

Humanities

#3

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Greece As Metaphor

Change and Conflict For Seventh-Graders

"The Egyptians," wrote Holden Caulfield on a final exam that helped flunk him out of Pencey Prep,

are extremely interesting to us today for various reasons. Modern science would still like to know what the secret ingredients were that the Egyptians used when they wrapped up dead people so that their faces would not rot for innumerable centuries.

So did the anti-hero of *Catcher in the Rye* sum up one of man's most successful civilizations. In 1951, when Salinger published the novel, a kindly teacher might have described Caulfield as "lacking in academic aptitude." A less kindly colleague might have characterized him as just plain stupid, and Holden himself assured his regretful prof that "I was a real moron, and all that stuff."

No more; *stupid* has been dropped from the educator's lexicon and even *lacking in academic aptitude* brings raised eyebrows these days. This is the heyday of *relevance*, and if a student can remember nothing more about the Egyptians than their pre-eminence in mummy-making, the approved judgment is that "He does not find the Egyptians relevant to his experience or future life."

Despite all the guff, relevance does, indeed, have a good deal to be said for it. What a student studies *should* bear some relationship to his present and future life, but—particularly in the humanities, as Dr. Charles Frankel points out in this issue—educators frequently beg the question about such relationships with a host of pieties. "Enduring monuments of man's intellect," "transmission of values," "becoming well-rounded" and all the rest *sound* right—but this stuffy litany increasingly fails to convince a skeptical generation which, after surveying a tradition of liberal education that began around the time of Socrates, pensively hitches up its bell-bottoms and asks, "So what?"

Partly in an effort to answer so what, the National Endowment for the Humanities has financed development of a 12-week unit on Athens and Sparta for seventh-graders. The nearly finished product, already

tested once and to be tested again this fall in nine Massachusetts and New York classrooms, is the work of Dr. Erich Gruen, a University of California historian, and the Education Development Center in Cambridge, Mass.

It is as relevant as any ADS-er could wish—not because it twists history into the shape of 1970 headlines, but because the history of Athens and Sparta in the 5th century B.C. bears a genuine resemblance to our times.

On a superficial level, that resemblance stems from the political character and history of the antagonists. Sparta was a tightly controlled, closed society; its legendary (he may never have existed at all) lawgiver, Lycurgus, divided the land equally among the citizens, banned the use of silver and gold, kept rule in the hands of a small minority, and forbade foreign travel to guard against the introduction of "dangerous" ideas. Athens was a free-enterprise city and as pure a republic as ever existed this side of anarchy: every male citizen not only had the right to speak out in the governing assembly, but was suspect if he did not occasionally do so. "We do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics is a man who minds his own business," Pericles told his fellow Athenians; "we say that he has no business here at all." Just as Russia and the United States overlooked their political differences in World War II to join forces against Hitler's Germany, so did democratic Athens and oligarchic Sparta unite in 480 B.C. to turn back the mightiest military machine of their time: Xerxes' Persia. And after the war, just as the Soviet Union and the U.S. lined up opposing blocs of nations through mutual-defense treaties, so Athens and Sparta formed two coalitions of allied Greek states. The cold war is at least 2,500 years old.

On a much more profound level, however, the events leading to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War in 431 B.C., the war itself and its aftermath are relevant to modern times because they reflect the themes of domestic as well as international conflict and change. Both Athens and Sparta were at the height of their power, and though they differed drastically, both represented valued parts of the Greek ideal. The war changed both, making Sparta much less repressive and Athens much more so: it was only five years after peace came that

the Athenian elders sentenced Socrates to drink the hemlock. The confrontation between Athens and Sparta, writes Dr. Gruen in an outline of the course, "was only in part a military contest. On a more important level, it was a clash of fundamental values and goals."

It is this kind of contest that interested Dr. Gruen and the Education Development Center when they determined to develop an introduction to Greek civilization that would be much more than a history course. In fact, reports Peter Dow, director of EDC's social studies curriculum program, the Athens-Sparta unit is hardly a history course at all.

A typical history course would try simply to convey what happened in the Peloponnesian War. This course is really about social change and the place of warfare in changing social values; it sets up a comparison of two societies in transition and then examines their confrontation.

Ideally, a unit of this kind is primarily a course in human behavior, and only secondarily a case study of Sparta and Athens. But we use them as a kind of metaphor for looking at our own times.

Constructing that metaphor begins, in EDC's unit, with a look at education—which Dr. Gruen regards as the most accurate expression of any society's aspirations. What kind of people does a nation want its children to become? The answer is best found not in schools or books, but in the character of the men whom a society designates as its heroes, the *exempla* who represent what a people thinks is excellent.

In the case of Greece, those heroes were preeminently Achilles and Odysseus. Homer, for better or worse (Plato thought for worse), was the principal educator of Greece; schoolboys were required to memorize portions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which "carried weight and authority comparable to that which a later era found in the Bible." The *Iliad* stresses military valor and the craving for distinction; Achilles expresses this ideal in his choice of fame and an early death rather than comparative obscurity and a long life. Odysseus, on the other hand, added intelligence, resourcefulness—a kind of noble cunning—to his courage in war.

All of this, together with the "conflict and change in social values" theme, may sound like heavy going for seventh-graders. Another major emphasis in the EDC unit, however, is the use of primary sources: Homer, Thucydides, Xenophon, Plutarch, Plato. The Greeks speak for themselves, and because their finest writers and thinkers were men with an eye for detail and succinct formulation, Grecian heroes rise from the centuries and stand again fresh and contemporary in a seventh-grade classroom as ever they stood in battle or debate:

Achilles seeks Hector

As inhuman fire sweeps on in fury through the deep angles of a drywood mountain and sets ablaze the depth of the timber and the blustering wind lashes the flame along, so Achilles swept everywhere with his spear like something more than a mortal . . . But brilliant Achilles kept shaking his head at his

own people and would not let them throw their bitter projectiles at Hector, for fear the thrower might win the glory and himself come second. But when for the fourth time they had come around to the well-spring, then the Father balanced golden scales, and in them he set two fateful portions of death, which lays men prostrate, one for Achilles and one for Hector, breaker of horses, and balanced it by the middle; and Hector's death-day was heavier.

Odysseus and his companions blind the Cyclops

Some great divinity breathed courage into us. They seized the beam of olive, sharp at the end, and leaned on it into the eye, while I from above leaning my weight on it twirled it, like a man with a brace-and-bit who bores into a ship timber, and his men from underneath, grasping the strap on either side, whirl it, and it bites resolutely deeper . . . the blood boiled around the hot point, so that the blast and scorch of the burning ball singed all his eyebrows and eyelids, and the fire made the roots of his eyes crackle.

Xenophon on Spartan training

When they were in the field, their exercises were generally more moderate, their fare not so hard, nor so strict a hand held over them by their officers, so that they were the only people in the world to whom war gave repose.

Pericles on his fellow Athenians

Our love of what is beautiful does not lead to extravagance; our love of the things of the mind does not make us soft. We regard wealth as something to be properly used, rather than as something to boast about. As for poverty, no one need to be ashamed to admit it; the real shame is in not taking practical measures to escape from it.

Socrates opens his defense

I do not know what effect my accusers have had upon you, gentlemen, but for my own part I was almost carried away by them; their arguments were so convincing. On the other hand, scarcely a word of what they said was true.

So spoke the Greeks and so can they speak now, given intelligent treatment by text and teacher. The EDC text is much more than a series of excerpts; it uses selections such as those cited above not as examples of literary excellence or philosophic insight alone, but as interrelated incidents and commentary that carry forward the narrative of the Peloponnesian War: what happened, why it happened, and the difference it made to the people engaged in it. Such abstractions as *The Greek ideal*, *democracy*, *oligarchy*—frequently vague even to college students—are easier to understand, EDC believes, when they are related to memorable individuals and to concrete, highly charged situations. The EDC unit will further enliven readings through the use of Grecian art, slides and filmstrips, and roleplaying situations in which, for example, students will assume the identity of Athenian or Spartan leaders to argue out military strategies or alternate diplomatic policies.

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Grant Profiles

Walking on History

The Kecoughtan Indians had a good thing going with their settlement just off the Atlantic Ocean back in the early 17th century: long-established clearings and well laid-out homes at the tip of a peninsula—a sheltered location that would serve handsomely as an anchorage. In fact, the English decided, the place was so convenient that it really should belong to the Crown. And so, in 1607, they evicted the original tenants and founded Hampton.

Hampton, Virginia—today a city of 125,000—is America's oldest, continuous English-speaking community, and a lot of Colonial, Revolutionary, War-of-1812 and Civil War history lies beneath its streets. Trouble is, urban renewal has caught up with history: 119 acres of the city's core have been designated for redevelopment, and the bulldozers threaten, in the words of Rufus B. Easter, Jr., to "grind up the past as they grade for road beds."

But Easter, executive director of the Hampton Association for the Arts and Humanities, is a man to be reckoned with. Arguing that the excavations necessary for redevelopment offered the city a "once-in-forever" chance to probe and salvage its beginnings, he rallied a group of volunteers ranging from teenagers to senior citizens behind *Buried Treasure*, a project designed to build community spirit through a blend of elbow-grease and archaeology.

With the support of the area's five colleges, the advice of antiquarians from Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Richmond, the indulgence of a sympathetic contractor and modest financing from the city, Easter set up courses in the techniques of archaeology and mustered a crew of amateurs to do everything from research to digging to cataloguing what they find in the mud below Hampton's sea-level streets. But he realized early in the project that *Buried Treasure* required a full-time professional archaeologist to supervise the spade-work and assess the results.

Feeling that *Buried Treasure* would not only contribute to the nation's understanding of its past, but would also unify a significant portion of Hampton's black and white, young and old, prominent and obscure citizens in a single effort to preserve their common heritage, NEH awarded the Hampton Association a

grant of \$50,000. With this new financing, Easter has been able to engage the full-time help he needs—excavators, clerical help, a photographer, an artist and, most important, Joseph Benthall, a young archaeologist with extensive experience in supervising digs in the southeastern states.

Old Hampton will never displace the nearby "historical triangle" in importance, Easter concedes, yet "it seems a missed adventure in education for all school trips to end up in Jamestown, Yorktown, or Williamsburg when the children are walking all over artifacts of the same periods of Colonial history whenever they come downtown."

Voodoo in Arizona

Most Americans remember Rip van Winkle and his trip into the Catskills, where he ran across little men bowling, had a drink with them, then fell asleep for 20 years. But not many know that in 1496, Erasmus recounted the story of the Greek Epimenides, who slept for 56 years; nor of the seven Christians fleeing persecution by the Roman emperor Decius who fell asleep in a cave for 360 years; that the Babylonian Talmud has a story about a teacher named Honi the Circle-Drawer, who falls asleep for 70 years; or that the Chinese have a legend about Wang Chih, who encounters some elders playing chess in a mountain grotto and then falls asleep, not to return for centuries.

The recurrence of certain distinctive tales and customs down the centuries and in widely separated places indicates, according to Dr. Byrd Granger of the University of Arizona, that men are more alike than they are different. It occurred to her and to UA colleague Dr. Charles Davis that this insight might moderate some of the ethnic animosities that operate in Arizona's multi-cultural (Chicano, Anglo, Indian, Black) classrooms. More importantly, they felt that by giving dignity to legends and practices still held or remembered by the students' elders, folklore might help overcome the sense of cultural inferiority which, many educators believe, contributes to the poor scholastic performance of a disproportionate number of minority children.

With NEH backing, Drs. Granger and Davis organized a Folklore Institute to train 15 junior-high teachers

in the classroom use of folklore. The five-week session embraced *rites of passage* (ancient and modern rituals accompanying birth, the arrival of puberty, marriage and death), superstitions (why are black cats bad, but not black dogs?), folk-concepts of heroes from Prometheus through Pancho Villa, and such arcane practices as voodoo, white magic, and protecting oneself from werewolves.

In September, this small cadre tried out folklore on their students—and couldn't get them to stop talking about it. A new teacher on a Navajo reservation got more response from her suspicious charges "than teachers who have been there a decade." Children who had been embarrassed by their grandparents' eccentricities—particularly in the face of Anglo *respectability*—returned to class brimming with legends, proverbs, magic charms and formulas for curing illness. An Italian boy previously reticent about his background brought in an amulet that had been hung around his neck as a baby to ward off the *evil eye*, and found himself the hit of the class.

The educational results of the experiment in strict terms of improved pupil achievement are mixed: some kids suddenly began to talk and write, others didn't. But all groups showed an improved respect for persons of other ethnic backgrounds, and whatever the tests show, the participating teachers—in math and science as well as in English and social studies—are uniformly enthusiastic about using folklore to perk up children who once threatened to drop out as effectively (and in much the same way) as old Rip.

Toward *Eco-Community*

While teaching environmental design at the University of Hawaii, architect Robert C. Gay found himself increasingly nagged by the idea that he was perpetuating the *status quo*: helping students understand how today's American cities and suburbs operate, rather than how they *should* operate. Yet present practices, he believes, frequently represent "highly irresponsible interference with man's life-supporting eco-system."

The damage goes beyond such catastrophes as the Santa Barbara oil-spill or the sun-darkening emissions from factory chimneys. It includes our TV-dinner, no-deposit-no-return approach to cuisine, which heaps our dumps with unburnable trash; our agricultural chemicals which, while making our lawns greener and rhubarb redder, seep slowly into the water-table, surfacing somewhere else as DDT-laden pasture for cattle; and, of course, the ethyl-bearing cloud hanging over our expressways. Finally, *environmental damage* includes the job mobility of a big-corporation, big-government economy that transfers families from one state to another every few years, robbing them and their children of the deep friendships and community identification that used to develop in the days when everybody tended to stay put.

In the course of a wide-ranging education that led him into lumbering, surveying, cattle-raising, construction, computer-programming, a *summa cum laude* degree in architecture at the University of California and election to Phi Beta Kappa, Gay had roughed out 15 *idea-capsules* on the design of a new *eco-community* that would concern itself with every aspect of environment from food-packaging to home-design to community size. Trouble was, he needed some time off to read, discuss, stare at the wall and otherwise refine those ideas.

He now has time, in the form of a seven-month Younger Humanist Fellowship from NEH. Gay expects this sabbatical to help him produce two books: the first a carefully reasoned, thoroughly documented treatment for sociologists, architects, city-planners and others with a professional interest in environment; the second, a layman's volume aimed at those harassed, middle-aged Americans who are beginning to wonder if the kids have something in all this talk about *new life-styles*.

Gay's tentative blueprint calls for a community consisting of a voluntary group of 20 to 50 persons . . . large enough to afford diversity, but small enough to permit its members to know each other well. They would make a conscious effort to redefine "the good life in terms of less consumption" and to exercise discretion in their use of resources (e.g., land, automobiles) to prevent further damage to our over-taxed life-support system.

Though not central to *Eco-Community*, one of Gay's most provocative ideas is for *financially moderate living*, that would permit annual family savings of about \$4,000. In 15 years at 6 percent, Gay figures, this investment would yield an estate of \$100,000, "freeing the executive drop-out from the necessity of employment for the rest of his life."

Right on, brother. And hurry up.



If you would like more detailed information about any of the grants described in this issue, write Office of Public Information, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D. C. 20506.

It has long been held that a major function of the humanities is to teach values. In the following excerpts of a speech originally delivered to the Department of Elementary School Principals of the National Education Association in Las Vegas, Dr. Charles Frankel, professor of philosophy at Columbia University, argues that such solemn phrases are helping to kill the humanities, and that it is as much their function to unteach values as to pass them on intact.



On Killing the Humanities



Even though it is slightly implausible, it is quite right, in a way, that we should be meeting in Las Vegas to talk about the 'humanities. This place illustrates some of the humanities' central themes—sin, pride, the Greek idea of the tragic fate that befalls those who don't recognize their limits, the Christian idea that the faithful are always deserving of one more chance. I wish that the humanities in the country at large were in as good condition as the activities for which this city is celebrated. Unfortunately, their situation is just the reverse. Many people talk against gaming and gaudy women, but that's because they recognize how tempting they are. I wish people talked against the humanities similarly. It would prove that at least they found the humanities tempting.

The fact is that many of those who claim to be defenders of the humanities are helping to kill them. They speak of them in solemn phrases that would lead any intelligent child to suppose that they have nothing to do with gaming and gaudy women. But of course they do—and with blood, death, passion, folly, and all the other things which, as someone once remarked, make life worth living. Listening to ponderous utterances such as that the humanities *teach values* and must be restored to their place in the schools because they help people learn how to live better, one would never guess that the Old Testament is full of stories of fratricide, sodomy, and fanatical warfare; that the Odyssey is the celebration of the triumphs of a villainously tricky and selfish hero; or that the Greek plays are accounts of demon-ridden men and women.

Stendhal, Lord Byron, Dostoevsky, Kafka, Joyce, Vladimir Nabokov—whatever these men teach, it isn't goodness in the ordinary genteel sense of the word. I don't say that the humanities do *not* teach values; I shall return to this point a little later on. But if the humanities were as dull as the praises of them sung by those who say that it is their function to *teach values*, they wouldn't have a chance to compete for human attention. Fortunately, they do compete, provided teachers don't take the life out of them, provided they don't expurgate and bowdlerize them so that they teach only the sweet and gentle truths which, according to tradition, are proper to the school room.

Very few of the great works of art or literature or history or philosophy which we call the humanities were written to be taught in school. The first humanistic revolution in the schools is to teach the humanities as though they told tales out of school which is, of course, what they actually do. In 1964, the Com-

mission on the Humanities said, "Without major efforts in all the schools of every state the status and influence of the humanities in the schools will inevitably decline in the years ahead." They will decline, I am convinced, if we continue to treat them as we have treated them. They will decline if we take the humanity, the human beings out of them; if we try to break them down into bits of comforting politeness or little globules of safe, treasured wisdom passed on from age to age. . . .

Why should there be a humanistic revolution in the schools? And what should be its character? I think the beginning of an answer to these questions is obviously to look at the present situation of American society and American culture. . . .

We live in a remorselessly busy culture that knows it is wasting a good deal of time. We live in a society in which most people who have "made it" simply don't have the time to do the things they think they ought to do and want to do. We live in a society that is as successful, I suppose, as any that has ever existed. And yet this successful society is one which is being rejected by its children because they don't like its conception of success.

Those of you who have seen the film, *The Graduate*, will know what I mean. It is the story of a young man who graduates from college, and the best advice his father's friend can give him is expressed in one word, *plastics*. *Go into plastics*. Strangely enough, this culture of ours has, over the last 10 or 15 years, witnessed an immense explosion of interest in the arts, in music, and the like. All through our country, people are playing and singing in music groups and combos. More people participate in painting and in music in our country than anywhere else in the world. People spend quantities of money on records. A reasonable amount is spent on books—good books. And yet, despite these things, we have a society where public ugliness runs riot, a society that has already destroyed the extraordinary beauty of a large part of this continent and seems intent on destroying the rest. We live in cities as sophisticated as any the world has ever seen, but it is necessary for the city dwellers to walk through these cities with their eyes turned inwards so as not to see the ugliness. We live in a society so wealthy that for most of us the great nagging problem is not to eat too much—and yet in this society we have inexcusable and avoidable poverty. These are matters which disturb our young men and women, and if these products of our schools were to emerge undisturbed by such phenomena,

I would, indeed, worry about our schools. . . .

The situation I have described is essentially a situation in which we have not brought means and ends together. It's a situation in which we know all about how to do a thousand and one things, but we haven't quite yet decided what things are worth doing. What is our machinery for? What can the elementary schools do to deal with this problem? Obviously, they can't change the state of this country by themselves. Education is sometimes treated as the wastebasket of society. Whenever there are problems and no one knows the answers, there are people who say: "It's the schools' problem; let the schools handle it." I don't think the schools can solve the problems we have. They can make a contribution, but that's all. I do think, however, that teachers and principals can try to do something that is simple and direct. They can try to give students in their formative years what the students will need in order to live in a world of the kind I've described.

What do the students need? What do the humanities teach them which, to my mind, they do need?

First of all, when we say that the humanities teach values, I would suggest that it is just as much their function to *unteach* values. Why should we say, with no qualification, that the humanities teach values? What values? Whose values? Plato's or Aristotle's? John Bunyan's or Beaudelaire's? Voltaire's or D. H. Lawrence's? Literature, philosophy, history do, indeed, expose students to a wide variety of human perspectives. But they teach no single lesson, and they exemplify not a consensus on values but rather great disagreement. . . .

To the children growing up today, change—accelerating change—variety, heterogeneity, mobility, these are going to be the everyday facts of life for them as they are becoming increasingly facts of life for us. The world in which they are going to live will be a world in which values are *loose*. The point, therefore, the moral point, is to develop in our students the kind of urbanity that can allow them to live in such a world, put up with it, make sense of it. They have to have a willingness to recognize and to like their own native accent while recognizing and sympathizing with the accents of others. I know of no better way to do this than through the humanities.

What is the second thing the humanities teach? I think the humanities teach the necessity for choice. The very fact that there are so many great artists and writers who have held radically different views of the world teaches one lesson—you can't be everything, you can't do everything. Every choice you make has a price and involves rejecting something else. I have never cottoned to the Puritans. I have always had some sympathy with H. L. Mencken's definition of a Puritan—a man who has a sinking feeling that somebody somewhere is having fun. But just the same the Puritan had one very great moral insight. That insight is that the satisfactory life is an athletic life. It's a life lived on a regimen. It's a life in which a decision to be or do something is implemented by a refusal to be or do many other things.

Third, the humanities teach the value of time. They teach human mortality. I've often thought that most of

the studies of what TV does to the young are somewhat beside the point. I myself rather suspect that TV has a most evil effect on young people, although there are those who would argue with me. But beyond its effects—violence, cigarette-smoking, what have you—there is one simple way in which TV, beyond argument, does damage. The modern college student in America is coming to college having spent an average of 25,000 to 50,000 hours of life looking at TV. I can't prove, perhaps, that it's *hurt* him—but he certainly has wasted time. That's a lot of days in a person's life. A lot of absolutely forgettable things have passed in front of his eyes.

Now what do the humanities do? They give you good books, first-rate music, great debates over the ideas that define the purposes of human life. They give you an excitement that stays with you, that you live with, and live on. They give you something you can collect and recollect and go back to. That's time well spent; it's emotional capital in the bank. The humanities are harder; of course, they're harder. They take more time and more investment of personal energy. Things which are noblest and most valuable are always most arduous. But what the humanities can teach is the sense of the value of time, and the value of discrimination.

Fourth, the humanities teach continuity. In a world of whirling changes, they give the individual a sense that he has a base, a sense that these things have happened before, to other people. He is not, after all, the first. Antigone and Creon fought out some of the issues that are being fought out today and which are taken to indicate the existence of an unprecedented "generation gap." When I went back to Columbia last fall after an absence of three years, I offered a new course called *Philosophy and Public Affairs*. Its content was contemporary, but the reading that provided a framework to the whole course was Plato's *Protagoras*. And I think by the end of the course most of the students thought that all the propaganda being handed out by the warring factions on the Columbia campus was a lot more *irrelevant* than Plato. What they got from reading him was at the very least a sense of proportion and a sense of humor. What's most disturbing about some of the present generation, and what seems to me to make their politics dangerous, is that they do lack a sense of proportion and a sense of humor. Perhaps it comes from having stared too hard and too long at the boob tube. . . .

The next thing that I think the humanities teaches—and we mustn't be too solemn about them—is the remarkable contrast between man's spirit and his material nature. George Santayana summarized Aristotle's philosophy by saying, "In Aristotle everything ideal has a natural basis and everything natural has an ideal fulfillment." That, I think, is the theme on which the greatest humanistic literature always plays. Comedy usually takes a man who has lost himself in some image or dream and runs him down to earth. Tragedy, on the other hand, is usually the story of men and women who nobly have tried to triumph over a human limitation. All of us need this tragi-comic sense of human life to sustain us. The churches don't have the power

they once did; the neighborhood community doesn't. The schools have to lean now on this immense treasure of human experience to help sustain youngsters.

But, finally, what is it the humanities teach? What they teach, I think, is activity. It's the joy of taking on what's difficult and arduous. If young people can be excited about our astronauts, as they should be, they certainly ought to be excited by those who have voyaged in the vast spaces of the human spirit. It's hard work, but that work is the joy. In the end, indeed, I think the humanities do *not* teach, really. They do something deeper. They exercise our emotions, they discipline them, they give us patterns of excellence against which we can measure our own achievements. They do not teach except in the deepest sense of teaching. They ask questions.

I belong to a discipline—philosophy—which has existed for 2,500 years. The questions were first asked by Plato. Very few of them have been answered to the satisfaction of philosophers in the 2,500 years since. That doesn't make the discipline a failure: it makes it a success. It explains its rapture, its excitement. It explains why men keep coming back to it. We come back to it because we don't only want answers. We want to know the liberating questions. We want to look beyond the answers to the mysteries. And that sense of mystery, of something unfulfilled, is what I think we can transmit to the young. Indeed, they are full of it themselves if only we build upon it.

And so I would call upon school principals to talk about a humanistic revolution in the elementary schools. We need it badly. But I would offer just one word of warning about it. Humanism, to be sure, does consist in increasing the amount of time given to the study of literature and fine arts, music, history and philosophy. But the humanities are just as much *a way of teaching*

any subject as they are *the teaching of a specific subject*. The sciences can be humanities. They are achievements, constructions of the human mind; they are achievements of particular people in history. And they can be taught humanistically.

Newton saw an apple fall from a tree and his mind leaped like a poet's in a metaphor. He asked whether the laws that explain the motion of the apple's falling are the same as the motions that keep the heavenly bodies circling the earth. To move from an apple to the stars is quite a leap. We don't have to make this leap for ourselves because it was done for us by the poetry of science; but you can help students to see the poetry in science. And you can teach mathematics in a humanistic way, and grammar, too. What is the subjunctive mood? It expresses a mood, a human emotion, a way of looking at the world. We can teach words in a humanistic way. "What is the matter?" we ask. But matter and mater and mother all have the same roots. Use your dictionaries. Recall your Latin. Teach your own language in terms of its human roots. Every word comes suffused with historical associations and with human emotions. . . .

The biggest problem in creating a humanistic revolution is, of course, to revolutionize the teachers, and that, in turn, depends upon revolutionizing the principals. Jerome Bruner said, "Any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child in any stage of development." But he left out one big presupposition. Can a subject be taught effectively to any *adult*, even school teachers and school principals, at any state of development? Whether our country will recover its educational soul depends very much on how our educators value the humanities, or can learn to value them.



(GREECE continued from page 2)

Athens and Sparta is the second of a projected, multi-unit series for seventh-graders that will cover the development of Western man from the Babylonians to the mid-16th century. In keeping with EDC's *teaching strategy* of examining perennially important questions through specific situations or the confrontation of significant individuals, the titles suggest a slice of historical action frozen in time, e.g., *Fiefman and Cathedral*, *Lorenzo and Savonarola*, *Henry VIII and Sir Thomas More*.

Dow expects that *Athens and Sparta* will be tested, further revised, and ready for publication by February 1. He hopes that the publisher chosen will finance workshops to train teachers in the proper use of the unit. The text and accompanying materials are not a *teacher-proof* program designed simply to be handed to students; their effectiveness will be greatly enhanced by the teacher's personal injection of creativity.

Whether the unit helps students remember who Alcibiades and Cleon were or to locate the Piraeus on the map is to some degree beside the point; the principal thrust of *Athens and Sparta* is to help students understand how differing national characters emerge, and the changes that can result when contrasting views

of life finally clash.

Understanding that kind of clash and its effects on social institutions is important to students in any time. The EDC unit tries to bring that ancient quarrel and its participants to life—but not, as Dr. Gruen writes in his outline, by trying to give the 5th century B.C. a false note of 20th century currency:

The obsession with relevance is an attitude that requires no encouragement from the schools. History stands on its own merits, without artificial contrivances to bring it into conformity with the present. When it lacks authenticity, it loses all force. Students, fortunately, are swift to detect and to reject manipulation by scholars or by curriculum-designers.

The lessons of history are manifold. They disclose not only the similarities with the present, but the differences. And the latter are no less *relevant* than the former. It is instructive that other states at other times encountered problems and suffered conflicts similar to our own. It is equally instructive that their solutions need not be ours, that the consequences of their actions can inform but do not determine our decisions. If lessons are to be drawn, they can come only from an honest reconstruction of the past.

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DEADLINES FOR APPLICATIONS FOR FISCAL 1971

NOTE: A new, detailed Humanities Endowment Program Announcement will be printed and distributed soon; meanwhile, this summary of deadlines may be useful to prospective applicants.

Applications due no later than:

EDUCATION

*For action by March 1971	November 16, 1970
For action by June 1971	February 1, 1971
For action by August 1971	April 19, 1971

PUBLIC

Museum Personnel Development to be conducted between July 1971 and July 1972	November 15, 1970
Others: for action by March 1971	November 2, 1970
Others: for action by August 1971	April 1, 1971

RESEARCH

For action by March 1971	November 2, 1970
For action by June 1971	February 1, 1971

FELLOWSHIPS

Fellowships and summer stipends for younger humanists—Action by March 1971	October 26, 1970
Senior fellowships—Action by March 1971	October 19, 1970
Fellowships in selected fields—Action by March 1971	Institutional nominations by January 11, 1971
Faculty Development Grants—Action by March 1971	November 30, 1970

*Action means notification by the Endowment to applicant