but are individuals active and functioning in everyday society:

There can be no more important education today than education for personal effectiveness and a sense of connection with big events. A truly educated person is one who has reasonable knowledge, if not command, of his environment, who performs those acts that are relative to his well-being and the well-being of the people around him, who is able to think about and to anticipate the effects of causes, and who can help to control the effects by helping to deal adequately with the causes. However impressive a man's acquisition of worldly knowledge, however proficient his ability to marry theory to technique, if
he cannot use his thinking ability and his skills to work for a safer and better world, his education is incomplete and he is in trouble.63

As Cousins examines society through his position at Saturday Review, and in his larger role in international affairs, a continuing interest, and the third content theme emerges--namely, understanding the nature of change. Understanding change is an implicit base of Cousins' most famous editorial--"Modern Man is Obsolete." This editorial grew from his realization that "modern men had become obsolete, a self-made anachronism becoming more incongruous by the minute." "We [Modern Man] had exalted change in everything but ourselves. We had leaped centuries ahead in inventing a new world to live in, but we knew little about our own part in that world."64

Understanding the nature of change was also the topic of his work, "The Age of Acceleration." The fast pace of change leads towards a disorientation. "It has unhinged the sense of vital balance that enables a man to locate himself in time and place." Thus education provides what Cousins sees as the only hope for this problem--the world-wide emergence of the articulate and communicating citizen.

A common presumed function of general education programs is developing critical intelligence,
and this, too, is a reoccurring thread of continuity in Cousins' writings. In his own re-education, he talks of never really learning how to read. "I had read the things young people were supposed to have read by the time they got out of school... How much of it had given me vital insight into the author's purpose--insight essential to truly creative reading?" Cousins describes an education which goes beyond the mere memorization of knowledge. In his editorial, "In the Class of '45," he urges the young to recognize the need to place facts themselves in the larger process of "learning how to learn."

The value of your education cannot be measured in terms of the facts and information you have been able to retain. If your education has provided you with nothing except facts, that education has been a failure. More important than your ability to remember facts is your ability to appraise them, to know a fact when you see one, to be able to go to the right places for facts when you need them. 65

Cousins suggests the classroom reading of print journalism as a method of furthering critical reading (and, in essence, critical intelligence). The students would read different journalists' reporting of the same news event and then compare the different portrayals and perceptions. In one sense, this is similar to knowledge of different conceptual perspectives and research modes which was proposed in the previous chapter. Cousins feels that such activity on the part of the students would
increase their critical "detective" powers while lessening their passive acceptance of "the printed word."\textsuperscript{66}

Clearly, this content theme is evidence of a basic dimension related to developing the creative, critical aspect of wide-awakeness.

How much emphasis is there on the most important science of all--the science of interrelationships of knowledge--that critical area beyond compartmentalization, where knowledge must be integrated in order to have proper meaning?\textsuperscript{67}

This is a significant reoccurring question posed by Cousins: how do you educate for a decompartmentalized world? In essence, Cousins' conception of general education and "the whole man" mandates an integration of knowledge. A crucial content theme for general education emerges from this analysis--understanding the interrelationship of knowledge. Cousins calls for integration from two dimensions: cross-cultural and historical.

Provincialism is caused by those individuals who place peoples and civilizations in two big bundles neatly marked "East" and "West." This, for Cousins, is of major concern. He reminds us the hope for world peace lies with the articulate citizen whose knowledge cuts across cultural boundaries. Knowledge is part of humanity and not identified with specific geographic locales. "The disorders of our times are lodged within the body of man and cannot be effectively treated if they are to be regarded as an external and local growth."
A second dimension of his concept of the interrelationship of knowledge is that of time and how it affects the study of history. Cousins talks of conventional history courses as presenting a vertical view of history. Knowledge and facts are presented in chronological order. This linear presentation can be technically sophisticated. Similarities and interrelationships between two different periods, for example, can be illustrated. The portrayal of Pericles and Woodrow Wilson, in "Two Men," is an example of the potential of vertical history. But the vertical view of history more often than not keeps periods separate and obscure. Cousins applauds the Durants, at their 92nd birthday celebration in his editorial "Birthday Party," for writing more than the vertical method and for being, in effect, creative synthesizers:

They [the Durants] have performed an important service by steering clear of the vertical construction of historical writing--that is, the method by which historians handle events by climbing a chronological ladder in a single area. The Durants deal with the interaction of ideas, events, and personalities far outside their original habitat. They make no pretense of being definitive; they regard themselves rather as synthesizers. As such, they belong to a rare breed.68

From this more holistic historical perspective, Cousins writes:

An individual needs instruction in the techniques of action and decision. He needs to be convinced that individuals and groups changed history
in the past--and to learn how they did it. He needs an awareness of the fact that vital factions have moved whole societies--and that the essential ingredients had something to do with the inspiration by which a man comes to recognize his own possibilities for effective action. Surely in the lives of men who have been able to harness this power there may be essential nourishment for people who are starved for purpose. 69

Thus, in addition to a student being able to see the inter-relationships of knowledge, the student must also come to realize the power of ideas and their impact upon the social realm. What Cousins asks for is a student sensing the uses of knowledge. He employs the concept "conversion skills," to describe a student's ability to use knowledge, to take facts and apply them to the practical social realm. We are reminded of Cousins' definition of the new illiteracy. The role of "imagination," he delineates in the "Celebration of Life," serves as an antidote for this new illiteracy. Imagination thus becomes a significant component in this requirement that knowledge "be put to use" by the individual.

The traditional justification of general education has been the study of knowledge for knowledge's sake. Cousins takes a position much like the Social Reconstructionists of the 1930's. For them and for him, the social situation is such--the impending crises and uncertain future--that the uses of knowledge must be highlighted and seen by students as avenues for action at their own
levels of responsibility. In effect, the uses of knowledge can be drawn out, says Cousins, with the gift of imagination.

This gift of imagination, combined with knowledge, enables you to do more than to participate only theoretically in the lives of those who have lived before you. Through the art of creative reading, for example, the panorama of history can be spread before you. The grand individual experiences in history can be reborn and fulfilled in your imagination.70

Again, in this content theme we see a parallel to the position both Greene and Taylor take with respect to the nature of knowledge when it becomes meaningful to the student. And the process proposed by Cousins as a condition for rendering it meaningful is basically that which emerges from the Mooney model for the creative process.

The last content theme which emerges from an analysis of Cousins' life and thinking is one which has received most of his attention in recent years: realizing the importance of physical health. Cousins' own bouts with crippling diseases heightened his awareness and respect for the "preciousness of life." This interest has coincided with a recent nationwide curiosity with holistic, preventative medicine. His effort to present his views on this significant aspect of human experience is the subject matter of a current best seller Anatomy of an Illness.71 The central thesis of the book is an extension
of his earlier account in the New England Journal of Medicine in which he described how he overcame his own illness and became a more fully self-actualizing individual.

Function of Content Themes

The preceding analysis of Norman Cousins' life, taken as a prototype of source material for the identification of content themes which would provide initiating structure for a proposed general education curriculum development process, has produced seven content themes:

- Developing a social conscience
- Participating in service to the community
- Understanding the nature of change
- Developing critical intelligence
- Understanding the interrelationships of knowledge
- Sensing the uses of knowledge
- Realizing the importance of physical health

It is evident that there is overlapping among these seven as they function in the experience and thinking of an individual who is assumed to be an exemplar of one who demonstrates a good general education. Important to note is the marked difference between such themes and the typical concepts employed to make order out of general education curriculum phenomena--such concepts as knowledge or behavioral outcomes; structure of the disciplines;
overarching themes, or "big ideas," drawn from various periods of history.

These proposed content themes were drawn from the lived-in experience of a humanist-educator who has given thought over the years to the nature of his humanness and its implications for education broadly conceived. In this respect, it provides many "take-hold" places for teachers and students to generate dialogues to meet their own needs for meaningful general education experiences.

The themes themselves, cut across both a variety of disciplines, however defined, and across different periods of time. But more than this, they are rooted in the experience of an individual who is living through both these dimensions. This is to say, they have lost the abstractness that characterizes the conventional structures of general education curricula and serve thereby as a genuinely reconceptualized base for evolving further extensions of teaching-learning. In effect, they represent what might be accurately termed "open-ended" curriculum structure. As such, they give pattern to the design of the general education curriculum without restricting it or subordinating the involvement of the teachers and the students in the process.
The outcomes, it is claimed, will be the levels of wide-awakeness and heightened consciousness for both teachers and students and concern for the consequences of their beliefs and actions for themselves and for the lives of others—levels of growth and development depicted in the schemata in Figure 1, p. 173.
FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V


10 Cousins, Present Tense, p. 19.

11 Ibid., p. 20.

13 Ibid., p. 274.
14 Cousins, Present Tense, p. 6.
15 Ibid., p. 5.
16 Canby, American Memoir, p. 403.
17 Cousins, Present Tense, p. 18.
18 Canby, American Memoir, p. 359.
19 Cousins, Present Tense, p. 18.
20 Canby, American Memoir, p. 404.
21 Ibid., p. 278.
22 Ibid., p. 274.
23 Ibid., p. 275.
25 Cousins, Present Tense, pp. 3-4.
26 Ibid., p. 27.
28 Ibid., p. 276.
31 Ibid.


33 Cousins, personal interview, September, 1977.


36 Ibid., p. 335.

37 Ibid., p. 336.

38 Ibid., p. 336.

39 Ibid., p. 312.

40 Ibid., p. 312.

41 Ibid., p. 314.

42 Ibid., p. 319.

43 Ibid., p. 319.

44 Ibid., p. 320.


46 Ibid., p. 327.

47 Ibid., p. 331.

48 Ibid., p. 331.

49 Ibid., p. 332.
50 Ibid., p. 334.


53 Ibid., p. 264.


55 Ibid., p. 4.

56 Ibid., p. 77.

57 Cousins, *In Place of Folly*, p. 203.


64 Cousins, "Meaning, Purpose, and Belonging," p. 259.

65 Norman Cousins, "To the Class of '45," *Saturday Review*, June 9, 1945, p. 8.


69 Cousins, Present Tense, pp. 374-375.


71 Cousins, Anatomy of an Illness as Perceived by the Patient.
CHAPTER VI

GENERALIZATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study proposed to generate an alternative theoretical base for general education curriculum design at the college and university level. It has taken an historical-philosophical approach to the task, drawing upon empirical research when available to support the effort.

The investigation examined three historical paradigms of general education reform: Columbia, Chicago, and Harvard, and critiqued each program in relation to the inherent design dilemmas. It also analyzed a number of contemporary theoretical proposals for general education and examined one current attempt to redesign the curriculum, the Harvard Core project. Drawing heavily on reconceptualized foundational bases for curriculum theory, an alternative theoretical base for general education curriculum design was generated.

From this base, a curriculum design element, the content theme, was posited. And finally, a demonstration was made of the development of prototypical content themes from the analysis of an individual's life and work—-that of Norman Cousins, the humanist educator.
It is asserted that the study has met the criteria established for such theory-building efforts by the research efforts, the "findings" are in the corpus of the study itself. The most basic criterion is: has the effort raised a number of proposals, valid within the constraints of the methods used, which can next be tested out in practical applications of curriculum reform in various institutional settings. The claim is made that this criterion has been met.

A number of generalizations are an outgrowth of the research. Chief among them are the following which serve as recommendations for directions that should be taken to provide for more effective general education curriculum reform:

1. Efforts must be made to provide greater contact between professional educators with curriculum knowledge and the academics in colleges and universities who are most often involved in curriculum reform efforts. The current General Education Models project suggests the nature of a possible "clearing house" that could begin to serve this purpose.

2. The need for articulation between effective general education reform at the secondary-school level and the college and university level must be recognized. The
prevailing idea that secondary schools will provide only the basic skills upon which more adequate general education can be built in post-secondary institutions requires examination. A "top down" analysis of general education needs will not suffice. A new, more carefully planned eight-year experiment involving both secondary schools and colleges and universities could be a significant undertaking to foster this needed collaboration.

3. Genuine curriculum research and experimentation must be built into the general education efforts to reform. Much of the innovation underway tends to be merely "demonstrations" called experimentation. Little, if any, attention is paid to careful assessment of the changes. Yet there exists an increasingly significant body of curriculum development knowledge that could serve as a base for needed experimentation and evaluation.

4. Curriculum theory as a field of inquiry should be utilized more fully in general education curriculum reform efforts. This is clearly implicit in the needs identified above. But it also suggests that increased efforts be made to prepare historical and philosophical studies of curriculum development that focus directly on general education with special interest on the design component. Such efforts would begin to counteract the ahistorical and atheoretical stance of much current general education reform activities.
1. Introduction

During the past year a special committee invited by the Student Council and containing several members of the Council met weekly to consider problems of education at Harvard. Unlike two other such committees during the last fifteen years, this group spent the major portion of its time formulating principles. There was a pervasive feeling that if the system of education at Harvard is imperfect, this is due not only to faculty working of present institutions but to a conception of the meaning of education which is confused or inadequately thought out. By its attempt to re-define education as well as by some of its conclusions the Committee implicitly opposes a current and well-known attitude which insists that education may not be defined, doubts the validity of beliefs as guides to action, and allows merely the addition and subtraction of "scientifically established facts."

The stress upon the theory of education involves an emphasis upon the training of the mind and accordingly upon the academic curriculum. This is, however, a matter of emphasis and not of exclusion; and to those who demand that education be devoted to developing the rounded individual, the committee replies that it is precisely for that reason that it is stressing the intellectual element. When the 1926 committee of the Student Council surveyed Harvard education, it found that the glaring deficiencies were social and extra-curricular. To improve the organization of the Harvard community, the 1926 committee proposed the House Plan. The present committee believes that on the whole the Houses provide adequately for the social needs of the Harvard community. The striking defect in extra-curricular life today is not the House Plan itself but the fact that we have too little of it; and other Council Committees have been concerned with the
problems presented by the out-of-House men. Similarly the athletic activity of the Harvard community has been considered by a Council Committee. These other elements—the community life, the value of extra-curricular activity, the development of the social sense and the ability to make friends—have been the focus of college thought for the past years. The present Committee is convinced that the methods of thought and standards of value which a man's intellectual training leads him to acquire influence his activities outside the classroom during and after his college days. To produce the rounded individual, therefore, the intellect must in no wise be neglected. There comes a time in all Catholic institutions when a good truth is pressed to the point of falsehood, and those who attempt to restore the balance by recalling other good truths are invariably accused of that very heresy they are striving to correct.

The work of the committee may be divided into two parts. The first meetings were devoted, as stated above, to defining the meaning of education, and the others to determine the educational methods needed to fulfill such an education. It was announced at the outset that the topic under consideration was a liberal college. This report says nothing about technical schools or graduate work in any department; it cannot insist too much that the liberal college has a very special function, which proximity to other elements of a university is apt to blur. The faults of the Harvard system today may be roughly summarized as the penetration into the liberal college of university functions.

We take it as a truism that the college exists to advance the welfare, in the largest sense, of the entire community. In those centuries when the community was Christian and devoted to the greater glory of God, colleges served to train priests and to develop men who should assist others on the road to salvation, which was the term in which welfare was then expressed. In our day, communities are not, as they once were, everywhere more or less similar; the fascist community and the democratic community are antithetic. But this is not to say that the purpose of the college has changed. It serves the fascist community by training men devoted to the proposition that the Teutonic race should be lord of the earth and that Hitler is the new Messiah. Does the liberal college serve the democratic community?

By this question we mean to ask whether Harvard College trains men who are equipped to serve a community in which
the keynotes are freedom and peace, rather than tyranny and war; a community which respects the dignity of the individual, rather than conceiving of him as a tool. By such a training we imply an ability to make free choices, unhindered by ignorance and prejudice, and to bear an intelligible relationship to other human beings. Such an education should, in a word, develop a free man. Freedom is not merely lack of physical restraint. A mind clouded by ignorance makes choices which are not free by capricious. In a choice concerning income tax, the ignorance is technical; in a choice concerning human things, the ignorance is about humanity. Such an ignorance implies a failure to use human abilities. These abilities, in contra-distinction to animal or mechanistic qualities, are the intellectual virtues or reasoning, measuring, calculating, comparing.

To free the college man from prejudice the liberal college gives him the opportunity to develop considered standards of value. To free him from ignorance, the liberal college gives him some idea of our common tradition of human experience and attempts to give him intellectual tools with which he can confront new problems successfully. The theory is first that making man "free" men is something which is good in itself and needs no postgraduate justification. But it is also that liberally educated men in positions of leadership and in all walks of life will bring to the decisions which they have to make more adequate standards of value, sharper intellectual analysis, and broader imagination than other men.

This line of reasoning excludes the development of a specific vocational ability as the essential function of a college education. The Committee is conscious on the one hand of the economic need of such a training and on the other of the high value of technical schools. But it believes that at Harvard, a liberal college, neither that need for that value is a first consideration. For if the specific training excludes the general, we shall have lawyers and engineers who are not in a cultural sense men. Nor will they be in the same sense free. The colleges should resist all temptation to buckle down to the standards of the market place and the professions. They should instead attempt to impart to the men they educate a broader insight so that in the occupations these men may have enough imagination to transcend specialized routine and change traditional standards. It is with this in mind that the deans of leading professional schools urge men in college to gain a broad education rather than a specific pre-legal or pre-medical training.
If the college, in preparing men to be of service in a free community, should free the mind from ignorance about humanity and develop human abilities, we can already see certain things which shall be necessary in a liberal education. The content of that education is as important as the method. If the ignorance is about humanity, the content should be in some degree, those branches of thought known as the humanities—interpreting humanities in the broadest sense to mean man's intellectual achievements in science, art, and culture. The committee has made proposals which it hopes will present these branches of thought to all students.

Under the elective system, a student may elect not to study any of these branches of thought, or to specialize so thoroughly in one that he neglects all the others. That is to say, by a curious confusion, that the student who expects to develop ability to make unprejudiced choices must make from the start such choices; but owing to a lack of training, they cannot help but be prejudiced. Thus the system defeats itself. It is the student's legal right to elect not to have a liberal education; but this committee, considering not legal rights but human responsibilities, proposes to counter-act this danger by a series of requirements. The word must not be feared. The system which the committee visualizes will require that the student develop the proper tools to make a free choice; it will require him to develop himself in specifically human qualities. Such requirements, or laws, are those which respect the student, just as a democratic constitution is formed not of complete lack of restraint, but of laws which respect the individual citizen. The report has named these requirements, specified the method of fulfilling them and explained, as completely as possible, the reasoning behind them.

2. The State of Harvard Education Today

So far we have outlined what we consider should be the aims of Harvard College education. These aims, we believe, have always been implicit in Harvard's concentration and distribution system. Since President Lowell inaugurated the system to replace the anarchy of complete freedom of election, the Harvard ideal has been that a student master thoroughly one field and at least acquaint himself with each of the major divisions of learning. We have also stated our
conviction that college education should have a more definite common content. A liberal education should be a broad education. It should impart in some measure the humanistic and scientific tradition of the western world. This tradition should be shared by all liberally educated men. Harvard men should have more in common than the ability to swim fifty yards and write grammatical English sentences.

The distribution requirement as operated under President Lowell, was at least a recognition that there should be some definite content to college education. The concentration and distribution system was President Lowell's remedy for the anarchy and confusion of President Eliot's complete elective system. The elective system was introduced to escape the narrowness and the rigor of mid-19th century classical education. But it got rid not only of the particular content embodied in a rigorously prescribed classical education, but of all definite content to college education. The complete elective system deprived college education of any goal whatever; it encouraged perfunctory study and "course counting." President Lowell believed that content should be restored to Harvard education. He believed, that is, that each student should be familiar with the fundamental conceptions that underlie the various departments of human knowledge and with the methods of thought of the persons who pursue them. The original distribution requirement was that each undergraduate take six courses distributed among the three of the following groups outside his field of concentration.

1. Languages, Literature, Fine Arts, Music  
2. Natural Sciences  
3. History, Government, Economics, Education, and Anthropology  
4. Philosophy and Mathematics

Beginning with the class of 1922, the distribution requirement was whittled down to four courses, including one in literature, one in science, one in history or government, and one in mathematics or philosophy. With the advent of President Conant, the required distribution of the Lowell regime gave was to the simple provision that each student take four courses, and four courses, outside his field. But President Conant also has felt the need for some common ground which educated men can share, some body of knowledge which can serve as a point of departure and of references for Harvard graduates. One of the purposes of this American History program is to take a first step in that direction, and attempt to provide the meetingplace for minds in the form of study of the history and culture of our own country.
But, though well fortified with attractive prizes, the History program is purely voluntary and extra-curricular. As yet it has not succeeded in imparting a common content to the education of more than a handful of Harvard men.

The complaint which the committee lodges against Harvard education as it now exists is that it fails to live up to the aims originally intended in the concentration and distribution system. As a consequence, it fails to provide any broad common content. Harvard men certainly do not, as President Lowell intended, learn a great deal about some special field of study and a little about each of the large divisions of knowledge. There is no attempt, systematic or informal, to see that the program of study of a Harvard student is either coherent or broad. The American History plan falls hopelessly short of providing a common denominator for men taught at Harvard. It would in any case be an inadequate sort of common denominator. Yet the American History program is the only indication that Harvard is at all worried about this problem of liberal education.

This failure of Harvard education manifests itself in over-concentration and in inadequate and poorly selected distribution. With the breakdown of the distribution system, concentration has come to be practically synomous with Harvard education. From sophomore year on, almost the sole curricular interest and preoccupation of a student is his field of concentration. The sole requirements which he concerns himself with fulfilling is the requirement that he know enough about his field to pass the general examinations. For the superior students, this preoccupation with concentration takes the form of a study of the frontiers of his field which is frequently of the order of graduate study. For other men, evidently the fear, founded or unfounded, of confronting general examinations unprepared leads to an excessive degree of concentration. The courses which are selected for distribution are not selected with any view of covering the major fields of human knowledge. Indeed courses, even elementary courses, are offered by the departments largely with concentrators in view. They are not designed for the man from another field who is seeking a broader education. Even a man who desired to acquaint himself adequately with the major humanities and sciences which constitute our learned tradition would find it almost impossible to do so. Given the existing course offerings, to cover as wide a range would require numerous elementary courses. A student could not afford to take the necessary number of courses outside his field of concentration. It is no wonder, therefore, that the
concentration and distribution system do not today accomplish President Lowell's ideal....

We conclude, therefore, that the present system of distribution does not fulfill the ideals for which the distribution system was established nor does it supply the broad and general view of our intellectual heritage which should be the purpose of distribution in a liberal education. The abolition of the old specification of the types of courses required for distribution has resulted in a random and unplanned selection of courses. Not enough courses have been taken for distribution. The courses which have been taken have not been distributed adequately over the major branches of knowledge. Finally, the presentdepartmental organization of courses makes it almost impossible to gain an intelligible and broad view of the main areas of learning.

3. Introductory Area Courses

If our contention that over-concentration and maldistribution exist on a serious scale is true, Harvard College is not fulfilling its functions as a liberal college. In terms of the aims of education which we stated in the first section, Harvard is failing by considerable measure to make its students "free"men. Freedom, we contend, consists in intellectual breadth. It does not consist in complete freedom of election of courses. It should not be surprising, therefore, that our proposals for liberal education destroy, to a great extent, freedom of choice in the selection of courses for distribution.

The remedy for over-concentration is to require a larger number of courses which are genuinely valuable for distribution. The remedy for the hopelessly unplanned and unsystematic selection of the courses which are taken for distribution is to provide that the main branches of knowledge be covered. The remedy for the inadequacy of the present departmentally organized courses for distribution purposes is to institute new courses organized for the express end of providing an intelligible and broad view of each of the large areas of knowledge.

Consequently, the Committee recommends the establishment of what we shall term introductory courses. These courses
would not be offered by any of the now existing departments or divisions. They would instead be offered and administered by three "area" committees, one for natural sciences, one for the humanities, and one for the social sciences. These area committees would be of the same order as the three area committees established to administer the broader fields of concentration recently adopted by the Faculty. But the administration of the introductory courses would mean that these committees would have to possess more power and a more definite administrative standing in the University than is at present contemplated for the area committees. Under the three areas the various departments would be classified, and the personnel for instruction in the area courses would be drawn from the departments under each area. The classification which we used above in analyzing the figures for concentration and distribution is a possible classification, but only one of several classifications. The Committee does not feel that it is for us to decide definitely the departments which should fall under each area. It is clear, however, that the subject matter and personnel of some departments would be utilized in more than one of the area courses. The resources of the department of History, for example, should be employed both in the introductory courses, in the humanities, and in the introductory course in social sciences. Analogous cases are the departments of Anthropology and Psychology.

The Committee recommends that five introductory courses be established: two in the area of natural sciences, two in the area of the humanities, and one in the area of social sciences. Of the two in natural sciences, one would be concerned with the physical sciences and one with the biological sciences. The two courses in the humanities would be concerned with our intellectual and cultural tradition. The two courses would in reality be one, but the Committee feels that an adequate treatment of subject matter of such large scope would require a course extending over two years. The Committee tentatively suggests that the first year cover the intellectual and cultural history of ancient and medieval times and that the second year cover intellectual and cultural history from the Renaissance to recent times. The social sciences introductory course would be concerned with an analysis of contemporary society. This course would not be divided into parts each concerned with economics or government or sociology. Rather it would consider social problems cutting across these separate disciplines and attempt to synthesize the different approaches. History especially since the Industrial Revolution, would be employed where it would shed light on analysis
of the nature of present-day society....

These five courses would be required of every student in Harvard College. This requirement would replace the present distribution provision. Students would be free to take courses for distribution in addition to these five. The Committee believes that the years of a liberal college education during which the broad background should be acquired are the first two. Specialization may begin in the second year, but should be the preoccupation of the student only in the two final years. Before he definitely decides his field of concentration, the student should have tasted of all the main branches of learning. Before he finally settles down to pursue thoroughly one subject of study, he should have the broad background, so that he may temper the narrowness of his specialization with a deeper insight and wider perspective. Therefore, the Committee recommends that ordinarily four of the five introductory courses be taken before the junior year. There need be no stipulation as to the order in which the five courses are taken, except that the two halves of the humanities course be taken in successive years....

In this way our proposals seriously cut down freedom of election of courses in the first two years in Harvard College. We have already given our reasons for believing that freedom of election is not the freedom which should have significance in a liberal education. The elective system was introduced by President Eliot in a reaction against the rigidly prescribed classical education of the mid-nineteenth century. It may have been a necessary revolution then, but there is no danger of a return of the ills which Eliot's system was designed to cure. If our introductory courses are made broad and flexible and undogmatic, there need be no fear that the curriculum will become rigid and stultifying....

The usual charge against the courses of the type which we are proposing is superficiality. Paradoxically, it seems to us, many persons who agree that the liberal college should provide a grounding in the major areas of knowledge refuse to advocate courses in these areas as the means to their ends. They offer no other means, but they are afraid of superficiality. The Committee has heard the axiom concerning the danger of a little knowledge; it is more impressed with the danger
of no knowledge. A superficial liberal education is better than no liberal education. Superficiality, after all, is a matter of degree. In a sense, any treatment of a subject short of a Ph.D. thesis is superficial. Compared to the accumulated wisdom of economists, the doctrines imparted in Economics A doubtless suffer from a deceptive clarity and simplicity. Our introductory courses need not be much more superficial in this respect than the present departmental elementary courses. And they will avoid one source of superficiality of which the present courses are guilty; namely, the approach to complicated problems from the standpoint of a single limited discipline.

The problem of teaching in the introductory courses would be even more acute than the problem of teaching in departmental courses at present. The younger instructors in the introductory courses would have to possess a breadth of learning which perhaps is rare in these days of specialized scholarship. They would have to be better than two jumps ahead of the students. The Committee believes that there have been and are younger instructors in the university who would be able to direct sections and conferences groups in the introductory courses. And if Harvard is to continue to operate a liberal college, it should make the breadth of view required to teach these introductory courses one of the criteria for the appointment and advancement of teachers. It should enable by financial support certain young instructors to equip themselves to teach the introductory courses and to tutor in the prospective "area" fields of concentration. We believe that the subsequent research of one who has acquired sufficient breadth of view to teach in an introductory course and to tutor in an interdepartmental field will be the more significant. We recommend therefore, that to provide for competent tutoring in the area fields of concentration and to provide for competent teaching in our proposed introductory courses, the University make it financially possible for certain younger instructors to obtain the necessary breadth of view. And we recommend that competency of this sort be one of the criteria in the selection and advancement of teachers at Harvard.

Our proposals impose, it is apparent, a greater administrative and financial burden. But it must be remembered that the pressure will be taken off the large courses which now bear the brunt of distribution. In any case, we do not believe that administrative or even financial inconvenience
can be pleaded as a reason for permanent rejection of a plan which is otherwise acceptable. Moreover, much of the administrative machinery and additional expense for personnel would be required for the effective operation of the plan for broader fields of concentration to which the Faculty is already committed. . . .

To summarize, we believe that introductory courses are the necessary remedy for the over-concentration and maldistribution which characterize Harvard education at present. Introductory courses fulfill the ideals of Harvard's concentration and distribution system; more important, they help to fillfill the ideals implied by the conception of liberal education itself. We do not believe that the danger of superficiality and the additional administrative and financial burden are decisive objections to the establishment of introductory courses. They have been successfully offered at other colleges, notably Columbia and Chicago. Finally, we have shown that introductory courses are not incompatible with the present concentration system and are almost indispensable for the concentration system to which the Faculty is committed for the future.

4. Concentration

5. The Tutorial System

6. General Examinations

7. The Teaching of Courses

8. The House Plan

9. Conclusion

The major recommendations of this report are designed to reinstate liberal education in Harvard College. They are designed to reinstate liberal education as it is supposed to be embodied in the concentration and distribution system and in the tutorial system. The principle on which we have proceeded is that the object of liberal education is indicated by the term liberal education; the object is to make men free, to give them the background and training which enables them to make decisions untrammelled by ignorance and prejudice.
A part of this process is grounding the individual in the major conceptions of man's scientific and humanistic knowledge. A part is the thorough mastery and integrated study of a particular branch of learning. To enable Harvard College to offer the first part of the process of liberal education, we have recommended the establishment of five introductory courses covering the major areas of knowledge. To enable Harvard College to offer effectively the second part of the process, we have suggested means of making the tutorial system an integral part of the college. These proposals are not inconsistent with Harvard's particular conception of a liberal education. Rather they are the fullest expression of that conception, and they restore to their rightful place two parts of that conception which Harvard is in practice in danger of losing, namely, the distribution system and the tutorial system. The effect of our proposals is to diminish the freedom of election of courses and the freedom to have tutorial or not to have it which at present are the privileges of Harvard students. We have emphasized again and again that the ability to make choices free of ignorance and prejudice is expected to be the result of liberal education; freshmen in Harvard cannot therefore be expected to make such choices.

The effect of our proposals would probably be to stiffen the standards of Harvard College. It probably would not be so easy to get by, though dean's list men might not have to work any harder than before. The Committee does not think it necessary to defend our proposals on this score. The influx of scholarship men in the last few years makes a raising of academic standards a natural and necessary trend. There are doubtless many persons who come to Harvard not because it is a liberal college but because a part of their breaking-in is to spend a few years as a member of the Harvard community. Doubtless these men make worthwhile contributions to the social, cultural, and athletic life of the Harvard community. A stiffening of the curricular standards might be hard on them. The Committee remembers, however, that Harvard is primarily a liberal college and secondarily a community. The manifold social and organizational needs of the Harvard community should be met only by those who are able and willing to do those things necessary at Harvard to secure a liberal education. For these reasons, this Committee has come out against the establishment at Harvard of two colleges, an honors and an pass college. We have recommended that general examinations be retained for all, and that, if a Plan A-Plan B
must be nevertheless be genuine tutorial instruction.

No doubt some will accuse this Committee of wishing to impose on undergraduates our ideas of what they should know, and those critics may bandy about the word fascism. These persons forget that our required introductory courses and our required tutorial do not have as their object the propagandizing of any particular beliefs or dogmas. The aims of fascist education are to impart fixed beliefs in the myths of the fascist state, to the exclusion of all else. The aims of liberal education are to acquaint the student with the conflicting views of various thinkers on important issues and to permit the student to draw his own conclusions, to choose his own beliefs. Against ignorance, liberal education puts its faith in knowledge; against prejudice, liberal education puts its faith in reason. In this way, liberal education is a part of liberalism itself. Liberal education is education for democracy. There are few enough countries which attempt to decide questions of public policy by knowledge and by reason. So long as this is one of them, it is the function of Harvard College to give to society leaders equipped with the insight and perspective to make important decisions and with the skepticism which demands that conclusions stand or fall according to the reasoning and the premises they are based on. Our proposals are designed to enable Harvard College better to fulfill that function, better to serve American democracy.

Respectfully submitted,

Student Council Committee on Education

James Tobin, '39 (Co-Chairmen)
J. Spence Harvin, '39
Harold Brown, '39
Ellsworth S. Grant, '39
Frederick Holdsworth, '40

John Keppel, '40
Richard W. B. Lewis, '39
Irving M. London, '39
Ralph B. Murphy, '39
Phil C. Neal, '40
APPENDIX B

The Use of Festivals in General Education Curriculum

Craig Kridel
Ohio State University

General education re-emerged in 1978 as a significant topic of curriculum reform. One need only, for example, examine the widespread reporting of the proposed Harvard "Core" to sense something of the interest aroused both within the profession and in the public at large. But a careful examination of the many so-called innovations that have thus far been undertaken reveals that they are both ahistorical and atheoretical. This is a harsh judgment. But those who work in curriculum know that the field is scattered with the dry bones of repeated ventures to "redo" general education at both secondary and post-secondary levels.

Most of the contemporary efforts tend to manifest what Newmann and Oliver have called a "Great Society" approach (1.) in contrast to their proposal for the generation of genuine educational communities which they call "missing communities." In classic terms, the distinction is often between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, the former centered on shared intimacy and interdependency; the latter, on more impersonal, formal and contractual relationships characteristic of a bureaucracy. In the Great Society approach (Gesellschaft) general education curriculum reform tends basically to involve a re-arrangement of content to assure that a student takes work in at least the conventional three areas: the humanities, the sciences, and the social sciences. And in the more radical of the proposals, efforts are made to develop curricular structure designed to show relationships among these areas. But more often than not, the political decisions commonly involved in curriculum development in institutions result only in a watered down set of required courses every student must take. In a secondary school curriculum terminology, these have come to be known as "the constants."

I take the position that a new knowledge base in curriculum theory is emerging which could provide a significant alternative presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April 7-11, 1980, Boston
to these current trends in the redesign of general education. Moreover, I draw upon a case study of an effort to reconceptualize general education through the use of the festival in a university-community setting. I view this effort in which I was directly involved as a clear demonstration of the thesis Lawrence Cremin has proposed (2.)-- namely, a "configuration of education" that must of necessity take place in a larger setting than the institution called school or college. And Cremin sees his work as a logical extension of Dewey's philosophical idea of community and its crucial relationship to all levels of education. As a backdrop to a fuller understanding of my position, an overview of the historical role of festivals and a brief discussion of the importance of play are both useful.

**Historical Role of Festivals**

The traditional role of festivals, in many respects, has been one of education. One need only think of communities based upon an oral tradition, most notably villages of the Middle Ages, and the role that festivals played in educating the people. The festival was an instrument of culture and a vital form of popular art. (3.) Common knowledge, or in the broadest sense, culture, was transmitted through the art forms idiomatic to the oral tradition. Thus, the community's myths, legends, customs, sacred and secular conventions were "inculcated" through the festival performances of storytelling, music, dramatic dance, mummers plays and other theatrical performances. In the most basic sense, tradition was maintained and customs were taught during these times of festivity. (4.)

Jacob Burckhardt discusses festival "as a higher phase in the life of the people, in which its religious, moral and poetical ideas took visible shape. The Italian festivals in their best form mark the point of transition from real life into the works of art." (5.)

Cultural transmission was not the sole reason for festivals; from ancient Greece through the Middle Ages, to the early Twentieth Century, religious and secular celebrations served to promulgate customs and "common knowledge" of society. In a real sense, they can be viewed as supplying some of the shared experience that is called for in Cremin's new configuration as a component of the "common learnings" of a school or community. They stand as demonstrations of significant efforts to produce the missing community that Newmann and Oliver seek.

In the early Twentieth Century there was a more direct link between festivals and schools. An example of the reporting of this link is the substantial "festival" entry in the 1911 Monroe Cyclopedia of Education. Many advantages are cited for the inclusions of festivals in the school program. The examples and the bibliography support the fact that school festivals were common. The
The author of that section of the Cyclopedia emphasizes that such festivals should be a part of the regular work of the school.

Today, in contrast, festivals tend to be more nearly a function of departments of recreation in urban settings or events organized to celebrate specific holidays in various ethnic subgroups of metropolitan areas. In effect, they tend to have lost the central role they once had both in communities and in educational institutions. In schools, when they are sponsored, they tend to be viewed as extra-curricular events. The loss of this once crucial role may be partially accounted for in an examination of our conception of play and its relationship to culture and to learning in Twentieth Century society.

The Importance of Play in Festivity

Historically, play and games have taken on great meaning. For many Renaissance humanists, play and games were activities engaged in to acquire certain moral virtues and traits. For example, Renaissance treatises discuss the "moral education" one could receive from playing chess. Sir Thomas Elyot explains, in the Boke Named the Governour, 1531, how one acquires the virtue, prudence, when one dances the basse dance, a popular social dance of the time. Bakhtin writes of Rabelais:

- It is needless to dwell on the roots of the imagery representing feasts and games. What is important is not their generic relationship but their related meaning.... There was in those days a vivid awareness of the universalism of this imagery, of its link with time and the future, destiny, and political power.... Life was presented as a miniature play, a play without footlights. (6.)

This analysis made by Bakhtin gives something of the flavor of the importance attached to festival-like activities.

The sources of the long, slow decay of the play element of Western culture are complex. A general reaction to the oneness of a thoroughly rational view of the nature of individuals and society has furthered fresh concern for the aesthetic value of play, fantasy and festivity. The pioneering work of Johan Huizinga is a case in point.(7.) He speaks of individuals in the present society as predominately homo sapiens and homo faber. And he makes a strong case for our renewed attention to homo ludens.

Harvey Cox, as well, discussed the decline of the play element of culture.(8.) The Protestant work ethic and the "morality of achievement" of the "rising middle class" are often cited as contributing factors. Indeed, the Protestant Reformation abolished
the holidays, games, and emotional safety valves of the medieval society. Technological changes also were contributing factors.

It is significant to note that contemporary educators have begun to recognize more fully the meaning and imagery that is so central to play and festivity. As early as the 1950's the many investigations into the nature of creativity adumbrated this interest. And in the 1960's, there was a growing recognition that studies which focused on a narrow definition of the nature of cognition were inadequate. Jerome Bruner, the cognitive psychologist, for example, in his discussion of the nature of a learning experience, writes: "There is something antic about creating although the enterprise be serious."(9.) It is this antic quality of human experience, and in turn, learning, that we wish to foster. Bruner goes further in this quest and cites the crucial role he is convinced myth has. He urges us not to think of logos and mythos as polar opposites, but rather, as essential complements.(10.)

Moreover, Bruner relates this need to recognize antic experience and myth to a new sense of community. He asserts:

We are no longer a 'mythologically instructed community.'
And so, one finds a new generation struggling to find or to create a satisfactory and challenging mythic image.(11.)

This creating of a new mythic image involves, it would seem, a concept not unlike the concept of "resonance" developed by the cultural anthropologist Rhoda Métraux.(12.)

All of this suggests a radical redefinition of the nature of cultural transmission, traditionally viewed as a central purpose of general education. We often speak, for example, of a common core of Western culture as general education content. Significant in this redefinition is an emergence of play and festivity as a basic ingredient. In his plea that schools and colleges become "agents for cultural renewal," Lawrence K. Frank recognized this crucial shift which, as he asserts, can reinforce the arts and humanities:

to provide the esthetic, effective dimensions of a culture and communicate the enduring goal-values by which the aspirations and strivings of a culture are focused and directed.(13.)

We begin to see, then, confluence of ideas from many sources, ideas that can serve as a source for an alternative foundational base for curriculum development in the general education realm.
The Festival in General Education

Thus far, we have noted the central importance of play, or in Brunerian terms, the antic quality, as a significant dimension of learning. And we have seen the relationship festive experience brings to a redefinition of community. An effective 1980 redesign of general education must take into account both of these aspects of human experience if it is to go beyond the mere re-arrangement of traditional subject matter. Even the so-called "discipline oriented" general education theorists such as Paul Hirst in England(14.) and King and Brownell(15.) recognize this need for a "community" among the disciplines. Less clear, however, are the means for achieving such in a typical college or university setting.

John Dewey was certainly aware of this need in his contention that community is the "upward extension" of the individual. Alfred N. Whitehead echoes a similar idea in his conception of the role the individual has in relating to his community and to the culture it bears:

Knowledge is the reminiscence by the individual of the experience of the race. But reminiscence is never simple reproduction. (italics added) The present reacts upon the past. It selects, it emphasizes, it adds. The additions are the new ideas by means of which the life of the present reflects itself upon the past.(16.)

In all of these theoretical bases for general education, the idea of "process" is dominant. This is to say that the individual is an active participant in a community in his/her reflective processing of experience. The "modes of inquiry" approach to general education curriculum design stems from this perspective. Daniel Bell is a leading proponent of this approach.

Columbia professors Robert Belknap and Richard Kuhns, who write about general education curriculum at the university level relate this concept with that of community consciousness in their commentary on the role of festivals:

Festivals are the demystificatory epiphenomena of the general education program. They cut across the professional boundaries within the institution and put professionals in contact with enthusiasts outside.(17.)

In this sense, they endorse the thesis Cremin has put forth-- the need to bring a larger sense of community to the shared educational experience as well as transmitting the culture. This comes close to being a good definition of the function of general education, approaching Frank's conception of the need to establish educational agencies for continuous cultural renewal.
Involved in such an undertaking are many diverse educational agencies in the community. In addition to the schools or colleges, libraries, museums, broadcast media, and special interest groups—to name only a few—have important roles to play. The functions of such agencies assume even greater importance when the concept of education as life-long learning becomes more fully understood.

The Ohio State University Renaissance Festival

Thus far, we have discussed the potential of the festival to bring to life some of the purposes that often are only implicit in the rhetoric of general education curriculum development. Let us turn now to a specific case study of a festival experience in a real institutional setting, The Ohio State University. (A similar case could unfold in a secondary school or in any other institution which took the necessary leadership.) Held the second Saturday each May, the Renaissance Festival has come to be a significant event in this university and community.

The idea of Renaissance festivals is not new. There are a number of Renaissance "fairs" around the country. And with the growing interest in the Renaissance performing arts, such events are likely to increase. A unique feature of the Ohio State Festival which makes it different from the others is its conception as an educational event. Other festivals highlight contemporary crafts as many festivals of the 16th century would have done. Or, festivals are often seen as a time for games and performances which are within the Renaissance idiom but are not authentic. In other words, such efforts often tend only to be another form of passive, spectator recreation.

Since the Renaissance arts are approached in this undertaking with genuine scholarly respect, a wide range of university departments are interested and anxious to take part. The public schools in the city and the public library display relevant material as a prelude to the festival itself. Radio and television stations film and record festival performances for later broadcast. Even local theaters feature movies of the Renaissance as their way of taking part in a community venture.

In the first years of the event, the festival audience saw themselves neither as participants nor as students. Since the festival was conceived as an educational experience, the task was one of "educating" the general audience so that the performances could be better appreciated. No compromise of authentic material was made to achieve this desired outcome. It was held that if the highest standards of authentic performance were demonstrated, then the beauty and meaning of the "content" would be recognized and appreciated. Our respect for Renaissance culture took its form in the belief that the material is intrinsically interesting and beautiful. This attitude proved to be valid and it shaped what each succeeding
festival was to become.

Our expectations of the significant role these festivals could play have been met in each of the past five years. In its sixth year, the 1980 festival will include approximately sixty performing groups of regional reputation. The festival has hosted at least one nationally-renowned performance each year. The 1980 festival, for example, includes six nationally-acclaimed ensembles. Although preparations are always made in case of rain, the festival is advertised as an outdoor event. In 1979, despite a festival day that rained and brought the activities indoors, approximately 12,000 individuals attended. This attendance, itself, attests to student and community perception of its importance.

As college survey courses introduce freshmen to Western Civilization, so this one-day festival introduces the community to the performing arts of the Renaissance—music, dance, mime, puppetry, theatre, storytelling and juggling.

The organization of the event grouped performers into nine performance areas. Each group performed twice. The audience was thereby given a second opportunity to select performances. The festival performer's intent has become one not only of performing but also of educating, in the best sense of that term. Shawms, for example, are compared to modern oboes. Renaissance deportment ideals—such as Castiglione's concept of sprezzatura—are explained. Comprehensive notes accompany theatrical productions. The result is wide appeal for scholar as well as neophyte. As musicologists listen for the New York Cornet & Sacbut Ensemble's ornamentation of Susato dances, the novice attempts to distinguish cornets from sacbuts. Both are enjoying the same performance.

With some performances, it is possible to invite members of the audience to learn elementary aspects of the art forms. Typically, the O.S.U. Historical Dance Ensemble, after their performance, invites interested members of the audience to learn branles. We see here a clear example of the point Whitehead was concerned with—namely, that the festival experience be more than "simple reproduction," that it indeed be an experience in which the life of the present reflects upon the past.

There has evolved in these festivals a quality of educational experience for both performers and audience not unlike the aesthetic literacy that Maxine Greene speaks of in her work at the Lincoln Center Institute:

It is a form of literacy grounded in 'doing'... grounded in specific acquaintance with distinctive modes of art-making, the languages, the symbolisms, the forms of expression, the techniques peculiar to dance, music, drama. We are convinced that thoughtful engagements
with movement, say, an acquaintance with some of the
elements of choreography, cannot but feed into our
kinaesthetic responses to dance, cannot but enable
us to see more, feel more, attend with more outgoing
energy, attain more delight. The same is true with
respect to work with sound and attentiveness to sound
as medium, as raw material, to tone, color and rhythm
and sonority. (18.)

The presentation of knowledge in a way that honors Dewey's
concept of the relationship between a fully developed reflective
citizen and his community has been a major intent of the Ohio State
Festival. One year, for example, in the wake of Watergate, the
festival theme was "An Afternoon of Corrupting Awareness." A group
of commentators-- part of a performing group-- were given all per­
formance scripts prior to the festival. On that day in their role
as commentators, they leaped from the audience and proceeded to
highlight the political, economic and social maneuverings of the
time period.

Another year, the festival fell on Armed Forces Day. That year's
theme, "Artillery, Anarchy, and Amatory," allowed that year's commen­
tators to stage impromptu arguments which concerned defense spending
and weaponry. The often rather amorphous general education aims of
furthering "critical intelligence" and "knowing the uses of the past" were sharpened by such festival activities.

The varied "modes of inquiry" so commonly viewed as aspects of
general education reform proposals were specifically highlighted in
the interdisciplinary treatments of the different performances.
While some music theorists discussed "voice transfer" from the
perspective of notation analysis, other musicians explained their
interpretation and ornamentation from their "feel" for the music
or from their belief in "national characters." Dance historians
explained their reconstructions from deportment analysis of paintings,
woodcuts, and dance manuals of the period. Other dancers talked of
their "phenomenological affinity" to the social setting and context.
Some poets discussed their grasp of meaning from linguistic analysis
and others from a compilation of word usage.

From the outset, the festivals have brought together "town and
gown" in new relationships. Community members who are affiliated
with national organizations (for example: The American Recorder
Society, Society for Creative Anachronisms, Country Dance and Song
Society) met university academics in newly-recognized cooperative
efforts. This sense of community extended to alumni as well as to
students present on campus. Through these festivals, the university
has found new friends willing to support this and other such events.
Epilogue

No claim is made that festivals in themselves will solve the complex issues and problems of general education curriculum reform. But the Ohio State University Renaissance Festival clearly demonstrates an approach that should be experimented with more widely in a number of different settings—secondary schools, colleges and universities where efforts are underway to develop more effective general education programs. Clearly, there is both historical and theoretical grounding to undergird the use of festivals as a curricular resource. And, of course, the Renaissance is not the only theme that might be explored in such efforts.

It is my hope that some of the current proposals for generating fresh general education curricula will begin to focus on the creation of educational communities that have as their main task "cultural renewal." We now need many demonstrations of how such efforts get started, how the various problems are faced and what emerges as a result of the collaborative efforts of a number of individuals and agencies which heretofore have not seen themselves directly involved in general education. Moreover, such efforts would be an excellent source for carefully planned curriculum research, utilizing some of the newer approaches that have not yet found their way into the mainstream of educational research.

A national network of interested individuals who could share information and continue a professional dialogue about these matters would be a valuable mechanism for furthering such work. Perhaps the National Endowment for the Humanities or the GEM Project could lend support to such activity. In my judgment, this kind of support would make a qualitative difference in general education curriculum redesign that I am convinced will not take place if curriculum developers depend only on the direction given in such prestigious reports as the Carnegie series.
Footnotes


10.) Ibid., p. 31.

11.) Ibid., p. 39.

12.) Rhoda Metraux, "Resonance in Imagery," in Margaret Mead and Rhoda Metraux, The Study of Culture at a Distance (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1953).


APPENDIX C

Is It Possible to Be an Optimist? by Norman Cousins

Is it possible to be an optimist in a world which has turned most of its organized brain power and energy into the systematic means for debasing life or mutilating it or scorching it or obliterating it? What basis is there for hope when the human future is increasingly in the hands of men who do not comprehend the meaning of the new power and who are, some of them, puny and fretful and prone to act out of frustration or false pride or mistaken notions of grandeur?

Is it possible to believe in the ability of the human species to eliminate the mass injustice that leads to mass violence-- or the mass violence that feeds back into mass injustice? Can anyone have confidence in the capacity of human intelligence to sustain the natural environment on which humans are absolutely dependent-- at a time when the progressive despoliation and poisoning of air, land, and water are fast outrunning efforts to protect the environment?

Questions like these are producing a profound upheaval within the body of contemporary Western social philosophy. For the essence of modern social thought is its belief in the idea of human progress. With a few exceptions such as Spengler, the leading thinkers of the past few
centuries have generally accepted Aquinas's idea that man "advances gradually from the imperfect to the perfect." Pascal underscored this notion when he said that man is a creature capable not only of undergoing experiences but of comprehending them, and that the unending accumulation of experiences is therefore bound to be reflected in his own learning, understanding, and growth. Bacon, Descartes, Kant, and Hegel, each in his own way, have attempted to break free from the Aristotelian concept of fixed limitations on human potentiality, or the Lucretian idea of cataclysmic disaster, or the prophetic notion of doom.

No group of thinkers has had more to say about the potentialities of human beings, especially under conditions of freedom, than Americans such as Franklin, Jefferson, Emerson, William James, Holmes, Pierce, and Dewey. Each has added depth and strength to the idea that humankind is capable of almost infinite development. Indeed, emerging from the ideas of the American social philosophers is a definition of human uniqueness: the ability to do that which has never been done before.

Today, however, the bedrock of modern social philosophy has been badly shaken by a long series of somber developments pointing toward the ultimate decimation of the human species. The habit of violence is no less significant than the technology of violence. There has been a growing desensitization to human hurt.
Albert Schweitzer perhaps reflected the dilemma of many of his colleagues when he said that any optimism he might have for the human future rested less on his knowledge of history or on his analytical faculties than on a pervasive wish that everything would come out all right. Yet there is no real contradiction between the two. The capacity to hope is not the natural enemy of the analytical intelligence. It is a source of energy for creating new options. It helps to create new uses for logic. It sets people in motion and thus gives rise to new swirls, new contexts, new combinations. It gives reality a new face.

History is an accumulation of causes and effects, but it is far from being a procession of inevitables. Time and again, supposedly inexorable forces have been reversed by human acts proceeding out of positive human decisions. To say that man is locked into error and delusion runs counter to human experience. This is not to underestimate his propensity for error. But neither should we underestimate man's ability through an act of will to create a wide and exciting range of new possibilities. The only ultimate prison he need fear is his inertia and indecision.

Pessimism has one thing in common with optimism. It is not only a mood but a movement. The main characteristic of pessimism is that it tends to set the stage for its own omens. It is self-fulfilling.
It shuns prospects in the act of denying them. It narrows the field of vision, obscuring the relationship between the necessary and the possible.

The prime fallacy of pessimism is that no one really knows enough to be a pessimist. It is unhistorical to rule out the conversion of imponderables under pressure from powerful ideas into positive forces. And the reason there is no inconsistency between the exercise of reason and the optimistic outlook is that the search for new approaches or answers often has to be built on new grounds— and optimism is the range-finder for locating such grounds. Optimism is also a way of paying our respects to the mysterious process of change in human affairs and to the marvellous suddenness with which new prospects are revealed when urgently sought. The achievement of a limited ban on the testing of nuclear weapons was one example. Extending that ban to all levels of testing and to all nations can be another. Creating a basis for a reasonably decent and war-free existence on this planet can be yet another.

It is possible to be an optimist in today's world— without having to strain or synthesize. It is necessary only to attach oneself confidently to a plan for accomplishing an essential purpose— and then to help bring that plan to life with advocacy and work. The only thing more dangerous that nuclear force in today's world is failure to
perceive the lines of connection between the individual and the ideas and forces that shape his world.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Implementing Programs of General Education for Teachers.  
The Subcommittee of the Committee on Studies and  
Standards of the American Association of Colleges for  
Teacher Education.  Oneonta, New York:  American  
Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1953.

Ions, Edmund.  Against Behavioralism.  Totowa, New Jersey:  

Jenkins, David. "Editor's Introduction" to Culture and the  
Classroom by John Reynolds and Malcolm Skilbeck.  

Jenks, Chris, editor.  Rationality, Education and the Social  
Organization of Knowledge.  London:  Routledge and  

Jones, Howard Mumford.  Education and World Tragedy.  

Kaplan, Abraham.  The Conduct of Inquiry.  San Francisco:  

Kaufmann, Walter A.  The Future of the Humanities.  New  

Kaysen, Carl, editor.  Content and Context:  Essays on  
College Education.  New York:  McGraw-Hill Book Company,  

King, Jr., Arthur and John Brownell.  The Curriculum and  
the Discipline of Knowledge:  A Theory of Curricular  

Klohr, Paul R. "Staff Development--Resource Pack for  
Curriculum Reform," in Staff Development:  Staff  
Liberation, Charles Beegle and Roy A. Edlifert, editor.  
Washington:  Association for Supervision and Curriculum  

Kockelmans, Joseph J.  Interdisciplinarity and Higher  
Education.  University Park, P.A.:  The Pennsylvania  

Kuhn, Thomas S.  The Structure of Scientific Revolution.  
Second Edition, enlarged.  Chicago:  The University of  


Packard, A. S. "The Substance of Two Reports of the Faculty of Amherst College to the Board of Trustees," *North American Review*, Vol. 28, 1829.


Student Council Committee on Curriculum and Tenure, "Necessary Elements of a Liberal Education," May, 1942, Harvard University Archives, HUD 3808.615.

Student Council Committee on Education, "Report," June 12, 1939, Harvard University Archives HUD 3808.622.10 (mimeographed).


