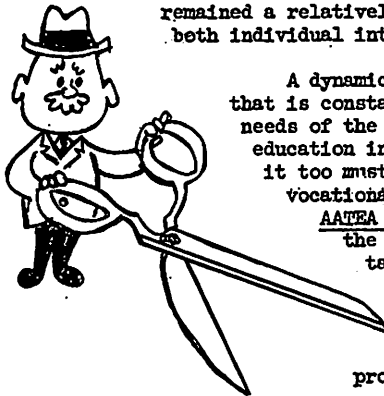


IDOLATRY: NEMESIS OF CREATIVITY

Arnold Toynbee presented the thesis in *The Study of History* that "Idolatry is the nemesis of creativity." He felt that history indicated any institution or civilization that reflected too long on past glories was bound to falter and finally fall. This concept might have prophetic value for agricultural education. Vocational education in agriculture has had unprecedented success in bringing systematic education to the rural people of America. However, past success does not ensure it for the future.

This lesson is very important as is the often-quoted lesson that we should profit from our own history. Therefore it might be well to examine vocational agriculture to determine some factors that contributed to success. Was success, for example, due to the structural requirements stipulated in the Smith-Hughes Act, or was it due to functional curriculum developments in vocational agriculture? The answer must be partially "no" in each case because the interpretation of the Smith-Hughes Act was vastly different in 1963 than it was in 1920, as the curriculum content in 1963 was quite different than in 1920. The salient point is that the change took place, and that vocational agriculture remained a relatively dynamic institution that reflected both individual interest and national purpose.



A dynamic institution might be described as one that is constantly undergoing change reflecting the needs of the institution's patrons. Then if teacher education in agriculture is to be considered dynamic it too must change to reflect the emerging needs in vocational agriculture. This issue of the AATEA Journal will be devoted to exploring the diverse avenues of inquiry that are now taking place in agricultural education.

This very diversity is one of the main strengths of the field today because it is pointing to a broad advance towards solving some of the educational problems that are facing us today.

Agricultural education expends a minute part of the 16 billion dollars spent annually on research in the United States. However, this research has not only contributed to the body of knowledge concerning vocational agriculture, but it has even more significantly furnished a "lever" for growth. The "lever" has definitely aided agricultural education in securing more staff and additional allocation of time by current staff members to research-oriented activities.

The current issue has an article by an agricultural economist

concerned with the world food shortage. This is a particularly important area of concern because of the implication it carries for all agricultural educators. The "food surplus" problem may be gone forever. The most important "new" problem for agricultural educators may be to implement increasing efficiency and productivity of agriculture.

A distributive educator examines possible cooperative relationships between vocational agriculture and distributive education from a fresh point of view. This shows the possible way valuable relationships might be utilized to the benefit of existing programs.

The concern for a dynamic agricultural education is highlighted by the presentation of an agricultural educator pointing out the "direction" that teacher education must take. Another article illustrates a vocational educator's approach to examine a broad range of problems in vocational education. These are supplemented with a description of a state-wide program to expand vocational agriculture instruction.

These and other articles in this issue highlight the need to have a diverse range of research activities in agricultural education. This diversity contributes to a creative and dynamic profession. This Journal attempts to alert the members of the profession to action that might be appropriate within agricultural education.

C.L.N.

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LEADERSHIP EDUCATION MATERIALS

Leadership was the topic for a developmental study by 1965 Montana State University Summer School Agriculture Teachers. A publication on the subject should be complete in early 1966. All 50 states were contacted for materials and references. Over 30 facets of leadership are discussed.

A major aim was to develop subject material to use in leadership education. Both individual and corporate leadership were explored. Surprisingly, corporate leadership appears to be the real key, even to individual development.

All states will be sent a copy of the forthcoming publication, which in itself will not be the last word or idea or expression of the fascinating subject of leadership. - Leo L. Knuti

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