
Learning Throughout Life

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the land, instead. That prophet was Henry George. Surely the time has come when the intelligent masses of the community should realize that the present system disparages initiative, discourages thrift and depreciates merit.

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Learning Throughout Life

IF SCHOOLS HAVE good vocational programs, if they have well-planned transitional programs of the work-study variety, and if they have first-class counseling services, then they are in a position to answer the puzzling question: "When should the boy or girl be allowed to terminate his full-time formal schooling?" And the answer will be, "At whatever point it has been clearly demonstrated to responsible officials that he can gain little by continuing."

Those who have been most sympathetic to the needs of academically less able children have tended to offer only one solution: more schooling. Sometimes more schooling is the answer, but there comes a time when it is not. And the failure to see constructive alternatives is leading us into deeper and deeper absurdities. It is leading too many of our young people into educational paths that gain them nothing except the conviction that they are misfits. The truth is that in the case of the youngster who is not very talented academically, continuance of formal schooling may simply prolong a situation in which he is doomed to failure.

A number of forward-looking communities (Milwaukee, for example) have demonstrated that there are highly constructive ways of dealing with the transitional experience for young people of limited academic ability. It is high time that every school system in the nation addresses itself to this problem.

The successful transition of young people from school to job will become easier to accomplish as the artificial wall between the schools and the outer world breaks down. Fortunately, that wall has been crumbling for some time, and is certain to disintegrate further. The vast development of industrial, military, and other educational programs outside the formal system is striking evidence of that fact. In some communities the young person may get almost precisely the same course in a school setting or in an industrial setting.

It isn't only the wall between the school and the outer world that is breaking down. Also disintegrating is the notion that education is something that goes forward with no interruptions until it is capped by some sort of graduation ceremony, whereupon it ends forever. We are coming

to recognize that education should be lifelong, that it may be interrupted at many points, and that it may take place in many settings.

We should expect it to become an accepted practice for men and women to enroll in one or another kind of educational program intermittently throughout their lives. The boy who leaves school early may resume his education after a year of work or a period of military service. The mature individual may enroll in an educational program to acquaint himself with new technological developments—or sheerly for his own enjoyment. Women may return to education after their family responsibilities are over. Retired people may resume their education.

When the populace as a whole comes to recognize that education should be an enduring thing in their lives and can take place in a variety of settings, then the artificial emphasis on certain types of education will recede. Emphasis will be on individual fulfillment and personal growth, however they may best be furthered. And they will be sought for all. [From the *Annual Report for 1960*, Carnegie Corporation of New York.]

JOHN W. GARDNER

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Private Efforts in the Struggle for Progress

HUMAN NEEDS are today served by government to an extent never imagined in the dawn of the American republic. Regardless of varying political philosophies, there is nearly universal agreement on the new role of government in certain functions of human welfare. Only government can marshal the resources needed to cope with certain complex and costly functions of society.

Far from implying a forfeit of private responsibilities, government expansion poses special challenges to individual initiative and ingenuity. While not entirely precluded from boldness and imagination, responsible government in a democratic society cannot habitually experiment and venture beyond public sentiment. Thus, it is ever more the responsibility of individuals and institutions outside government to serve as the crucible in which new approaches are identified, and promising ideas tested. [From the Ford Foundation Annual Report, 1960.]

HENRY T. HEALD