

Epilogue to the Summer 2019 SUP Special Issue: Remembering Yesterday

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Yesterday

There is a popular movie out at the moment about a young singer who wakes up one day to discover that no one other than himself has any memory of the Beatles or their music. His efforts to find any documentation that the Fab Four ever existed bore no results. By some mystical miracle the movie never really explains, the singer appears to be the only person with any knowledge of the band which enables him to roll out hit song after hit song by simply re-recording every Beatles song ever made. Seeing the film was a very pleasant experience, not just because it was filled with nostalgic music, but also because of various subplots involving romance, the evil side of fame, and, personal heart wrenching struggle about coming to grips with the truth. There is a nice bit where the main character meets two other earthlings whose memories have not failed them. Instead of accusing him of fraud, they thank him for keeping the music alive and vow to keep his secret. There is also a touching scene when the protagonist visits John Lennon, very much alive and living in a spartan bungalow on a beautiful beach.

It would have been nice to simply sit in the theater and enjoy the film at face value, however the film struck me as an apt metaphor for how history can sometimes be regarded. What good is having a clear knowledge of the past? Why should we feel obligated to familiarize ourselves with ideas, concepts or events when they may seem irrelevant to our personal and professional lives? I am reminded of the old maxim – *those who have not learned the mistakes of history are destined to repeat them* – a piece of folk wisdom which is inarguably true. Still, sitting there in that dark theater, it did occur to me that the world was made a truly better place because of Paul, George, John and Ringo. I can imagine a world without their music, but I am sure we are better off having enjoyed it. The Beatles not only had an enormous effect on the music industry, but also on western popular culture. Their lyrics were not always profound, but many were. They did, after all, remind us that we all live in the same “yellow submarine.”

The analogy I want to make here is that it seems that while there exists an enormous record of educational reform, the field often behaves as though one does not exist. For some, it is as if nothing happened yesterday. Goodlad's observation that our field suffers from a kind of “intellectual amnesia” remains quite true. It is particularly true in the field of teacher education where good ideas and sound principles abound, but practice has a way of staying the same. The concept of school and university partnerships like professional development schools, has been with us for decades now. School and university partnerships were created by pioneers like Goodlad for very sound reasons. Report after report and study after study have resulted in calls for more emphasis on clinical experiences in collaborative communities of practice, however much of the field continues to sustain programs and policies that seem to be unaware of, or uninformed about, their own histories (Holmes Group, Carl Glickman, NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel, Goodlad's Postulates, The Nine Essentials, AACTE's Clinical Practice Report). While school and university partnerships are seen as state-of-the-art approaches to teacher preparation, many of the same unresolved problems exist today as in the last century: who and what education is for and how teachers are prepared teachers for such a philosophy of education.

Neil Postman (1995) once pointed out that education has two fundamental problems; the first one is metaphysical, the second is engineering. The engineering problem focuses on the how and what questions in policy and in practice. But the metaphysical problem focuses on the *why* questions. The answer to these questions gives purpose and coherence to the what and the how. Perhaps nowhere does this struggle play out more vividly than the area of teacher education because in defining what teachers should know and be able to do, all of the tensions and differences of opinion about how to cultivate the best possible system of education are brought to light. The history of education in America is one of conflicting ideas continuously colliding in a struggle to become manifest in structures, curriculum, pedagogy, law and leadership. The metaphysical problem and the engineering problem must both be addressed. Yet, it is the engineering problem that has been the focus. One need only to look at present educational reform movements.

The field of education is in the throes of yet another wave of reform, this time motivated and funded by special interest groups in the private sector with questionable motives (Ravitch, 2013). Reforms these days seem less like waves and more like white caps on a vast, stormy sea of competing educational initiatives. Each welling up has its champion, politics and underlying agenda. For school people, the targets of reform, change initiatives rise and fall in disjointed cycles, as one sweeps up over another with little regard for the possible consequences. Goodlad once speculated, "Perhaps it is the nature of reform to look ahead with hope undiminished by sobering lessons from the past" (1990, p. 4). As such, we ask that we focus on what Postman (1995) deemed the metaphysical problem. Have we neglected to discuss what schools are for, whose interests are being served, and how we form relationships with one another that will ultimately benefit children? This issue was an attempt to focus on the metaphysical by reconsidering Goodlad's work. Based on relatively few responses to the call, it seems that the metaphysical problem is still in need of our attention.

This special issue represents the very tip of the proverbial iceberg. Goodlad and his many colleagues from the Institute for Educational Inquiry, the Center for Educational Renewal and the National Network for Educational Renewal set important and useful foundations for furthering our work together. His twenty postulates reprinted below are not "standards" nor are they "policy directives", they are principles for the formulation of unique partnerships offered to guide programs for teacher preparation that result in simultaneous and mutual renewal of schools and universities. They complement the vision and mission of the National Association for Professional Development Schools and the Nine Essentials. All of us who work in professional development schools would do well to become students of Goodlad's legacy. The guest editors hope you have found this special, themed edition of *School University Partnerships* helpful in opening up new understandings of our history and purpose. As the NAPDS reconsiders its Nine Essentials, members can expect to see more of Goodlad's legacy come to light. We believe in yesterday and what it can help us achieve tomorrow.

The Twenty Postulates

1-19 were first published in Teachers for our Nation's Schools and later revised in Educational Renewal: Better Teachers, Better Schools, while number 20 was added in 2000.

postulate one

Programs for the education of the nation's educators must be viewed by institutions offering them as a major responsibility to society and be adequately supported and promoted and vigorously advanced by the institution's top leadership.

postulate two

Programs for the education of educators must enjoy parity with other professional education programs, full legitimacy and institutional commitment, and rewards for faculty geared to the nature of the field.

postulate three

Programs for the education of educators must be autonomous and secure in their borders, with clear organizational identity, constancy of budget and personnel, and decision-making authority similar to that enjoyed by the major professional schools.

postulate four

There must exist a clearly identifiable group of academic and clinical faculty members for whom teacher education is the top priority; the group must be responsible and accountable for selecting diverse groups of students and monitoring their progress, planning and maintaining the full scope and sequence of the curriculum, continuously evaluating and improving programs, and facilitating the entry of graduates into teaching careers.

postulate five

The responsible group of academic and clinical faculty members described above must have a comprehensive understanding of the aims of education and the role of schools in our society and be fully committed to selecting and preparing teachers to assume the full range of educational responsibilities required.

postulate six

The responsible group of academic and clinical faculty members must seek out and select for a predetermined number of student places in the program those candidates who reveal an initial commitment to the moral, ethical, and enculturating responsibilities to be assumed, and make clear to them that preparing for these responsibilities is central to this program.

postulate seven

Programs for the education of educators, whether elementary or secondary, must carry the responsibility to ensure that all candidates progressing through them possess or acquire the literacy and critical-thinking abilities associated with the concept of an educated person.

postulate eight

Programs for the education of educators must provide extensive opportunities for future teachers to move beyond being students of organized knowledge to become teachers who inquire into both knowledge and its teaching.

postulate nine

Programs for the education of educators must be characterized by a socialization process through which candidates transcend their self-oriented student preoccupations to become more other-oriented in identifying with a culture of teaching.

postulate ten

Programs for the education of educators must be characterized in all respects by the conditions for learning that future teachers are to establish in their own schools and classrooms.

postulate eleven

Programs for the education of educators must be conducted in such a way that teachers inquire into the nature of teaching and schooling and assume that they will do so as a natural aspect of their careers.

postulate twelve

Programs for the education of educators must involve future teachers in the issues and dilemmas that emerge out of the never-ending tension between the rights and interests of individual parents and interest groups and the role of schools in transcending parochialism and advancing community in a democratic society.

postulate thirteen

Programs for the education of educators must be infused with understanding of and commitment to the moral obligation of teachers to ensure equitable access to and engagement in the best possible K-12 education for all children and youths.

postulate fourteen

Programs for the education of educators must involve future teachers not only in understanding schools as they are but in alternatives, the assumptions underlying alternatives, and how to effect needed changes in school organization, pupil grouping, curriculum, and more.

postulate fifteen

Programs for the education of educators must assure for each candidate the availability of a wide array of laboratory settings for simulation, observation, hands-on experiences, and exemplary schools for internships and residencies; they must admit no more students to their programs than can be assured these quality experiences.

postulate sixteen

Programs for the education of educators must engage future teachers in the problems and dilemmas arising out of the inevitable conflicts and incongruities between what is perceived to work in practice and the research and theory supporting other options.

postulate seventeen

Programs for the education of educators must establish linkages with graduates for purposes of both evaluating and revising these programs and easing the critical early years of transition into teaching.

postulate eighteen

Programs for the education of educators require a regulatory context with respect to licensing, certifying, and accrediting that ensures at all times the presence of the necessary conditions embraced by the seventeen preceding postulates.

postulate nineteen

Programs for the education of educators must compete in an arena that rewards efforts to continuously improve on the conditions embedded in all of the postulates and tolerates no shortcuts intended to ensure a supply of teachers.

postulate twenty

Those institutions and organizations that prepare the nation's teachers, authorize their right to teach, and employ them must fine-tune their individual and collaborative roles to support and sustain lifelong teaching careers characterized by professional growth, service, and satisfaction.

References

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