

THE SEVEN CARDINAL PRINCIPALS  
REVISITED

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September-October 1978

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# REVISED CARDINAL PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION

In 1972, the National Education Association established a Bicentennial Committee charged with developing a "living commemoration of the principles of the American Revolution." This 200th anniversary celebration of the Declaration of Independence was to focus on the next 100 years of education in an interdependent global community.

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Early in September 1975, a 19-member Preplanning Committee began the task of recasting the seven cardinal principles of education by developing 26 guidelines for the project.

While Committee members did not reach a consensus on every point,

they did generally agree that the opinions of a panel of distinguished world citizens, competent educators, and youth should be recorded on tape and incorporated in the report; that heed should be given to the geographic divisions and ethnic fabric of both American and world culture; that conservative as well as liberal opinions from persons in a variety of disciplines should be gathered; and that Panel members' views of the future and the educational changes it suggested should be obtained.

In addition, the planning group noted that any reports resulting from reexamination of the cardinal principles, however useful they might be, would not automatically become NEA policy statements, since such statements are an Association function.

During the planning period, the Preplanning Committee nominated nearly 250 persons for the 30 or more interviews that were planned originally. The Committee then screened those nominees to reduce the number to a more manageable size. After Committee members had studied this smaller list, they selected the 15 persons whose views they believed would be especially reliable, interesting, and influential. Guided by these stated preferences, the project staff and representatives of the NEA then selected the persons to be taped.

When approached, most nominees were pleased to participate in the interviews. Beginning in mid-September, a total of 48 Panel members' and approximately 95 youth (most of them in their junior or senior years of secondary school) summarized their views—all but five of them on tape. The Panel responded to these three questions:

In broad terms, and barring such catastrophes as nuclear war, what are some of the characteristics of the most probable world you foresee by the twenty-first century?

In view of this image of the future, what imperative skills should education seek to develop? Also, in anticipation of the twenty-first-century world, what premises should guide educational planning?

Have the original seven cardinal principles of education retained their merit? If so, what are the new ways in which they should now be interpreted, amended, or applied in anticipation of changing social, economic, and political conditions in the world community?

Persons responding to these questions invariably spoke at length; interviews lasted from 25 minutes to almost two hours.

Appearing on the following pages is a section of the report dealing with the famous seven cardinal principles and their pertinence today. Marginal quotes are relevant statements from some of the panelists who were interviewed by Project Chairman Harold L. Shang of Indiana University in the preparation of the report. Copies of the full report may be ordered from NEA Publishing. See page 72.

Of all NEA-sponsored studies, probably none has been more visible, more widely studied and quoted, or more remembered for its impact than the 1918 report of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, in which the seven cardinal principles made their first appearance. The decision of the NEA Bicentennial Committee to study and possibly to reframe these principles is eloquent testimony to their enduring role as an important body of objectives or goals for American education.

Established in 1913, the Commission was destined to carry American education in new directions. For one thing, the membership included several junior professors who were innovative "young rebels" of the era. For another, it included seasoned, tough-minded practitioners as well.

The Commission agreed that "secondary education should be determined by the needs of the society to be served, the character of the individuals to be educated, and the knowledge of educational theory and practice available," adding that these factors "are by no means static."<sup>3</sup>

In effect, the Commission accepted preparation for effective living rather than preparation for the college or university as a guideline and, in response to the massive social and economic developments of the times, rather substantially rewrote the rule book for United States education with the implications for educational change which they identified.

While space precludes a detailed description of the discussions and conclusions out of which the cardinal principles were born, it is important to note that they were intended to help achieve "the ideal of democracy that the individual and society may find fulfillment each in the other."<sup>4</sup> After reaching this conclusion, the Commission proceeded to analyze certain human activities—family, vocational, civic—and to identify seven objectives for the education of every American boy and girl: (1) health, (2) command of fundamental processes, (3) worthy home membership, (4) vocation, (5) citizenship, (6) worthy use of leisure, and (7) ethical character.

In 1927, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers incorporated the seven cardinal principles in its permanent platform. Subsequently, the Congress published a booklet<sup>5</sup> that interpreted and originally rephrased some of the principles.

This source and the original report of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education were used to determine the meanings that had attached themselves to the cardinal principles during the decade following their proclamation. By 1927, according to the National Congress, it had "become increasingly apparent that these (cardinal principles) are the objectives not only of the high school, but of all education." The principles also were seen to be interwoven "as the intricate pattern of life itself is interwoven."<sup>6</sup>

Are the seven cardinal principles still valid? Those among the readers of *Today's Education* who recall the principles with nostalgia and affection will be pleased to learn that all save a few members of the NEA Bicentennial Panel felt that the seven goals have retained their usefulness and their importance even after the passage of nearly 60 years.<sup>7</sup>

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*Individual schools try to take on too many tasks at once. . . . We may do a far better job as educators by lowering our sights—paradoxical as that might sound.*

—Theodore R.Sizer

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*I see the seven cardinal principles becoming skills for survival.*

—Donald Blakenlee

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*I would suggest two major premises. One is that there should be increased emphasis on lifelong learning. The second imperative is that we be a great deal more flexible about in-and-out education.*

*-Helen D. Wise*

At the same time, educators who see a need for new goals and directions that anticipate a millennium can take comfort from and find satisfaction in the fact that the Bicentennial Panel also felt that the old meanings attached to the cardinal principles were no longer adequate for learning and living in an interdependent human community.

Some points the Commission made in 1918 serve to illustrate an outlook that now seems outdated. For example, in interpreting the cardinal principle of "worthy home membership," the Commission stated that women, even "those planning for higher institutions," should have greater exposure to the household arts, since the traditional college preparatory curriculum was seen as "incongruous with the actual need and future responsibilities of girls."<sup>8</sup>

The Commission associated the command of fundamental processes with "reading, writing, arithmetical computations, and the elements of oral and written expression." It construed health to mean the inculcation of "health habits," "a love for clean sport," and "physical activities" in schools where the surroundings "conform to the best standards of hygiene and sanitation."<sup>9</sup>

Yet the original statement of principles contains some interesting examples of prescience that suggest the unusual thoughtfulness of the men and women who drew up the 1918 report. "Geography," we are told, "should show the interdependence of men while it shows their common dependence on nature," and "the ideals of American democracy and loyalty to them should be a prominent aim of civic education."<sup>10</sup> A further comment on civic education needs rather little recasting to adapt it to the world of 1976:

Civic education should consider other nations also. As a people we should try to understand their aspirations and ideals that we may deal more sympathetically and intelligently with the immigrant coming to our shores, and have a basis for a wiser and more sympathetic approach to international problems. Our pupils should learn that each nation, at least potentially, has something of worth to contribute to civilization, and that humanity would be incomplete without that contribution.<sup>11</sup>

Several members of the Bicentennial Panel not only addressed themselves to revising the principles for use in the years ahead but took time to analyze and to speculate about them.<sup>12</sup> Some of the interesting and important points they made follow:

1. The original cardinal principles do not distinguish between the general responsibilities for education and those that are best assumed by or shared with agencies such as the church, the community, and the family. Health, ethical character, worthy home membership, leisure activities, and civic skills are influenced by or are influential in other arenas of life. The principles overpromised what the schools could do. We must now talk more sensibly about what schooling can actually accomplish.

2. The original principles did not anticipate how much learning would be required in the world of 1976. Now we must look at the total learning system. Except for literacy and, possibly, voca-

onal efficiency, the cardinal principles are tasks of educational agencies of the total society.

3. The principles, quite understandably, did not allow for the increasing need for lifelong adult education.

These three statements do not imply that the principles have lost validity. They do, however, point to the need for reexamining and updating them. In the context of these remarks, attention is now directed to changes in the cardinal principles that Panelists felt the passing years have made necessary.

# 1 HEALTH

The original statement of the cardinal principles indicates that in 1918 the objective of health was to be sought through health instruction, inculcation of health habits, and physical activities. By 1927, mental and emotional fitness had been added, and the objective was restated to read "Health and Safety." The role of the home was mentioned along with the community's responsibility for sanitation and control of disease and for pure air, playgrounds, and parks. Teachers were admonished to keep children clean, train them in health habits, and to arrange for physical examinations.

In 1976, the NEA Bicentennial Panelists made much more sophisticated statements regarding the health objective. They directed attention to the need for healthy interpersonal and intercultural attitudes, for instance, and said children and youth need to be made aware that overconsumption can be as debilitating as underconsumption and that both can affect one's behavior in adverse ways. Also, they recommended a greater "social action" role for schools and other educational agencies in the health realm through directing learners' attention to the unhealthful aspects of United States life-styles and to environmental conditions, which are in some way linked to from 60 to 90 percent of the cancer in the United States.

The Panelists mentioned stress as a source of health problems and recommended a knowledge of "stress points", as a part of health education. They extended an understanding of dietary needs and problems beyond simple nutrition education to include such matters as dangers in food additives, in pollution, and in sanitary standards that are so low as to be inimical to health. And they urged continued efforts to improve drug education along with frank consideration, at appropriate age levels, of healthful family living.

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*Health education also should help the young to learn that our atmosphere is losing its oxygen; that skies are becoming open sewers; that the seas are dumping grounds in which marine life finds it difficult to survive.*

*—Norman Cousins*

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A number of Panel members mentioned health as a transnational challenge. One said, "It seems unreasonable for a few among the world's peoples to have the privilege of heart transplants while most people in the rest of the world don't see a doctor from birth to death." Also speaking in a cross-cultural context, Helvi Sipilä, a distinguished woman on the Panel, said "Unless we take more seriously the fate of women in developing countries, I don't think we can solve many of the problems in the world."

The Bicentennial Panelists apparently believed that health not only remains an important objective but that as a major goal it has appreciably increased in scope. The goal is now stated as "total mental, physical, and emotional health" for each individual. Achieving this goal was seen as a responsibility of all educational agencies, although schools have an extremely important role to play.

## **COMMAND OF FUNDAMENTAL PROCESSES**

Over the years, the interpretation of "fundamental processes" has changed in many ways. While the Panel vigorously reaffirmed the importance of proficiency in the three R's and in oral communication skills, it also identified a wide variety of other skills. These additional fundamental processes sorted themselves into three categories:

1. *Skills in humanistic processes*, including human relations skills, group process skills, and those skills based on cross-cultural and multiethnic insights.

2. *Neacademic skills*, including a knowledge of sources, the understanding and use of computer languages, and improved ability to cope with increasing specialization through a command of cross-disciplinary understandings.

3. *Anticipatory skills*, represented by the ability to (a) see relationships and make correlations; (b) sort, weigh, and then act on data; (c) evaluate choices and make decisions wisely despite the current glut of information and misinformation; and (d) understand how power functions at various levels from neighborhoods to international capitals.

An examination of this formidable list of fundamental processes, extending as it does from literacy at one end of the spectrum to a functional understanding of "power" at the other, tends to support the point made earlier that schools, as they are now, are in need of closer cooperative relationships with other socioeducational agencies.

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**Education will be increasingly concerned with how to learn.**

**-McGeorge Bundy**

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**We should think in terms of forward to the basics rather than back to the basics. The new basics will include the attainment of decision-making skills in human relationships.**

**-Grace C. Balingier**

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more and perhaps most vocational preparation should occur outside the school walls.

Because of the range of viewpoints expressed, it seems desirable to present these contrasting views. In fairness, the thoughtful insights of the 1918 report should also be mentioned.

In its original form, vocation as a cardinal principle emphasized equipping the student to earn a living, to serve society through work, to "maintain the right relationships toward . . . fellow workers and society," and "as far as possible" to develop oneself through a vocation. The Commission also recommended that those proficient in a given vocation should serve as instructors and that students have apprentice-type experiences either in or out of school.

The 1976 Panelists tended to agree with one another that the best vocational education is a general education. Some of the views they expressed are as follows:

1. The problem with regard to specific vocational skill training in a changing society is to know what kind of preparation vocations are going to require in 10 or 15 years.

2. A good general education should be followed by the teaching of specific skills.

3. The habit of lifelong learning is now, in a sense, a vocational skill.

4. Most vocational education can best be acquired outside of school.

5. Competence in problem solving has now become a requisite for vocational efficiency.

6. We need a "new vocational breed" of individuals who see the implications in their vocations for combating pollution and other ecological problems.

7. School should focus on the general requirements of all vocations and on serial or recurring preparation.

8. Vocational preparation must avoid locking people into the wrong jobs.

The Panelists did not want to downgrade the importance of vocational education, but they did stress the notion that effective citizenship, vocational skills, and general education "are inter-related and more complex because life has become more complex and therefore more demanding."

A number of miscellaneous comments about vocational education can be summarized under the label "humanistic" that is, they deal with views on how human welfare can best be served in preparation for the world of work. Here are some examples.

1. Vocational skills need to be carefully developed, and productivity must be encouraged because otherwise as wages spiral upward, the unskilled will find themselves unemployed.

2. The school's prime tasks are to cultivate reason, increase knowledge, and facilitate self-realization, without which "vocation" loses much of its meaning.

3. Vocational training is very much in the human interest in developing nations, where less and less work is available to the untrained as populations increase.

4. One of vocational education's challenges will be to help insure that competent, motivated, productive people are available

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*Much that has been done in secondary education in the name of developing vocational skill might better have been accomplished outside the school.*

**-A. Harry Passow**

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*Some of our old concepts of success have actually become a threat to our survival in an increasingly crowded world.*

**-Lester R. Brown**

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# 3 WORTHY HOME MEMBERSHIP

When the Panelists discussed this subject, they emphasized three points. One was that the nature of the family is changing. Another was that the family is of great importance and is still needed in United States culture. A third dealt with the obligation of the schools to adapt to changes in the home and family and, in the process, to rethink the meaning of "worthy."

Most-mentioned home changes included (a) the new opportunities and roles for women that have developed since the cardinal principles first appeared in 1918, (b) the impact of television, (c) the home's loss of influence on the individual, and (d) the increase in the variety of "affinity groups," such as farm communes which have gathered people together in a relationship that often is quite unlike the traditional family unit. Some consultants spoke of the loss of self-worth experienced since the 1920's by children and youth as they found their roles as helpful, needed family members either diminished or wiped out by changes in life-styles and in technology.

A social scientist, Elise Boulding, made the point that there is nothing new about the fact that home-family changes have occurred except that now we are the ones involved. "We have had many kinds of social experiments with a bearing on family life in the course of human history," she said, "including the single-sex and the not so well-known heterosexual communes that were abundant in the Middle Ages."

Despite novel living arrangements that have begun to compete with the traditional nuclear family, the Bicentennial Panelists agreed that some form of family membership is very important, and they expressed confidence in the indestructible nature of family bonds, irrespective of social change.

They felt, however, that affinity groups can make an important potential contribution by fulfilling the need for love and affection, providing a sheltering environment for the disadvantaged child, and teaching the lesson of how to live with others in harmony and mutual respect. As one Panelist phrased it, affinity groups are "closed ecosystems of rewarding, mutual interdependence."

While the family received a variety of accolades, its troubles were a cause of concern. Panelists made a number of statements and recommendations bearing directly or indirectly on worthy home membership and the improvement of home-school relations. Some of them are as follows:

1. Heretofore, in a broad sense, the educational system has been a system comprised of the home, the workplace, the church, and the school. At present, only the school continues to provide the same number of hours of educational experiences. The home has reduced its contribution. To illustrate: In 1960, 43 percent of

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*We shouldn't look for a substitute for the family; we should strive to alter the forces that serve to destroy it.*

*—Willis W. Harman*

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**Among the educational imperatives needed are greater flexibility in teaching and learning, education for a dynamic world, and nurturing of intellectual curiosity so that there will be a yearning to keep on learning.**

**—Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh**

**All of the seven cardinal principles could be subsumed under two: (1) vocational efficiency and (2) self-fulfillment. "Self-fulfillment" is the ability of an individual to respond to the needs life imposes for ethical character, responsible parenthood, and the like.**

**—Sir Walter Perry**

mothers of school-age children were in the labor force; in 1974, this figure had climbed to nearly 55 percent. Many children now return to homes in which they have little guidance, and this creates new responsibilities for other educational agencies.

2. One often-overlooked factor that bears on education is the "power" role of certain organized groups such as taxpayers' associations, whose political and economic influence can be detrimental to the welfare of such unorganized groups as children, youth, the unemployed, and old people.

3. In some countries, the status of women must be improved further if there are to be families in which it is possible to achieve worthy home membership. To a considerable extent, this generalization applies in the United States, particularly with regard to minority groups.

4. Insofar as they have the time and ingenuity to do it, educational agencies, including schools, should make a carefully planned effort to help us rediscover the sense of well-being that can be found in rich family living.

5. Because parents are so often involved in activities that take them out of the home setting, teachers should encourage them to use the time they have with children as "high quality time"—time planned to maximize the significance of these parent-child contacts.

6. As a part of schooling, children and youth might well have more service-and-action-type experiences that help them to sense what good home living involves, including the responsibilities and duties as well as the privileges and opportunities. For example, one consultant suggested that children, at an appropriate time (in their teens), might become apprentices to mothers of young babies.

If the cardinal principle of worthy home membership were to be rephrased to adapt it to 1976, probably most Panel members would agree that it might better read "worthy family membership." This change would recognize that in addition to the home cluster, there are many affinity groups of value in which children and youth might find family experiences.

## 4 VOCATION

While the NEA's Bicentennial Panelists recognized the importance of vocational skills, their concepts of contemporary vocational education were, for the most part, much broader than those earning-a-livelihood goals that the Commission voiced back in 1918. There was also a clear division of opinion in the Panelists' replies. Some respondents felt that specific vocational training or preparation should continue to be carried on in the secondary and postsecondary school years. Others either stressed a general education as the best prerequisite to vocational success or argued that

with skills they can bring to a full employment program.

5. Independence and a feeling of self-worth depend on opportunities for exercising a vital ability. There is joy in reaching for excellence in some form. Vocational skills should help individuals achieve these personal satisfactions.

## CITIZENSHIP

educated persons must be  
more than doctors,  
engineers, or scientists;  
they must be effective  
citizens and human beings.

Benjamin Bloom

In its 1918 report, the "cardinal principles" Commission recognized the vast importance of civic education. This recognition is reflected in the amount of coverage given to this goal—more than double that given any other objective except worthy home membership, which was a poor second!

Loyalty to the ideal of "civic righteousness" was emphasized along with a knowledge of social agencies and institutions and the "means and methods that will promote one [worthy] social end without defeating others." Ways of implementing changes through "habits of cordial cooperation in social undertakings" also were considered essential for good citizenship. Superior citizenship, by the way, was singled out as "the dominant aim" of instruction in geography, history, civics, and economics at the secondary school level.

Understanding and respect for the ideals of democracy as well as respect for the achievements, possibilities, and limitations of other nations were made clear in a statement that said in part: "[the] study of dissimilar contributions in the light of the ideal of human brotherhood should help to establish a genuine internationalism, free from sentimentality, founded on fact, and actually operative in the affairs of nations."<sup>13</sup>

The foresight of the Commission statement with respect to civic education acquires fresh interest in the context of the goals or aims identified by the 1976 Panelists. While one cannot say *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*, there are striking similarities of thought between the 1918 report and the present Panel's thinking.

For one thing, the NEA Bicentennial panelists emphasized the importance of a global viewpoint. Various statements supported "loyalty to the planet as well as to the nation," the "need for a world view," "world citizenship," and the need for "membership in much larger societies" or for recognizing that "citizenship is more than narrow chauvinism."

Some participants pointed out that civic education should make clear the need to narrow the gap between the industrially developed and the less developed nations, that a liberal education should give as much heed to national and international problems as to foreign language, and that the difficulties and challenges which exist in both *laissez faire* and planned societies should be presented.

Another panelist made aware that if the United States wishes to improve its moral posture and leadership in the world, it can best do so by first cleaning up the domestic troubles in Washington and in the 50 states. A related point was that we must work to build respect and support for leadership of integrity.

Other strong statements, perhaps mirroring contemporary political and social malaise, centered around power. An overseas participant stressed the need for groups which have power to be better informed as they exercise that power. Some Panelists, a number of them from ethnic minorities, contended that being well-informed isn't enough. They said that civic education should encourage active, constructive participation in politics and that it should help people understand how to use power positively. A few expressed concern over the possibility that the beliefs and values of teachers and personnel employed in agencies other than schools, if publicly expressed, might increase pressure for censorship or other forms of retaliation and restraint.

Because of the nuclear threat and the increasing interdependence of nations, several Panelists felt that representatives of all national governments must more explicitly recognize the danger in aggression and in the use of force. Panelists also spoke of the importance of negotiation—of compromise, cooperation, cooperative decision making, and the resolution of conflicts. If this need is extrapolated downward to the national, state, and local levels within U.S. borders, the development of these same skills of interaction among the young presumably should become a new, vigorous dimension in civic education for the future. Certain Panelists even named process skills, which they defined as the ability to work well with other humans, as survival skills to be learned through civic education.

One final point bearing on citizenship experiences can be inferred from the preceding paragraphs: The Panelists evidently have confidence in what the schools in particular—among all educational resources—can accomplish to strengthen democracy, as well as to brighten our human prospects for the third millennium. An internationally respected Panel member, Ralph Tyler, put it this way:

The place that has the greatest promise of being an ideal democratic society—as I look over institutions in our nation—is the school. Even though some schools are troubled by conflicts, mostly begun and pushed by the parents, by and large they are a microcosm of democracy where people care, or are learning to care, about others. In most teachers and students alike, there is a degree of fairness and of justice. Lots of kids participate in the planning and in the outcomes of what they do.

Our efforts to make our society more democratic beyond the schools' walls and playgrounds are going to be aided tremendously by maintaining as we have in this country—and better than in any other country—a school environment in which teachers try to be democratic in their relations with students and with one another.

There are very few teachers who are cruel or who look down upon persons who come from a lower economic group or a different ethnic group. I believe that this attitude of acceptance is essential to maintain our pluralistic society. We must preserve this kind of school atmosphere and the values of what John Dewey called "a society in miniature."

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*The seven cardinal principles provide a useful taxonomy, but some of the original interpretations now seem naïve in retrospect.*

*—Robert J. Havighurst*

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# 6 WORTHY USE OF LEISURE

*I would prefer to change the "worthy use of leisure time" to the "creative use of leisure time."*

*-Sally Swing Shelley*

*I see missing from the cardinal principles references to the aesthetic experience—to art and beauty—and that is a serious omission unless you can weave them into the principles.*

*-Sterling McMurrin*

The comments that the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education made on the worthy use of leisure reflect in part the nature of society some 60 or 70 years ago. Reading between the lines of that document, one senses that work days were long and that arduous physical labor in America had yet to be tempered by a widespread use of machines.

The work ethic, perhaps a bit incongruously, sometimes infiltrated the 1918 approach to leisure so that people were made to feel that even free time should be used in "worthy" ways. To illustrate, the school was advised to organize recreational activities so "that they will contribute simultaneously to other ends of education" which improve the mind or increase the individuals' knowledge.

In examining this principle, the Bicentennial Panelists noted that the line dividing work and leisure has blurred since 1918, both because there is more time for relaxation available to more people today and because an energy-intensive economy leaves them less physically fatigued than does a labor-intensive one. The breakdown of the work-leisure dichotomy probably will be furthered as more men and women engage in work-type activities that have now begun to assume more of a recreational nature. Gardening, redecorating a room, crocheting, gourmet cooking, building a carport—all of these involve work, but they are also leisure-time activities, since they are undertaken outside of on-the-job employment time.

Sixty years ago, the Commission wrote that leisure was intended to recreate body, mind, and spirit and enrich the personality through experiences involving music, art, literature, drama, and social activity. Today, too, leisure time is well used for recreative purposes and as a means to self-fulfillment, but the channels that education should seek to open, according to the Bicentennial Panelists, are much broader, and the time for enjoying leisure is potentially greater.

As education seeks to enhance the ability to enjoy free time, it also needs to show awareness of a factor that is sometimes overlooked: the limited leisure of millions of people who are obliged to work on a second job or overtime because of the gap between their income and their aspirations or needs. Here schools and other educative agencies continue to be challenged to develop the skills and to encourage the productivity that permit the attainment of economic levels at which leisure time is available.

A second, more subtle factor related to leisure time is that increasing complexity in Americans' lives erodes time that might otherwise be used for recreative, self-fulfilling activity. The wives and mothers or husbands and fathers of 1976 have many gadgets and devices that their parents or grandparents lacked, but they

their grandparents. While this factor varies both with sex roles and with economic conditions, it provides a new task for education: helping young and old alike to prevent today's complexities from totally eroding their leisure time.



## 7 ETHICAL CHARACTER

"In a democratic society ethical character becomes paramount among the [seven] objectives," the authors of the cardinal principles declared. The 1976 Panelists believed that the task of developing ethical character is, if anything, more important at present than it ever was in the past. While they made few specific suggestions as to what education might do to strengthen or build ethical character, they recognized and defined the seventh cardinal principle as an educational imperative.

The following paragraphs attempt to capture the spirit of the statements regarding character which Panelists made.

When contemplating the development of ethical character as an educational imperative, it is well to note, as some consultants did, that young and old alike need ethical models. But to have ethical leadership, we must also have a society that honors and supports or elects "order" leaders. The process of creating or recreating an ethical society, therefore, becomes evolutionary and interactive.

The Panelists contended that we need a renewal of respect—merited respect—for the institutions that give democracy, the human conscience, and the individual life their meanings. We also need to develop, through consensus, basic guideposts that will give strength and meaning to social and educational policies. But there is a limit to what leadership in our government and other institutions can accomplish—a point at which democratic processes must vitalize policymaking and its implementation. Here the individual's possession of ethical standards becomes crucial.

In devising or developing experiences that create what we label "ethical character," it is the family (or affinity group) and the school that are likely to have the greatest influence. Above all others, these two among the various educational agencies strengthen or diminish the ability to resist manipulation. They either nurture or undercut the decisiveness needed to respond without confusion to basic choices. They either develop the talent for self-direction or they teach acceptance of the dictates of tyrannical machines, of authorities, or of the expert with the answers.

A number of the Panelists said that as parents and teachers guide young people toward the acquisition of ethical character, they need to reassess the importance of a reasoned discipline and of rules that are firm and fair rather than harsh or quixotic. They

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*Ethical character involves a regard for other people, and education should develop a sense of responsibility for others.*

*—Patsy Takemoto Mink*

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*We need to help children develop nobility. By nobility I mean doing the right thing for the right reason. I think this can be taught just as we teach arithmetic or reading or biology.*

*—Jonas Salk, M.D.*

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seven cardinal principles are fine—completely valid—but only if we interpret them in the context of the future rather than in their past setting.

David Rockefeller

hope that by 2000 A.D. education is going to be a multiethnic process from which each of us profits from the best of the other cultures.

Lloyd Elm

awareness that ethical character grows from within and cannot be imposed.

Furthermore, in any culture, development of ethical character also calls for an awareness of what is considered right and wrong in that culture and for a rejection of a relativism that denies, if only by implication, that such things as the common good and the general welfare exist.

After many, many hours spent in an attempt to capture the Panelists' thinking as well as that of a number of bright young people—some from what once were distant places—it seems a pleasant concluding exercise to turn back to the *NEA Bicentennial Ideabook* in which the cardinal principles project was described.

Did the Panelists' statements verify that the *Ideabook's* Declaration of Interdependence made sense? Did their testimony support the notion that after 200 years the American people really are entering a new era? Are we ready to think in terms of education for a global community? Are the five "self-evident truths" that the Bicentennial Committee proclaimed both true and self-evident?

At this juncture, the problems of the present and the prospects for the future that have been inventoried make clear that it is time well spent if we examine these self-evident truths:

1. *Two hundred years after declaring our independence, the American people are entering a new era.*<sup>14</sup> As far as the International Bicentennial Panel was concerned, this statement is categorically true. We are well on the road to an era that will be both threatening and promising—that will be full of developments which we must try to anticipate and replete with surprises no matter how clever our guesses about tomorrow's world may be.

2. *Today we must acknowledge the interdependence of all peoples.* Again, some of the world's more provocative, thoughtful people agree with the views expressed in the *Ideabook*. The data that support this second truth are accumulating with every passing day.

3. *Education can be a vehicle through which peace and the principles of the American Revolution—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—may become the guidelines for human relationships on our planet.* Here the Panelists suggest a cautious "maybe." It is the quality of education—its caliber, its integrity—that is significant. If education is to be a vehicle to promote peace and liberty, educated people must honor the seventh cardinal principle, ethical character.

4. *Educators around the world are in a unique position to help bring about a harmoniously interdependent global community based on the principles of peace and justice.* This declaration may be true in some respects, but it is not as yet self-evident. Educators are in a unique position to help, but one also can infer from the Panelists' comments that professionals in education sometimes have opportunities and responsibilities that exceed their resources and their authority and that teaching and learning thus lose much of their potential.

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In addition to input from the above panel members, 95 interviews were conducted with high school juniors and seniors and with presidents of student councils. Input was also received from 17 persons from overseas who were interviewed at the United Nations. Institutional affiliations are given as they were during the period when the Committee or the Panel began its work.

Copies of the full report will be available from NEA Publishing, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Write for information on publication date and cost.