

# THE JOURNAL OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION: TWENTY-FIVE MORE YEARS OF SERVICE

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There is a story that Theodore Herzl, a popular Zionist leader in the early 1900's, once inquired of the gardener at one of Oxford's Colleges how to cultivate a beautiful lawn like those that graced the lawn at Oxford. In a humor borne of English tradition, he replied: "It's really very simple sir. You sow the grass, you water it, you fertilize it, and roll it, and when you have done that for a hundred years, you get a lawn like this."

In a similar way, one might think about the building and flowering of an academic journal, one committed to the publication of the best efforts of the populace it is intended to serve. With the healthy perspective of twenty-five years of publishing the 'best and the brightest' in the field of literature of the Cooperative Education Association, the *Journal of Cooperative Education* can now commit itself to another twenty-five years of 'sowing, watering, fertilizing and rolling.' To do so will require a constant attention to the educational, political, economic and social environment, for these are all in the midst of great changes that will not only affect the shape and destiny of our cooperative education programs nationwide, but will shape the face of the research that emerges from the movement.

It was over a decade that Dr. D.T. Kenney, the President of the University of British Columbia, described the changing social environment and its impact on the university. He said:

"Two decades ago universities lived in a straight-forward world. Universities were at liberty to do pretty much as they desired. They were regarded as society's greatest hope. They set their standards of admission without giving great thought to the declaration that equal access to higher education is the key to the future of youth and of nations. They were not convinced that admission policies or graduation requirements had to be bent in conformity with the social goals of society . . . Then academic

affairs began to become increasingly complex and mazy. The belief in our omnipotence was challenged in the turbulent and hurley-burly days of the late sixties. Universities became publicly vulnerable when they were bitterly denounced for denying opportunities for advancement in society. Universities were accused of racism, sexism and elitism."

While those days are far removed from us in the late 1980's, what remains are the claims for "relevance" and "flexible innovations" in the teaching of curriculum, ideas accompanying the demands for equal access and which, perhaps not so coincidentally, coalesced with the greatest advancement in student participation in the history of cooperative education. Could one possibly mistake the impact of the social drama played out in the 1960's, with the subsequent massive infusion of monies into cooperative education through Titles IV-D and VIII? The literature of the movement during this period quite naturally concentrated on the mechanics of operating, sustaining and validating cooperative education programs, but did not comment on the social milieu out of which the movement was growing and by which it was being impacted.

### **Trends Impacting the Future**

As we move into the 1990's and look at the next twenty-five years in the light of the direction(s) of the *Journal of Cooperative Education*, it perhaps would behoove us to consider these sorts of social events, (as well as the economic, political, and education events) as we now perceive them, and project how these events might affect our movement and hence our literature. Consider the following:

1. According to State Policy Reports, new job generation is at an all time high, and is expected to continue so. Eight states accounted for more than half the 2.3 million job gains in the United States from September, 1986 to September, 1987 with California (126,000), New York (196,000) and Pennsylvania (126,000) leading the way. With 21 million new jobs projected in the U.S. by the year 2000, the Labor Department is projecting that a growing percentage of these will require a higher level of educational attainment and training.

Presuming that co-op dollars continue to flow from the federal government in support of cooperative endeavors, is there a case to be made for an allocation of monies based on where the jobs are predicted to be in the future? Could a national dialogue ensue related to this issue, and could surveys support the validity of such an approach? Should the issue of geographical representation be thrashed out as was suggested in an earlier issue of the *Journal of Cooperative Education* (Harris, 1983). Is this issue of new job generation similar to the one encountered with the move to "comprehensive" program grants begun several years ago, which incidentally, have never been comprehensively, systematically measured and evaluated as to the achievement of expected or projected outcomes?

2. The scientific work force in America is facing serious shortages, primarily due to the number of U.S. graduates taking degrees in the hard sciences—primarily

chemistry, mathematics and physics—dropping. In addition, the numbers of American graduate students in the technical fields are also dramatically down. An example: in 1970, universities awarded 1,200 doctorates in math; in 1987 the total was 730, with just over one half of those going to American students. With this kind of faltering decline, the government increased funding for science education 40.6 percent for 1988, 24.2 million more than the National Science Foundation requested.

What impact might these shortages have on cooperative education and on the literature of the movement? We have been hearing for some time now that cooperative education is a valid instructional strategy for both graduate and undergraduate programs. Is it possible that the next twenty-five years could herald a dramatic reversal of this graduate enrollment decline brought on by the increased role of cooperative education? If this is to happen, then the literature, which is scant at best at the present time (Tillman, 1986), must increase substantially. Successful programs must be documented, students must surveyed, employer commitment and satisfaction must be validated, and the role and scope of faculty and university involvement must be detailed.

3. Throughout much of the 1970's and 1980's, the American middle class has been characterized by its redistribution into numerous market segments, a fact documented widely in the literature. The days when a fairly homogeneous market segment could be readily identified and marketed to, are increasingly a thing of the past. Makers of goods, suppliers of services, and all levels of marketing, distribution, and retailing are finding it necessary to target their markets more carefully, changing and adapting their products and strategies to the changing conditions in the marketplace.

Over the past twenty-five years, there have been approximately six articles reported in the JCE that dealt with effectively marketing the cooperative education program (Harris, 1982; Korngold and Dubé, 1982; Dawson, 1982; and Harris, 1982, among others). Each of these articles deals in a limited way with market segmentation, but a comprehensive method of examining the redistribution of students into various subgroups is yet to be systematically or comprehensively examined in the literature. Is there a yet-to-be-discovered method for adapting our cooperative education "products and strategies" to the changing conditions of the student marketplace? While CEA, Inc. deals with "imaging" through, among other things, changing the national logo for cooperative education, are there proven methods of "imaging" that could be documented in the literature of the movement? What is the "image" of cooperative education programs on our nation's campuses, as carefully measured and validated by our best researchers?

4. The entrepreneurial revolution discussed so eloquently by Peter Drucker in *Entrepreneurship and Innovation* shows no sign of abating. If anything, the number

of small businesses continues to grow with more than 10,000 new business enterprises per week being started. When examining the key characteristics of the successful small businesses begun in the past 15 years, Dr. Drucker states:

"Is there anything at all that these growth enterprises have in common other than growth . . . Actually, they are all examples of "new technology," all new applications of knowledge to human work, which is, after all, the definition of technology. Only the "technology" is not electronics or genetics or new material. The "new technology" is entrepreneurial management." (p.11)

The appeal to students of entrepreneurship is a national phenomenon. A survey of Harvard University students in 1970 found less than four percent of the students interested in going into business for themselves. A 1987 study found better than fifty percent interested in starting their own businesses upon graduation from college.

Does cooperative education have a role to place in this worldwide phenomenon? To date there have no articles in the *Journal* reflecting innovative program changes to accommodate the move to entrepreneurship or 'intrapreneurship,' as the term is used for entrepreneurial activities within corporations by employees. Are there significant numbers of students who are interested in pursuing entrepreneurial internships, who would normally have little interest in traditional internship programs? How would the structure of such an internship differ from internships within well-established organizations? This emerging field raises many questions when applied to the academic internship mode of learning, but all developments and structural changes related to the area of entrepreneurship would need to be documented in the literature.

5. There is a massive concern throughout our modern world about the decline of ethics in all phases of modern life and practice. *Time* magazine devoted a cover story to the demise of ethics in its May 25, 1987 issue, concluding that corrupt business practices are estimated to cost the United States at least 40 billion dollars annually. A December, 1986, *USA Today* article reported that Washington-based Ethics Resource Center Inc. discovered that 75 percent of the nation's 1200 largest firms had established ethics codes. Meanwhile, a survey carried out by the Center for Business Ethics at Bentley College found that 80 percent of the companies responding to the survey (279) were involved in "institutionalizing ethics." Of course, it is not only business organizations that are concerned with ethics, but a wide variety of organizations are stressing similar needs for addressing this issue. CEA, Inc. has likewise begun addressing this issue for co-op practitioners.

The past twenty-five years of the *Journal* has not been concerned with ethics as a field of study related to cooperative education. In our unconcern, we have not been unlike the rest of higher education: benignly neglecting an area of great

need in our educational system. Who is in a better position to drive home ethical imperatives than the cooperative educational practitioner involved with students in a day-to-day work environment, where ethical dilemmas are played out on a daily basis. Even if not specifically trained, co-op professional could coordinate development of curriculum, scheduling of speakers for seminars, and engage other elements of the university in addressing the issues. Is such a program called for and if so, what should be taught? Is the co-op model appropriate for teaching ethics? Does someone in co-op have a "Master Plan" for teaching ethics to co-op students? Is it possible that the co-op community could be on the cutting edge of this unique need in the educating of our citizenry? The next twenty-five years of the *Journal* should see a closer attention to this issue as the ethical imperatives come into clearer focus.

6. An understanding of the purpose of education is being called for in all realms of our modern society. Politicians, educators, philosophers, parents, school administrators and a host of concerned onlookers have all called for a systematic re-examination of the role, purpose and philosophy of education as presently understood and practiced in America. Critics have in fact assailed American educational philosophy as a hodge-podge of disconnected theories built on faulty assumptions. Whether right or wrong, these critics are questioning the basic philosophical underpinning of our 'theory' of education.

Remarkably, the cooperative education movement has survived all these years without a fully developed theory of cooperative education. Understandably, neither theory nor practice have within them the essence of purpose, except as derived from an underlying philosophy. Therefore, several questions need to be dealt with, in seeking to establish a theory of cooperative education:

- What is our concept of the *Person*, both as to his/her nature and his/her role in the society at large?
- What should the cooperative education process do for society?
- What should the cooperative education process do for the individual?
- What is the source of authority in all of education?
- How are the nature and content of the curriculum derived in the cooperative education process?

These are not questions that can be flippantly answered but require a fundamental understanding of the deeper issues involved, along with an understanding of key educational theorists shaping our comprehension of these issues. Additionally, this is a starting point in the formation of a philosophy and/or theory of cooperative education, and not a comprehensive listing of questions to be answered.

The *Journal of Cooperative Education*, in the next twenty-five years should find increasing attention being paid to the area of educational theory and philosophy as elaborated upon by fellow educators.

7. The internationalization of the educational curriculum is under a full head of steam in most institutions of higher education, with business schools leading the way. Concern in the education and business world has focused on learning more about world markets, fostering interactive efforts among business, industry, government and education, and obtaining seed monies to begin internationalization efforts. Once again, in spite of cooperative education's obvious strength in the latter two of these emphases, international learning opportunities garner scarce resources in most co-op programs. Few students are actually recruited, fewer still are placed in international internships. As the world shrinks even more in the next twenty-five years, the literature of the cooperative education movement will find increasing attention to this emphasis.

8. Recruitment of qualified, competent employees is becoming an area of increasing concern to employers. In a 1987 *Business Month* magazine survey of American business people, business executives cited a desire to increase efficiency, cut costs, and increase productivity as central to their concerns in corporate recruitment. With the increasing difficulty of assessing qualified employees, employers will find themselves increasingly turning to proven methods of assessment. Some major national employers have already stated that their primary recruiting vehicle in the future will be cooperative education. As these recruiting devices are launched, what will be the results? Here, once again, the *Journal* will play a major role in reporting to the field, the successes and failures, the vagaries and the wonders of this move toward "sole source" recruitment.

### Summary

Of course, many other trends could be listed from a variety of sources, but these are highlighted as a reference point for this article in analyzing the impact of trends on the co-op ed movement and thereby the literature that emerges from the movement. Not to be lost in all of this peering into the future is that fact that within the next twenty-five years of the *Journal of Cooperative Education*, we will enter the 21st century. According to author Tom Wolfe, the 21st century will not be nearly so consumed with the constant yearning for the new and the bigger and the best, that has so characterized our late 20th century. This constant and frantic searching for the new, to the exclusion of all else may have an entirely new dimension in the 21st century. As a result, Wolfe writes in the December, 1987, issue of the *American Spectator*, the 21st century will be characterized by the "Great Relearning":

The 21st century, I predict, will confound the 20th-century notion of the future as something exciting, unexpected or radiant; as progress, to use an old word. It is already clear that the large cities, thanks to the Relearning, will not even look new.

Quite the opposite; the cities of 2007 will look more like the cities of 1927 than the cities of 1987. The 21st century will have a retrograde

look and a retrograde mental atmosphere. People of the next century will gaze back with a ghastly awe upon our time. They will regard the 20th as the century in which wars became so enormous they were known as World Wars, the century in which technology leaped forward so rapidly man developed the capacity to destroy the planet itself — but also the capacity to escape to the stars on space ships if it blew. But above all they will look back upon the 20th as the century in which their forebearers had the amazing confidence, the Promethean hubris, to defy the gods and try to push man's power and freedom to limitless, godlike extremes.

They will look back in awe—without the slightest temptation to emulate the daring of those who swept aside all rules and tried to start from zero. Instead, they will be content to live in what will be known as the Somnolent Century or the 20th Century's Hangover.

Whether or not we agree with Wolfe's prognosis, the concept of the Great Relearning is intriguing, even as we observe a return to the past in many areas of culture, architecture, and classical literature and music. So even as we stretch and imagine the future, and attempt to draw its parameters in our finite minds, we are aware of the past. As we consider the past twenty-five years of the *Journal of Cooperative Education*, we are aware of the vision of our past editors: Donald C. Hunt, Edward Susat, Harry N. Heinemann, and Maurice P. Hartley.

To quote the gardener at one of Oxford's Colleges, the next twenty-five years of the *Journal of Cooperative Education* will be consumed with "sowing, watering, fertilizing, and rolling." They will be magnificent years, filled with opportunity and growth. I can hardly wait!

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