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ABSTRACT

Because increased technology too often is an inappropriate means to deal with contemporary social and educational needs, there is a need for academics to stress ethical and ecological values to students who may otherwise expect to seek a "quick fix" for societal ills through "high tech" solutions without sensitivity to the longer range implications and costs for other persons living on the same planet now and in the future. Many departments of communication are positioned to offer a series of courses that could serve as a core for peace studies. For example, courses in intrapersonal, interpersonal, and public communication can be joined with a course in conflict management, audience analysis, and communication ethics to form such a core. Courses outside the Department, in areas such as negotiation, management, and psychology, could extend the minor to a viable major. Finally, Western higher educators must make sharing wisdom as well as technology with developing nations a high priority, requiring a redirection in the emphasis upon bigger (quantitatively) being more important to society than quality of life. Peace, based upon justice for all, is the ultimate goal, and a values-added educational effort is the means to improve curriculum. (Fifteen references are attached.) (MM)

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PEACE WITH JUSTICE: WHAT WE IN COMMUNICATION CAN OFFER  
FOR THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Increased technology too often is an inappropriate means to deal with contemporary social and educational needs. There is a need for academics to stress ethical and ecological values to students who may otherwise expect to seek a "quick fix" for societal ills through "high tech" solutions without sensitivity to the longer range implications and costs for other persons living on the same planet now and in the future. "Star Wars" and the related technological impact potential for higher education is a case for study. Ultimately, peace, based upon justice for all, is presented as the ultimate goal and a values-added educational effort is the means to improve our curriculum.

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PEACE WITH JUSTICE: WHAT WE IN COMMUNICATION CAN OFFER  
FOR THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Overview

The philosopher and novelist Andre' Gide once opened a presentation by noting: "All this has been said before, but since nobody listened, it must be said again." [9-1] The message referred to in this paper is the plea for attention to restoring a vision of excellence as the primary mission for higher education. For truly if we don't decide where we want to go in higher education, any road (philosophy) will take us there. One problem that is evident in attending national and international conferences regarding the future of higher education is that there is no widely-held set of guiding principles that provides us with a vision of where we ought to be directing the majority of our energies and resources. Higher education, I believe, should be the "steering wheel" of cultural change and advancement for the future. The superordinate goal of a sane curriculum for the nineties and beyond must be reflected in efforts to instill the values of active personal, national, and world peace that includes justice for all living on this planet.

There is evidence that we need such a metamorphosis in the form and focus of our educational system. Ultimately, it is necessary that we recognize and agree that there is no such thing as values-free education. Every curriculum has hidden (unstated) dimensions -- competition, materialism, capitalism, and middle-class values -- among others. I recommend that we decide to be intentional about what values we wish to engineer into the outcomes of higher

education. Mortimer Adler noted that, "Our educational system is absolutely inadequate -- not relatively [but] absolutely inadequate -- for the purposes of democracy." He called for training in moral character development as essential for the 21st-century educational agenda. [4-16] Also, Governor Mario Cuomo of New York supported this when he declared that the public schools should restore the teaching of values absent for twenty years. [11-21]

Philosophical agreement and lip service are given to such concepts as teaching of critical thinking, a thorough grounding in the liberal arts, and the importance of communication and linguistic skills, while in reality the curriculum of many universities has been moved toward more narrow specialization and job-skills training. This contradiction of practice from stated philosophy must be seen for the negative compromise that it is. The impact of such choice upon the future of our society will be significant.

Being intentional regarding values-added education is a controversial concept to many educators. However, I believe that the conditions of the international community make such intentionality essential. Academic professionals have been reluctant to move in a values-added direction. Some of the reluctance is justified. "Big brotherism" -- some elite directing the planning of outcomes regarding values of the next generation -- could be a frightening specter indeed. Nonetheless the conditions of today necessitate an in-depth look at the values-added approach.

#### Rationale

We live in a shrinking, global village that is struggling to become a global family. Many things divide us from that task. Our delicate, fragile ecosystem is in serious jeopardy. One group, for example, -- Americans --

only five percent of the world's population, are consuming one-third of the world's energy and approximately fifty percent of resources. This happens at the same time that millions in many parts of the world suffer serious effects of malnutrition, including many deaths. Regarding this Jim Wallis sadly noted:

Of every one hundred babies born in the world, forty will die before the age of six. Another forty risk permanent physical and mental damage because of malnutrition. Only three out of a hundred will get the education and skills they need to perform creative and meaningful work. [12]

If only three out of a hundred will get the education and skills needed, it is essential that these persons have values that would reflect a universal concern for human life. This "creative minority" must have more than just "know how". Wisdom in the form of skills in moral reasoning, ethics, environmental sensitivity, etc. must be present if this planet, or at least the majority of the populace, are to have a chance at survival.

Teaching moral virtues will be difficult under affluent conditions. Adversity, though not desirable, is a better incentive for the development of moral character. Mortimer Adler was quoted regarding this as saying:

If you said to many people today, "You really have to suffer stringent reductions of your standard of living for the sake of your grandchildren and your grandchildren's grandchildren [since] we can't go on spending the way we're spending," they would be morally incapable of doing that. [4-16]

Sir Earnest Titterton added:

Curiously, in the Western world, control has come from life style-- families would rather have a motorcar, an expensive world holiday or a swimming pool than an additional child, and this has controlled population growth. This is about the only advantage I can think of in the materialistic selfishness which today prevails in many advanced societies. [10 - 14]

Adler and Titterton correctly note the seriousness of the need for the application of ethics to significant issues such as the alarming and growing national debt and materialism. Quietly our domestic personal and public

materialism has placed the United States as the largest debtor nation in the world. Sacrificing for the sake of others may be among the most difficult concepts ever placed in a curriculum.

It would appear that a cadre of university-trained critical thinkers would be pointing with alarm to this growing national debt. Governor Richard Lamm, writing in his book 1988, noted, "Even the wealthy are crying poor now, faced with paying the piper for the monumental U.S. federal deficit." [5] Has the university served as a place where the ethics of asking that a future generation "pay" for our present materialistic wants been encouraged? It appears that the curriculum of higher education has been largely a preparation for consumption, rather than a preparation for quality in life now and in the future.

Political forces controlling policies on the planet are in the process of making relatively irreversible choices that have considerable impact on so-called "spaceship earth". Witness the fears expressed by concerned scientists regarding acid rain that is now on a global scale, the predicted greenhouse effect, concerns regarding the depletion of the ozone layer, and, most importantly, perhaps, the continued development of nuclear weaponry manifest in the concepts of MAD (mutually assured destruction) and SDI or strategic defense initiative (star wars). Suddenly civilization has become mortal. It is as if a giant poker game were being played where the stakes now have become life itself. Genocide of the entire population of the planet has to be considered as a wager laid upon the table in a relatively cavalier manner.

Star Wars is the kind of issue that tears at higher education. The promise of a needed infusion of many millions of dollars from government to higher education can be like a siren song. It will be very hard for

university administrators to lash themselves to the mast, let alone close their ears, while these mega dollars are available. However, despite voices of protest from within the scientific community, the current administration is prepared to entice thousands of scientists away from classrooms and other research. In a letter from Howard Ris, Executive Director of the Union of Concerned Scientists, he tells us:

A majority of the members of the National Academy of Sciences — our nations most prestigious scientific body — also believe that Star Wars is unwise. These distinguished leaders from all scientific fields have joined UCS in "An Appeal To Ban Space Weapons," . . . . Among those signing the appeal were fifty-seven Nobel Laureates, more than half of the living American recipients of this prize in the sciences. [8-1]

What could these academic scientists accomplish of direct benefit for society with similar economic encouragement rather than the current touting of possible "spin offs" from such military research?

For example, the spectacle of hunger on a vast scale lying beside huge food surpluses in America and parts of Europe should generate criticisms and creative program alternatives from student scholars and academics from many parts of our global, academic community. Why should not the attention to solutions be as important as the use of science and academic scientists for creating more problems?

Where is the concert of voices from the academic community regarding such choices? Perhaps such vocalization is silenced by the relatively substantial number of contracts for pure and applied research grants given the major universities, largely for defense-related research. While some university administrators have voiced the need to divest holdings in South Africa, no equally courageous position has been articulated regarding star wars research. Is this moral consistency?

Albert Einstein was asked how the next world war would be fought and he indicated that he was not for sure, however the war after that would, he felt, be fought with sticks and stones. [1-13] Einstein's thought does hint at the magnitude of the increasing nuclear threat the next generation must learn to solve or, God forbid, there will not be another generation. Decisions that a Russian radar technician must make in a matter of minutes, for example, since the installation of Pershing and Cruise missiles in Western Europe, as to whether he or she is seeing a computer glitch or a genuine nuclear strike demanding an all-out retaliation, should provide academics with some additional sobering thoughts. The possibility of an accidental launch becomes a real one.

There is a need to question the curriculum of our business colleges where growth in G. N. P. is not viewed realistically. The concept of net G. N. P. would be an example of injecting values into the study of business and economics. The equation of net G. N. P. would merit study -- Net G. N. P. = G. N. P. minus environmental damage caused by the increase in the G. N. P. This net or real G. N. P., posits Ira Jay Winn, provides an ethical base to question quantitative planning models that do not have a strategic basis in relation to qualitative needs. [15] This example of values-added educational strategies could help develop future business leaders who have a concept that the operational definition of capitalism should not be greed.

Our educational plan must consider the flaws of incremental, linear thought processes that are an inevitable part of our curriculum. Western man, in recent history, has tended to throw technology at most problems. If we have a demand for greater electric production, let us build more nuclear power plants. Never mind that no one wants to deposit the wastes from such plants in their neighborhood or have them transported past their houses, as happens



close to me. This is throwing technology after a problem before the net impact of the technological approach is considered fully. Perhaps we can begin to see that more isn't always better and that the principle of physics and systems analysis that suggests that there is an equal and opposite reaction as a result of forces applied is relevant. Technology is a potent force in our society that is applied, at times, relatively thoughtlessly.

If the thought of preparing students to wrestle with these questions does not sound like the domain of higher education, consider what some businesses are beginning to accomplish. "People are searching for new standards and values," comments J. Jennings Partin, a senior vice-president at E. F. Hutton. [2-9] Perhaps the recent revelations of fraudulent actions by some of Hutton employees has been the motivation to concentrate on ethics training. Since the time of Watergate, attention is focusing more on the need for study of ethics. Arizona State University and Harvard Business school have developed approaches to introduce the study of ethics into the curriculum at their institutions. Consideration of how a stock trader should be restricted ethically by the knowledge of inside information or the ramifications of divestment in South African business would be case studies applicable to the study of ethics in business.

We need, I believe, to understand what Thomas Jefferson's position was regarding the relationship of the products of higher education and success in government. Jefferson stressed that the populace must be prepared to demand quality government and that the people of a country will only get the kind and quality of government that they deserve. This philosophy should encourage us to develop values-added approaches to their curriculum. We need persons who will recognize that there is an unacceptable ethical position to padding and

planning cost overruns. Ultimately, people of principle do change systems. Should we expect that persons not exposed to ethical training are expected to have a corporate ethic? Would such an expectation be made regarding being a Certified Public Accountant without exposure to accountancy?

We need a curriculum vision in higher education that does not attempt to teach tomorrow's citizens yesterday's values. The day of a quick, technological fix for serious, contemporary problems that have social, environmental, and cultural implications must come to an end. The age of acid rain, ozone layer depletion, greenhouse effects, etc., call for strategic and just solutions. As we embrace the communication/information age that will be driven by a largely service economy and move further into the post-industrial era, it is important that we move toward a more environmentally-sane way of life. Futurist Alvin Toffler spoke of this when answering a question regarding what we should do to change our educational emphasis for the future. Said he:

We must figure out how to deliver far better and effective training to large numbers of people. You shouldn't learn just one repetitive task, like how to keypunch. Unfortunately, that isn't adequate. For people to be truly functional in this advanced economy, they need different attitudes as well as different skills, and different values. [13-4B]

Critical thinking skills, stimuli in the affective domain of learning, (as well as the cognitive and psychomotor), and dialogic communication skills must have a premium place in our educational plan or our anti-intellectual drift will continue.

As more and more user-friendly, computer-aided instruction is available to instructors and students, an ethics of computer applications should be considered. What computer-stored information should be available to whom and for what reason? Should people with the largest machines be in control? What jobs are replace by machines at what cost to employees and society? These

are examples of values issues our curriculum must include if we are to provide tomorrow's citizens with tomorrow's problem-solving skills.

More attention to active learning is needed. Less attention to just knowing about things and more to really knowing — education that makes a difference in how one lives and relates to others comes -- most effectively from active learning. Exploring applications of knowledge in all disciplines should include seminar discussions of what impact implementation of technologies, theories, and principles would have on society and the environment. Students wrestling with the ethics of new processes and technologies are an important step toward active learning. Ultimately, a recognition that critical thinking skills are of greater importance than encyclopedic-genre knowledge as "terminal skills" for a college graduate is mandated.

Prince Charles of England, addressing the 350th anniversary convocation at Harvard said:

To avert disaster, we have not only to teach men to make things, but teach them to have complete moral control over the things they make. Never has it been more important to recognize the imbalance that has seeped into our lives and deprived us of a sense of meaning, because the emphasis has been too one-sided and has concentrated on the development of the intellect to the detriment of the spirit. [11-21]

In writing guidelines for a visionary curriculum for the future, academic planners should consider job training as secondary to academic excellence. The core of ethics contained in the liberal arts and humanities should hold center stage in university education. The trend of businesses providing the career training after the university has provided a general arts and skills background would be preferable to the increasing encroachment of careerism in American higher education.

What does it mean to be educated? No one person has the final answer.

Professor Kathryn E. Nelson posits:

To be educated is to be provided with access to abundant life. To be educated is to search for wholeness, to tune the senses to the beauties, the subtleties, the incongruities, the patterns of life. To be educated is to develop creativity and imagination that will lift us into realms yet unknown. To be educated is to develop a sense of awe and connection to things eternal. To be educated is to have roots and wings . . . to have a past, the present and a vision of the future. It is to have access to the wisdom of the ages and to be a creator of new knowledge. To be educated is to 'know' what is worth dying for and more, what's worth living for. To be educated is to discover the joy of being a human being. [7-1]

Nelson continues:

The Liberal Arts enlighten, enrich, clarify values and expand and ennoble our relationships with others. They give perspective and help us accept ourselves and others. They give us cause to rejoice in our strengths and strengthen us to seek change in our weaknesses. The Liberal Arts focus our attention on first principles and point us to heights where knowing is not enough and we are left with faith in things not seen. [7-1]

Such, I believe, is the perspective regarding the purpose of higher education that should guide our curriculum revision. A curriculum that places a premium upon doing justice (universally throughout the world), loving tenderly in respecting human life, and walking humbly (living more simply so others can simply live) follows from this educational philosophy.

For many different reasons, the liberal arts are in trouble. Rather than resist authority or act as a nonconformist, many students can't wait to join the workforce and fill their bank accounts. Unfortunately, many universities have become little more than training grounds for aspiring Yuppies, stressing job skills instead of communication, literature, history, and philosophy. Universities are a primary means through which society transmit cultural and academic traditions. They are the depositories and dispensers of the principles, values, and goals that have shaped Western civilization for over 2,000 years. It is through the liberal arts that future generations acquire

the faith and assumptions that created democratic government and enhanced the dignity of each individual.

All of these would require considerable attention to faculty development. To date, faculty development receives much lip service, while dollars at the university tend to go toward hardware. A greater continuing education emphasis for faculty will be needed. Recognition that skills become outdated for faculty members as well as students must receive renewed stress in designing and advertising retraining and faculty development vehicles.

Obviously the number one agenda item for the educated world leaders of today and tomorrow will be establishing a climate of world peace with justice for all. Adler stressed this when he noted that prevention of nuclear devastation is a necessary step toward such a climate. He was quoted as saying:

. . . the world must understand peace as something other than a negative condition, which is the absence of fighting. Peace, as a positive condition, is that situation in which individuals and peoples can solve all their problems, all their conflicts, by law and by talk rather than by force. [4-17]

Adler further noted, "Whenever you have peace positively, you have civil peace. And civil peace is the product of civil government — the use of law and authorized force to maintain peace." [4-17] This genre of peace is different from an armed truce that is represented by concepts such as our current notion of Mutually Assured Destruction. "Conventional wisdom," writes Sir Earnest Titterton:

. . . has it that peace, like marriage and motherhood, 's something approved of by everyone. Yet, few people make much effort to understand the factors which operate for, or against, it. And even fewer are prepared to do anything actively to promote peace, particularly if this means any sacrifice on their part. [10 - 11]

Virtually everyone claims to want peace, yet we do not have peace within our families, relationships, marriages, nation, or world. It appears that peace

is either not valued as highly as armement (preparation for or against war) or we simply do not know how to proceed toward peace. (Some of both may be true.) Should it ever be that the miseries of destruction of persons upon others would cease, would we have peace? Inherently would this bring personal, social, and international justice? Certainly not! It will take a concerted effort to bring a violent world on the path toward peace. Higher education has an opportunity to be the medium of a redirection of energy toward peace in the world community. What more valued function can higher education serve than to provide, discipline by discipline, models of how persons can work actively toward peace with justice?

Peace spoke of today, writes Bryan Wilson:

. . . is the artificially maintained pressure system in a social situation in which a vast proportion of our energy, natural resources, time and emotion is expended on the now fully institutionalized provision for war. All too easily, we tend to suppose that peace is normal, but the burden of history should teach us that peace is abnormal; if it is to occur, it has to be worked for. [14-68]

Wilson correctly implies that any successful peace process will require intentionality and motivation. All academic disciplines need model programs which would help other academics in similar disciplines to renovate their educational plans.

As members of the disciplines related to communication, my colleagues and I are in a position for potential leadership. We can contribute to understanding how higher education can be a major vehicle in positive change in our society. We can take leadership in the development of attitudes toward the struggle toward minimizing conflict among and between persons, successful negotiation processes, and minimizing the momentum toward war. Many departments of communication are positioned to offer a series of courses that could serve as a core for peace studies. For example, courses in

intrapersonal, interpersonal and public communication can be joined with a course in conflict management, audience analysis, and communication ethics to form such a core. Adding a seminar on peace communication issues and methodologies would be appropriate. Naturally, appropriate goals should be set to guide such course arrangements. Courses outside the department in such areas of study as negotiation, management, psychology, etc. could extend the minor to a viable major.

Indeed I call for educators in every academic discipline to examine each course with an eye to noting what values-added potential there is and to determine how the study of ethical questions in the discipline can be enhanced. How each academic department can support the process of a development of a peace studies emphasis would make the basis of a university-wide questionnaire.

Finally, I feel that western higher educators must make sharing wisdom as well as technology with the third world, a very high priority. Such will require a vast redirection in our emphasis upon bigger (quantitatively) being more important to society than quality of life. Values-added education has the potential to change the way citizens of the western world view the emerging nations of our small global village. I believe it is time to begin.

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