



Review

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THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
Located on the campus of the University of Missouri at Columbia

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NATIONAL POLICY BOARD HEADQUARTERS TO BE HOSTED BY UCEA AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration unanimously voted to accept a joint proposal by UCEA and the University of Missouri to host the NPBEA headquarters for a two year period. After almost ten years in the Washington area, the nine member association agreed to try a location outside the District. UCEA's Executive Committee and executive director joined the University of Missouri's dean (Richard L. Andrews) and department chair (Paula M. Short) in drafting a proposal to assure the healthy and continued existence of the Board, whose future seemed uncertain after the announced retirement of NPBEA's executive secretary last year.

The NPBEA was organized in response to a recommendation of the 1987 National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration's report *Leaders for America's Schools*. Committed to fostering models for the preparation and professional development of educational leaders and improving certification standards, NPBEA has been a vehicle for the profession to assume collective responsibility for the improvement of educational administration preparation and practice.

Under the proposed agreement, UCEA and the University of Missouri will house the day to day operations and communications for NPBEA, and UCEA executive director, Patrick B. Forsyth, will serve as corporate secretary. The proposal calls for an expanded role for the Board's elected chair who will assume a stronger leadership role in relation to the board of directors. The NPBEA will continue to meet three to four times a year, but may explore meeting in venues other than Washington D.C. on occasion.

Ongoing projects of the NPBEA will continue such as the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, a collaboration with The Council of Chief State School Officers advocating common and higher standards for the principal licensure. The Board also continues the International Resource Bank for Program Leadership. This joint project with the National Council for Professors of Educational Administration and the University Council for Educational Administration is developing a resource bank of innovative school leader preparation programs. Under the new agreement, the NPBEA will not seek Danforth Foundation support for operational expenditures as it had in the past. Rather, the Board may seek foundation funds for important, *ad hoc* projects as it continues to act as a national forum focused on the improvement of the profession.

The hosting proposal calls for the NPBEA to form a "Policy Circle," a cluster of policy centers from around the nation. The policy experts of these centers will jointly serve as the research arm of the NPBEA and help to identify emerging trends and issues as potential Board agenda. By terms of the agreement, Bruce Jones, Director of the University of Missouri Center for Educational Policy Analysis and faculty member in the Department of Education Leadership and Policy Analysis, will work with the corporate secretary and coordinate the Policy Circle's activity with the Board. Professor Jones, a policy researcher, received his doctorate from Columbia University and has served on the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh.

Scott D. Thomson, who was NPBEA executive secretary for six years (after retiring as executive director of NASSP), retired for a second time on September 15. The members of the NPBEA board have appropriately applauded Scott for his years of service. UCEA joins the board in expressing appreciation to Scott for his inspired leadership and the remarkable accomplishments of the NPBEA during his tenure.

Convention '96

Louisville, Kentucky
October 25-27, 1996

The Galt House Hotel

Continuity and Change: Two Sides of a Paradox



Mary Catherine Bateson
(Based on an address given at the UCEA convention in Salt Lake City, November 27, 1995)

The paradoxical aspects of continuity and change open up a number of issues related to education and to educational reform, but I will begin with several examples from a little further afield, starting with a series of conversations that I had when I went back to Israel after a thirty year absence. The kibbutz (singular) is an essentially unique Israeli institution, a small agrarian socialist settlement, generally secular. The kibbutzim (plural) were founded with a great sense of idealism and vitality, beginning towards the end of the 19th century, by Jews coming back to the land in the literal sense of becoming farmers. At present, however, there is a good deal of demoralization on the kibbutzim and many young people are leaving. I had a series of conversations with kibbutz elders, pioneers, founders, who talked to me about how painful it is when young people leave the kibbutz and even leave Israel, about how painful it was to see that the new generation was not prepared to follow in their footsteps."

Then I would ask, "Your parents, did they live on a kibbutz?" "Oh, no, they lived in Poland and my father was a tailor, a very religious man." "Oh. How did he feel when you said you were going to give up Orthodox Judaism and go far away and become a farmer?" "Very upset. Very upset and angry." Again and again, I found myself pointing out that the new generation is in a very precise sense "following in the footsteps" of their elders. Just as the pioneer generation had embraced a new ideology, changed their lives, traveled a great distance, established a new way of life, that is what the young generation was trying to do. As so often happens with reformers and innovators, the last thing that the pioneers wanted was to have the next generation continue the process. They wanted to freeze it. In our society, reformers often do the same thing.

This is an example of what I mean when I talk about continuity and change being two sides of a coin. Often you can look at a situation and understand it both as an example of continuity and as an example of change. You can see the generation born on the kibbutz both as following in the footsteps of their parents, and as defying them and abandoning what they tried to build. In one case, it is movement and innovation that represent the continuity. In the other case, continuity has a more literal sense of staying and continuing a particular behavior.

Many of the classic paradoxes, when you explore how they work, have to do with logical levels, and this is often true of continuity and change, where continuity at one level represents change at another. Leaving the kibbutz represents continuity at a more abstract level than remaining. It is difficult to persuade people to accept a change unless you make them aware of the level at which it represents a continuity and present it as a new way of doing what they have always believed was important to do.

Often, however, people balance off change and constancy at the wrong levels, freezing the specific and letting the more abstract change by default. There are communities of ultra-Orthodox Jews in Israel, as there are in New York as well, who are still wearing the clothing of a century and more ago in Eastern Europe, which has become part of their identity. The long black coats and fur hats are not Biblical and there is nothing about them in the Talmud. Instead, they are pretty much the ordinary clothes of a particular place and time that got frozen for generations, and were quite probably still being worn by the tailor I described in Poland. Some of these

Jews shared the Zionist dream, but they had different ideas about what to take with them and what to change, including their specialized form of dress. Today, customs that preserved separation from gentile communities have come to symbolize division between Jews. Clothing always makes a wonderful example of what happens when you freeze some aspects of life and not others. Something that had one meaning when it was adopted comes to have quite a different meaning because of change in the context. Arguably, this is the inherent problem of all kinds of fundamentalism. So those ultra-Orthodox Jews, who believe they are affirming something unchanging, are in fact projecting quite a different meaning with the passage of time. The change is deeper than the cut of a coat.

This is, of course, what happened in the Catholic church with the habits worn by nuns. They were developed as a standardized version of the garments of modest women of their time, but by the beginning of the 20th century, they were grotesque and frightening to children. What was meant to be a material token of continuity of meaning and commitment actually had come to project a new and dissonant meaning and had to be reformed, by no means painlessly. Several years ago, I spoke at a conference of nuns in their 50's and 60's who were members of a teaching order. They had in common the fact that they had all entered their order when it was still going by the old rules, shortly before the reforms, so when they entered they expected to wear medieval floor-length black garments and wimples and veils, to do everything on a rigid schedule, and never to have private or personal conversations. And then things started changing. As things changed, a lot of women, educated and still young enough to choose quite a different life, began to leave; from some cohorts, by year of entry, four out of five left the order.

The women I was addressing at the conference were those who stayed, so I had to ask myself, who were these women who had made the transition from the regimented medieval life of the convent to today, wearing civies, praying by their own rhythms, living in apartments with roommates, and making their own job decisions? It occurred to me that maybe they were just the wimps, those who fit the stereotype of women escaping from life, for whom staying in the order at least offered a certain security. But when I talked to them, I discovered these women were on the whole far from being wimps, and were instead feisty and forceful professionals.

As I asked about those who had left, it became clear that many left because there was too much change, the ones who said, "This is not what I signed up for. They changed the rules on us."

But at the same time, many women left the order because there wasn't enough change and they felt the church should continue the process, abolishing celibacy, ordaining women, and so on. In effect, the women I was talking to had managed to find fundamental continuity within change and also to realize that change itself was a continuity, proceeding at different speeds. When they were troubled by the fact that a particular reform hadn't been made by a particular year, they could keep working, recognizing that the Catholic church does things slowly and maybe in the next century the needed change would be made. Most of them wanted to see more change, but most of them had learned that you can't change everything overnight without making change itself your only constancy, becoming addicted to change. This is of course the other danger that reformers face.

Joining a religious order is a bit like marriage. You can't commit yourself to another person and expect that person to stay the same. Some people leave a marriage for just this reason: "She let herself go" "He started treating her like his mother." There were changes they could not live with, because they could not find and affirm the continuity under the change. On the other hand, some marriages break up because one or the other partner says, "This relationship is stagnant and is blocking my growth," "He's not changing with the times," "She's not moving on and developing." I wrote a poem for my husband for an early anniversary that speaks of shaping change, like a potter, and ends by saying,

"We never promised we would stay the same."

But only we would shape our change
From this now single clay.”

We are now in a confusing period in this country, in which those who promote the most radical and rapid change call themselves conservatives, while those who have in the past been progressive or liberal, such as many labor leaders, seem to want to stop the clock.

This is complicated by another theme that comes up repeatedly in American culture and is also present in the Israeli example, the belief that with the next change it will be possible to get it right, once and for all. You decide to make a change, to move from an unacceptable, unsatisfactory state to an acceptable, satisfactory state, but then nobody is going to be allowed to make any further change. What you see hidden underneath so much of the rhetoric in this country is the expectation of finality: that whatever the job is, it will be possible to get it done and over with, including reform. Even spiritual growth has been subsumed for many into becoming “born again.”

The logic of getting it over with leads to dangerously rapid change. We have been hearing recently, for instance, about schools that have implemented ten different reforms simultaneously, which then were all declared failures after a year. I think that just as it behooves anyone in administration to think about the relationship between continuity and change, so it behooves us all to look at the metaphors of finality that underlie a short term willingness to address change as something to be gotten over with, like going to the dentist. After all, underlying the establishment of the kibbutzim was a utopian vision, both religious and secular, and American history has also been characterized by such static visions. It may be useful on the eve of the Millennium to remember that there is no ideal end-state and that the process of change is necessarily constant. Recently it has become common in this country for people of all political persuasions to agree that the War on Poverty failed. It is important, as we consider educational reform, to analyze what people mean by this, in order not to make the same mistake. In fact, the different poverty programs established during Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society are mostly still in place and are still regarded as useful, so that was not where the failure lay. So many people were lifted out of poverty that it took decades of cutbacks to bring the percentage of Americans living below the poverty line back, during the Bush presidency, to where it was when Johnson started. I don’t think one can disagree that the Poverty programs had a huge impact on the quality of lives and were useful and constructive. So what do people mean when they say the War on Poverty failed? Well, very simply, when you go to war, what you are looking for is victory, and poverty was not permanently defeated. It is possible to declare the whole War on Poverty a failure because the metaphor was wrong. Poverty is not the kind of thing that can be defeated by war.

I am sure many of us have had the experience of keeping a house or a garden and know that you can’t declare war on dirt and mess or on weeds, and defeat them so they will go away forever. You can make all sorts of improvements but essentially these are maintenance issues, tasks that won’t go away. You cannot use the metaphor of warfare (or football) to describe an unending process. The same thing is true of ill health. The same is true surely of illiteracy. We want to get rid of illiteracy in this society once and for all, but new illiterates are born or immigrate every day. If we want to have as little illiteracy as possible, we will have to keep on working on it, just like keeping a house clean and tidy. In effect, programs to address poverty or health or environmental protection are part of our necessary continuity. The metaphors of finality creep into debate all the time. Today people acknowledge a need to reform education, but they expect reform to make it right, to fix it once and for all. Reform, I would suggest to you, is not the kind of thing you can do once and for all. The rate of change in this society is so great that no set of innovations or adjustments will seem adequate for very long. We are never going to get it right. The process has to be ongoing. The same thing is true of education in the lives of individuals. When I was a student, President Pusey used to hand out the

diplomas and welcome the new Harvard graduates to the “company of educated men.” Well, now they hand diplomas to both men and women and I don’t know what they say, but the really profound change is that we have begun to understand that no one is educated on a fixed date, and indeed every departing graduate is still at the beginning of the process of education. All that money for tuition, and the job isn’t even half done.

For all our talk about lifelong learning, we still have a sense that education occupies a slot in the life cycle and takes place in certain kinds of institutional structures, and that perhaps full participation in society should not be possible until it is completed. “So and so sure has a lot to learn,” we say, shaking our heads. I sometimes ask audiences, “Isn’t it scary to have somebody in the White House who seems to be learning on the job? Of course,” I go on, “it would be even scarier to have someone in the White House who wasn’t learning on the job, and we have had quite a few of those.”

Many programs designed to improve education are weakened by the fact that they are built on the fallacy that an education is something that can be completed. That there is a war against ignorance that can be won by the home team. Thus, we have one fallacy, that it is possible to be educated (once and for all), embedded in another, that the process can be reformed (once and for all).

The political scientist and systems theorist Karl Deutsch said something that must represent a superb and interesting paradox to those concerned with educational administration. He said, “power is the ability not to have to learn.” Now, of course, one of the oddities of educational administration or virtually any kind of administration is that administrators have far less power than most people think they have. There you are, persuading and cajoling and balancing and making very tiny changes occasionally, and there is every one else, imagining you sitting in your office with Godlike power to determine their fate, probably in destructive and malicious ways, such as increasing the number of administrative positions and decreasing the faculty. The other side of this paradox is that, generally speaking, what we need as agents of change is not power but authority; we can only bring about change by persuading others to accept it. Today we have to give a new spin to the concept of authority and simply say that it is unwise to confer authority on anyone who claims already to have the answers, to accept the guidance or leadership of anyone who is not committed to learning, who doesn’t say with some regularity, “I don’t know.”

Unfortunately, if you put this to a leader or an administrator, a principal or a president or a CEO, you are creating a very uncomfortable dilemma for that person, because so many people have been taught that if you acknowledge ignorance, you will lose your authority. We are taught that to “change your mind” (could this be a kind of learning?), or to apologize, or to actually listen to other people and ask their advice, any of these is a sign of weakness. When I first went to Amherst as dean of the faculty, a colleague took me to see the hockey rink on which faculty families would go to skate. And I said, “Gosh, maybe while I am here I will learn how to do that.” And he looked at me and said, “I don’t think it would be too smart for the dean of the faculty to be seen learning to ice skate.” Because when you learn to ice skate, you suffer prat falls and make a fool of yourself. It was self evident to him that if I — heaven forbid! — went around learning things in public, I would undermine my authority. Which meant there was very little leeway for the necessary learning on the job. I would argue, however, that the concept of authority that assumes no need for further learning has become obsolete.

There was a psychologist at Princeton, Adelbert Ames, who built a set of installations (“rooms”) to demonstrate the constructivist theory of perception. Subjects looking through single eyeholes were asked to touch things with a stick and because of various optical illusions the stick would bump into something. There is a story that when Eisenhower visited the Ames Rooms and was reaching with the stick and encountering these frustrations, he threw the stick on the floor and left. Whereas Einstein, when he first went in, was perfectly comfortable with the fact that the

(Continued on p. 6)

UCEA AT MIZZOU: NEW PLACE, NEW STAFF, NEW ERA

In June, The University of Missouri cordially welcomed UCEA to its campus as the Consortium took up residence in Hill Hall, overlooking historic Jesse Hall and the central university quadrangle. The Hill Hall location places UCEA's offices adjacent to its host department (The Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis) chaired by UCEA's current president, **Paula M. Short**, and the host dean, **Richard L. Andrews**. This is UCEA's fifth home, having been previously located at Teachers College, Columbia University (1956-1959), The Ohio State University (1959-84), Arizona State University (1984-1991), and most recently The Pennsylvania State University (1991-1996). UCEA has benefited greatly from the unique strengths and generous support of each of these great universities.

The new staff benefits from the addition of **Richard V. Hatley**, who has been assigned half-time to UCEA and has been named associate director by the Executive Committee. Professor Hatley brings a wealth of experience to his new position as UCEA past president, six years as member of the Executive Committee, and 16 years as Plenum Representative. He received his doctorate from the University of New Mexico and was on the faculty of the University of Kansas before coming to the University of Missouri 20 years ago. Hatley will have a key staff role in shaping the regional consortia and professor development programs endorsed by the Plenum in the recent strategic plan.

Additional new staff are **Toni Brent**, administrative assistant. She comes to UCEA from Chicago, having held positions with First Chicago, Arthur Andersen, and recently the State of Missouri Equal Opportunity Office. Toni is a senior marketing/management major and is a veteran writer/poet. Among other responsibilities she will be coordinating the National Graduate Student Research Seminar in Educational Administration.

The University of Missouri has provided four graduate assistants to the Consortium. **James R. Crawford** will be working on the Innovative Superintendent Preparatory Program and the Information Environment for School Leader Preparation Project (IESLP). He has a Masters Degree in educational administration (The University of Idaho) and comes to Mizzou from Seattle, Washington where he taught junior high school.

Meredith J. Donaldson will be editor of the *UCEA Review*. She was a technical writer for *Applied Environmental Science*, a publication of the National Council for Agricultural Education. She began her graduate study at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in adult and continuing education.

Lori E. Houghton will be assisting with research projects of various kinds, statistical data analysis, and with the IESLP Project, especially identifying and building the research tools component. She holds two masters degrees, one in applied mathematics and one in physical anthropology.

Timothy O'Neal Smith will be working on the Thousand Voices project and will be staff liaison to the National Policy

Board of Educational Administration. He brings to UCEA 12 years of computer science experience.. He holds a double Bachelors Degree in American government and economics (University of Virginia) and is completing a Masters Degree in economics from the University of Missouri. All the graduate assistants are pursuing degrees in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis.

At Missouri, UCEA's executive director Patrick B. Forsyth, has accepted a tenured faculty appointment in the College of Education. By agreement, UCEA buys his time back, although he does hope to be an active member of the department-- teaching, writing, and serving on committees. Forsyth has been executive director for eleven years and managed the moves of UCEA from West to East to Midwest.

UCEA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1995-1996

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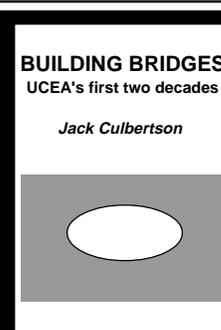
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Ex-Officio

Patrick B. Forsyth, UCEA

Richard L. Andrews, Dean, University of Missouri-Columbia



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"UCEA's formation and early programs were influenced by American and European ideas. Views expressed in the late 1940s by officers of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and by members of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), for example, helped shape UCEA's mission statement. On the other hand, adapted versions of ideas generated by a group of scholars in Vienna, Austria, provided essential content for UCEA's first Career Development Seminar. The seminar's content in turn influenced some of UCEA's future programs." (from Chapter 2: Roots)

The cost for the volume is \$26.95, plus \$2.50 shipping/handling. Send check to UCEA at 205 Hill Hall, Columbia, MO 65211 or call (573) 884-8300

CCEA CONFERENCE HELD IN MALAYSIA

by Paula Cordiero, University of Connecticut

The Commonwealth Council of Educational Administration (CCEA) held its educational administration and management conference in the exotic city of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, August 10-24, 1996. Sponsored jointly with the Malaysian Council for Educational Administration and Institute Aminuddin Baki (IAB), the conference program was titled Indigenous Perspectives of Educational Management.

Over 500 professors and practitioners from more than 45 countries attended the six keynote addresses and over eighty paper sessions. Educators from England, Australia, the United States, Malaysia, and Canada presented keynote addresses with titles such as: Management Initiatives for the Periphery (William Cummings, SUNY Buffalo), The Third Watershed in Building Theories of Educational Administration (R. J. S. Macpherson, Australia), Preliminary Explorations of Indigenous Perspectives of Educational Management: The Evolving Malaysian Experience (Ibrahim Bajunid, Malaysia) and Producing Portraits of Educational Leaders: Cultural Relativism and Methodological Absolutism (Peter Ribbins, United Kingdom). Particularly refreshing were the many paper sessions and keynote addresses that discussed Hindu, Islamic, and Christian perspectives of educational leadership, topics that are rarely discussed in the U.S.

Especially engaging was an eloquent address by Hessein Alattas of the University of Malaysia titled Education, The Captive Mind, and the Will to Think. Alattas believes that the captive mind is not merely an uncritical and imitative mind, but it is "dominated by an external source, whose thinking is deflected away from an independent perspective." The National Institute of Educational Management and Leadership (IAB) will be publishing Alattas' book later this year.

Several UCEA members and U.S. professors presented papers including Greyson Noley, Phil Hallinger, William Poston, and Tom Halbert.

Conference participants were invited to attend several public and private schools, local universities and the National institute (IAB). IAB was a gracious host and in the evenings offered participants Malaysian regional cuisine and folk dancing. The CCEA Conference is held every four years and the next conference venue will be Tasmania, Australia in August, 2000.

UCEA Review readers may remember Phil Hallinger's article Culture and Leadership: Developing an International Perspective on Educational Administration (Spring 1995). In that article Hallinger discussed attending a conference at IAB in Malaysia that reminded him of the need for professors of educational administration to include a cultural perspective on leadership and administration as we develop our knowledge base for the profession. The CCEA conference provided a superb venue for examining this topic. For example, Peter Ribbins provided wonderful examples depicting the need for more studies of educational leaders that respect context and culture. He argued that traditional studies and reports about educational leaders do not contextualize what admin-

istrators say in the views of significant others (staff, pupils, parents, etc.) within the community of the school. Ideas such as Ribbins' emphasis on decontextualizing, Hallinger's focus on including a cultural perspective, and Alatta's discussion of the captive mind can help us clarify our thinking about educational leadership. Additionally, other ideas discussed at the CCEA conference may help to frame our research more adequately. An organization such as CCEA has much to offer U.S. professors of educational leadership.

CCEA is in the process of changing its name to the Commonwealth and International Council for Educational Management (CICEM). The new constitution for CICEM that was ratified in Malaysia includes changes in the governance structure. Rather than offering individual memberships, CICEM will now consist of membership by professional associations. Membership questions should be addressed to Angela Thody, CICEM President, International Educational and Management Centre, Lincoln University Campus, P. O. Box 182, Lincoln, LN2 4YF, England.

UCEA CONVENTION 1996

This year the University Council for Educational Administration will hold its tenth annual convention in Louisville, Kentucky. The convention takes place October 25-27 at the Galt House Hotel overlooking the Ohio River. This year's theme is "Reinventing Education: Retrospect and Prospect." The official opening of the convention takes place Friday at 3:00 p.m. with welcomes and the first invited address.

Terry A. Astuto will deliver the opening address of the tenth UCEA Convention. Astuto is professor of Educational Administration at New York University. She is past president of UCEA. Her presentation is titled "The Evolution of Educational Opportunity: Searching for Balance." **Edmund W. Gordon** will deliver the sixth Pennsylvania State University Mitstifer Lecture titled "Education and the Pursuit of Social Justice." Gordon is John M. Musser Professor of Psychology, Emeritus, Yale University and Distinguished Professor of Educational Psychology at City University of New York. He is also the director of the Institute for Research in the African Diaspora in the Americas and the Caribbean. **David C. Berliner** will give the Convention's closing address on Sunday morning. Berliner is Regents Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and Psychology in Education, as well as the past president of AERA and the Division of Educational Psychology of the American Psychological Association. He is also a fellow of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. His presentation is titled: "Dispelling the Myths: Getting out the Real Story of American Education."

Between sessions, convention participants can browse through the exhibit area where major publishers will have display tables and/or representatives available to answer questions. The exhibit area will open Saturday from 8:00 AM - 10:00 PM and again on Sunday from 7:30 - 10:30 AM. This is an excellent place to meet a colleague for a cup of coffee and a light snack.

world was not as he had expected it to be, even delighted with the chance to find his way into a new understanding. Now, Eisenhower was a very great general, who played a major role in winning a war that could be won. But those of us who are educators or educational administrators are not involved in a war that can be won, and we have to deal with the frustrations of not knowing what we are doing most of the time. As we work toward reform, therefore, we are feeling our way, if we have the courage to acknowledge it, into a reality that we haven't totally grasped. And yet we do have to act and we do have to advise. Somehow, we have to find the authority to ameliorate and persuade, and at the same time we have to convey the fact that we are not going to complete the task, that reform is an ongoing process, like recovery from alcoholism. This is easy, and past practices have made it harder. Educational institutions bear a great responsibility for teaching children that there are right answers and that those "in authority" already know them. All too often, children come to believe also that when they don't know the answers to a given set of questions it is their fault and they are going to fail. I have spent my life in educational settings — I am one of those addicted to the academy — but I have to admit to you that I still have exam dreams, and I will bet that a great many members of the UCEA do also. In my particular exam dream, I have discovered that I had registered for a course and completely forgotten about it, never shown up at all, and tomorrow is the exam. Now if I have embedded that deeply in my personality the conviction that it is humiliating and culpable not to be able to cough up appropriate answers on an exam, I am likely to have great difficulty admitting my own ignorance in other settings, or respecting those who admit theirs.

What does it mean to take away from people the illusion that they can know what they need to know? It means condemning them to an awareness of ambiguity and uncertainty. It means telling them that they are going to have to keep on learning, which is a terribly invasive thing to say, especially to people who have grown up thinking of education as a necessary short term unpleasantness. They are going to have to accept neighbors of different colors and customs. They are going to have to care about the access rights of handicapped people. And so on. They are going to have to learn, to be changed. How invasive can you get?

A commitment to lifelong learning and change as basic continuities might alleviate some of the polarization that has come to characterize this society. So often when we are trying to bring about change we buy into the demeaning rhetoric that suggests that if opponents disagree it represents a fundamental failure: You didn't learn. You fail, because you are ignorant, or possibly because you are evil. Even in the most divisive areas, like abortion, we need far more "common ground" type efforts, where instead of squaring off in confrontation, you look for ways to work and learn together. For example, Right to Life and Right to Choice advocates can work together to make sure that more women have access to contraception. That is a way to reduce both unwanted births and abortions, but it is not easy because it requires new learning and a suspended demand for finality: giving up the demonized image of the other side and working for what is, after all, only incremental change.

Another way of thinking about the discomfort of living in ambiguity and adjusting to constant learning is to reflect on familiar examples where we do so more or less successfully. Even if we hold the view that we ought to know the answers, we have all been in situations, often voluntarily, where we didn't know the answers and had to learn along the way. Indeed such situations are a necessary part of the human condition.

My favorite example is being a parent. You study. You read the books. You take the advice. But the fact is that when you bring an infant home from the hospital, this infant might as well be an immigrant from outer space. You are committed to someone unknown and constantly changing. There is no way you are going to do the right thing every time. Parenthood involves learning from day to day because this little critter changes. You think to yourself, "Well, in a couple of years, we will be able to talk and I will be able to explain things," but misunderstandings and surprises

continue. Being a parent — or being a grandparent, or parent-in-law or whatever it is — involves acting in uncertainty, sustaining a commitment to the unknown, and constant learning.

We are all going to face other situations, such as aging, where we find we don't even know our own bodies, we question basic aspects of our identity, and we don't know what is going to come next. We have to learn to deal with a great deal of uncertainty. With aging, we can either pretend it isn't happening and dye our hair, or we can say, "Well, it's a learning experience." So much of constancy, like the long plateau of adulthood, is an illusion, but what is clear is that there is no contradiction between the capacity to sustain commitments to persons or ideals and the willingness to continue learning.

Many situations of uncertainty can be rephrased as a kind of constancy: "I have always been the kind of person who likes to meet new people;" "I could spend my life learning new things;" "Life is like surfing, there is always another wave." These are ways of reframing so that instead of feeling you should know what you are doing, you focus on the process of learning as you go along.

Within the paradoxical relationship between continuity and change, it seems to me that learning and reform are both examples of change in the service of continuity, of adaptation to changes in the environment that makes survival possible. My father used to use the example of a tightrope walker far above the crowd, walking on a narrow wire and holding a long bamboo pole. As he or she walks, the constant adjustment of the pole is what preserves balance. This is an example of constant change in the service of a constancy: staying on that tightrope, not falling down. Now, if one were to take that bamboo pole and freeze the angle, what would happen? The tightrope walker would be unable to make the compensatory constant changes to maintain the necessary continuity of staying on that line. If the tightrope walker overadjusts, however, he or she runs the risk of steadily increasing oscillation getting out of control, and that could lead to a fall. You can make the same set of arguments about evolution, where you have adaptation in the service of survival.

Change in the service of continuity

We are talking here about a cybernetic system in which you achieve desired constancy by frequent corrections, by a necessary back and forth, a controlled oscillation. It is often pointed out that fashions in education seem to oscillate, at one time becoming more permissive, and at another time becoming more authoritarian. "Do we ever get anywhere," I am asked, "or is this just an endless pendulum.?" Some of the back and forth is surely on issues so fundamental to human relations that they are going to come up again and again, to be resolved anew by every generation. But oscillation is not necessarily a bad thing. Many of us manage pretty well going on a diet every couple of years, but for some people the oscillation of yo-yo dieting becomes too great or they fall into bulimia and anorexia or various kinds of bingeing.

Similarly, in education, some of the oscillations are part of the conversation that exists in society and keeps it healthy. The problem is whether those oscillations get out of control, whether we lose the capacity to self-correct and get into a regenerative feedback system. Of course there is going to be an oscillation between discipline and permissiveness and centralization and decentralization because we will never get it exactly right. The polarization of debate in this society is a sign that our capacity to self-correct is at risk, but oscillation in itself is not a bad thing.

Furthermore, I like to think, as we are dealing with these oscillations, that this recycling of old issues is more like a spiral than just a pendulum, in the sense that the context is different every time these issues are addressed. Institutional reform is a kind of learning. It isn't just the same thing being tried again and again. It is the same thing being tried in a new context, where it might be appropriate, for instance in a knowledge based economy, as well as where it is needed as a corrective for an earlier over correction. Oscillation is a constancy, the necessary process of system maintenance.

Much of the debate about continuity in this country is framed in terms of what are called "traditional values." Staying in balance on the tightrope is clearly a very basic value for the tightrope walker, just as a clarity of commitment to the service of God is important for the nun. Yet often the debate about traditional values proposes freezing the very mechanisms that allow adaptation. It is like those nuns' habits or the Hasidic garments that were appropriate in Eastern Europe and are so inappropriate under the Mediterranean sun. In other words, we are caught up in arguments about continuities at the wrong level of abstraction.

I want to suggest to you that it is critical at every stage to emphasize the constancy that underlies reform or change, and to regard much of what we do, including constant adjustment and adaptation, as part of a maintenance function, not something that will ever be done once and for all.

Mary Catherine Bateson is a cultural anthropologist who divides her time between teaching in Virginia and writing in New Hampshire. She is currently Clarence J. Robinson Professor in Virginia. Her books include Our Own Metaphor: A Personal Account of a Conference on the Effects of Conscious Purpose on Human Adaptation, With a Daughter's eye: A Memoir of Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, Composing a Life, and most recently, Peripheral Visions: Learning Along the Way. Collaborations include Angels Fear: Towards an Epistemology of the Sacred (with Gregory Bateson) and Thinking AIDS (with Richard Goldsby).

CONVENTION '96: "Looavull, Luhvul, Lewisville, Looaville, Looeyville, Louisville"

UCEA's 10th convention will be in Louisville, October 25-27, 1996, at the city's historic Galt House. The theme is *Reinventing Education: Retrospect and Prospect*. Paper sessions, debates and conversations, and two new formats, poster sessions and "Voices from the Field" have been scheduled. Program co-chairs are **Bruce G. Barnett** (U. of Northern Colorado) and **Mary E. Driscoll** (New York University).

The convention Planning Committee met at the Galt House in May to discuss Convention '96 details. The facility offers 1300 rooms, with over 600 suites, and 180,000 square feet of meeting space. Conveniently located on the Ohio River, and less than 15 minutes from the airport, it is a short walk or quick trolley ride to many attractions.

Louisville's selection of rich cultural attractions are unlike those found anywhere else in the world. Tourist favorites such as Louisville Science Center, the Louisville Slugger plant, Kentucky Center for the Arts, and the Actor's Theatre of Louisville line the streets. Providing a glimpse of life on the river during Mark Twain's time as well as a spectacular view of the Louisville skyline, is the *Belle of Louisville*, the oldest operating Mississippi-style sternwheeler in existence today. The Falls of the Ohio Interpretive Center, and the 220 acres of naturally exposed fossil beds it overlooks, offer a rare look back at life more than 400 million years ago. The Cathedral of the Assumption, the third oldest Cathedral in the United States, features one of America's few remaining hand-painted stained glass windows. The Kentucky Derby and Churchill Downs contains the largest equine museum in the world. And with more than 2,500 restaurants ranging from fine to funky, it's no wonder that it's been said that, per capita, more Louisvillians eat out than any other city in the world.

UCEA WELCOMES TWO NEW PROGRAM CENTERS

At its June meeting, the UCEA Executive Committee approved the establishment of two new program centers, bringing the number to ten. The concept of the program center was born in the early 1980s when declining UCEA income had all but eliminated program activity. Program centers are directed at a focal problem, issue, or need facing the profession. One or more universities commit resources to coordinating the identified task, often serving as a resource, research, and dissemination center, all in one, and with the help of the UCEA central staff when possible. For most of its history, M. Scott Norton (Arizona State University) has acted to coordinate the centers, including their periodic evaluations and the effort to identify new focal topics. With the move to Missouri, associate director Richard V. Hatley will join Norton in the effort to serve the centers better and give their work the attention they deserve.

The two new centers are The UCEA Center for the Study of Leadership in Urban Schools, and The UCEA Center for the Study of Leadership and Ethics.

The Center for the Study of Leadership will be hosted by the University of Houston. Directed by Professor Larry Hughes, the Center will conduct research on complex problems of urban education, facilitate communication among researchers sharing this interest, foster collaborations among like-minded private and government institutions, and help prepare leaders with a particular focus on urban education. Other Houston faculty who will be a part of the Center's activity are Lianne Brouillette, Douglas Hermond, Richard Hooker, and Cynthia Norris.

The Center for the Study of Leadership and Ethics will be a joint effort by the University of Virginia and the Ontario Institute for the Study of Education (University of Toronto). The Center will be directed by Margaret Grogan of Virginia. The purpose of the Center is to better understand the role of ethics and values in the practice of leadership and administration in schools, and to use this understanding to develop and disseminate instructional materials that may be useful for the preparation and or school leaders and their professional development. Grogan will be joined by Eric Bredo, Daniel Duke, Herbert Richards (University of Virginia) and Paul Begley, Elizabeth Campbell, Kenneth Leithwood, and James Ryan (OISE).

New from the Oregon School Study Council **Block Scheduling in High Schools** by Karen Irmsher

The author combines knowledge from the literature with insights from interviews of educators at 15 high schools that have adopted--and in one case, later abandoned--block schedules. (57 pages)

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SCHEDULE OF COMING EVENTS

SUBMITTING ARTICLES
FOR THE *UCEA REVIEW*

Diana G. Pounder (U. of Utah) is feature editor for the *UCEA Review*. If you have suggestions for the Review, or ideas for substantive feature articles, she would be happy to hear from you.

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**October 23-24 UCEA Executive Committee
(Louisville, Kentucky: Galt House Hotel)**

**October 24-25 UCEA Plenum
(Louisville, Kentucky: Galt House Hotel)**

**October 25, 27 Graduate Student Symposium
(Louisville, Kentucky: Galt House Hotel)**

**October 25-27 UCEA Convention '96
(Louisville, Kentucky: Galt House Hotel)**

November TBA Convention '97 Planning (Orlando, FL)

April 24-28 AERA, Chicago, IL



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