

Oregon's 'Talent Loss' Topic Of Study at Monmouth School

Editor's note: This is another in a series of articles on research and public-service activities of the state's tax-supported colleges and university. It was written for the state system of higher education by Mrs. Wilma Morrison, long-time Oregon education reporter.

By WILMA MORRISON
If 1,200 students in five Willamette valley high schools constitute a sampling, Oregon has as many capable youngsters who do not plan on college as do.

The statistical evidence in Oregon of the "talent loss" that has become a matter of national concern, is a by-product of a two-year study at Oregon College of Education in Monmouth.

Another by-product of even more significance to parents and educators, is the overwhelming evidence that it is the family pattern far more than the school that determines the child's attitude toward learning — and college.

Also shown by the tests and interviews is the fact that almost twice as many bright girls as bright boys see little value in training beyond high school.

Project Launched
The OCE research project, conceived and directed by Dr. Jack V. Edling, was launched one year ago under a \$60,000 National Defense Education Act grant. It is an attempt to find out whether some of the Madison Avenue advertising techniques that whet the public appetite for deep freezes and tail fins, could be used by schools to inspire children who don't want to learn.

The focus of the study has been narrowed to one area — the attitude of students toward college. In this case, college is broadly defined to mean college or any kind of technical schooling beyond high school. "College-capable" has also been broadly defined to include those above the 100 IQ median.

Dr. Edling's idea: that where the school has a group of children who are indifferent or opposed to a subject or concept, some kind of deliberate audio-visual appeal to whatever the child's goals or interests are — however trivial — might serve to motivate them.

Shapes Advertising
This is the approach that under the name "motivational research," now shapes the advertising campaigns, and the buying habits, of the country.

The first job is to identify the "market" to be sold — in this case, the group of youngsters who are able to profit from education beyond the high school, but who do not want it, or at least, are not making any effort to get it.

The OCE study proposes to examine, through tests and interviews, the background, attitudes and interests of 5,000 Willamette valley high school students. The end product will be two films designed to appeal to what the staff determines to be the distinctive characteristics of the group of college-capable children who are indifferent about college.

"If we asked 100 professional firms to prepare films that would influence children to go to college, we would get 100 different emphases," Dr. Edling said. "We think that the contributions of psychology and behavioral sciences

generally, can narrow down the appeals to a few specific ones that will have an effect on those we want to reach."

Findings Offer Evidence
Whether the films that will later be designed from the motivational research findings will be demonstrably effective when tested by comparison with control groups, Dr. Edling can't prophesy. His findings, however, already offer evidence that there are pronounced and distinctive characteristics common to the group of college-capable, college-indifferent children.

The 1,200 youngsters whose tests and interviews have been recorded thus far are from Clackamas, Woodburn, Milwaukie, Lebanon and North Salem high schools.

They have been divided into four categories: (1) Those who are capable of education beyond high school and who intend to go on either to college or into technical school — about 30 per cent. (2) Those who are capable but do not intend further schooling — about 30 per cent. (3) Those who, on basis of intelligence scores, do not have necessary college aptitude and who do not plan further education — 30 per cent. (4) Those who do not have the aptitude but who say they intend to go to college — 10 per cent.

Group 2 is the one the OCE experiment is concentrating on.

Range of Intelligence
The range of intelligence as shown on IQ tests is about the same in groups 1 and 2. It runs from 101 (about average) to 145 (very superior). There are just as many superior and very superior IQ scores among the Group 2 youngsters, Dr. Edling said, as among Group 1, those who intend to go to college.

There are almost twice as many girls as boys in Group 2. The Group 2 children come from larger families and report greater financial blocks to schooling. But, Dr. Edling said, their answers show that money is not by any means the only, or even the chief, factor that influences their attitude toward further schooling.

Following are some of the characteristics of the Group 2 children, as shown on what Edling regards as the best interest inventory test available, the "Dynamic Factors Opinion Survey," and on another

test, "Your Educational Plans," which is designed to give family background information as well as the aspirations of the student.

'Non-Reinforced Group'
These children are, in psychologists' language, "a non-reinforced group." Approximately three-fourths of them said their parents do not consider education beyond high school important. Over and over again, these students, when they faced questions about what their parents thought about higher education, would tell the interviewer, they didn't know how to answer because, "They never talk about it."

"Here is a group whose parents didn't go to college, whose brothers and sisters didn't go to college, whose best friends aren't going to college," Dr. Edling said.

Their goals are immediate — a job or marriage, and their job and money aspirations are either low or unrealistic. Their ideal job — store clerk, salesman, repair man, waitress, beautician, etc. — are the same as shown in answers of Group 3 students, those who have neither the necessary college aptitude nor the intention of going to college.

Other Differences
Other differences between these Group 2 children and their college-bound equals in capacity "are so significant that they would occur less than one in several thousand times, if it were due to chance," Dr. Edling said.

They show dependence as contrasted with self-reliance. They are conformists, and most markedly, they seek security as contrasted with adventure or risk. These characteristics show up most strongly among the girls most of whom see early marriage as synonymous with security.

They show a greater need, both for attention from others, and for entertainment, diversions.

There are other distinctive traits which have been "factored out" as far as the film designing end purpose of the research is concerned. But they add to the total picture of this group of non-school-minded youngsters. For instance, their answers show that they are generally low on quantitative thinking, and low on aesthetic interests, appreciation of art, literature, music. They show an allergy for precision, all things requiring exactness and detail.

Pattern of Dislike
While the OCE research has not included high school grade records in its documentation, Dr. Edling said, the Group 2 children, in answer to questions, placed themselves lower on the grade scale than did those in the college-bound group. And, unlike their college-focused contemporaries, they showed a pattern of dislike of high school.

Anyone looking over the interest and background records of these average and superior students who, obviously, have not been "motivated" in high school, and are not "motivated" toward college or technical training, winds up with the big question:

Has the school — can the school — do much to make them self-starting learners when the home and society does not?
Dr. Edling's answer was, "As yet, no. But we are hoping..."

COLLEGE INTENT VS COLLEGE ABILITY (O.C.E. HIGH SCHOOL STUDY)

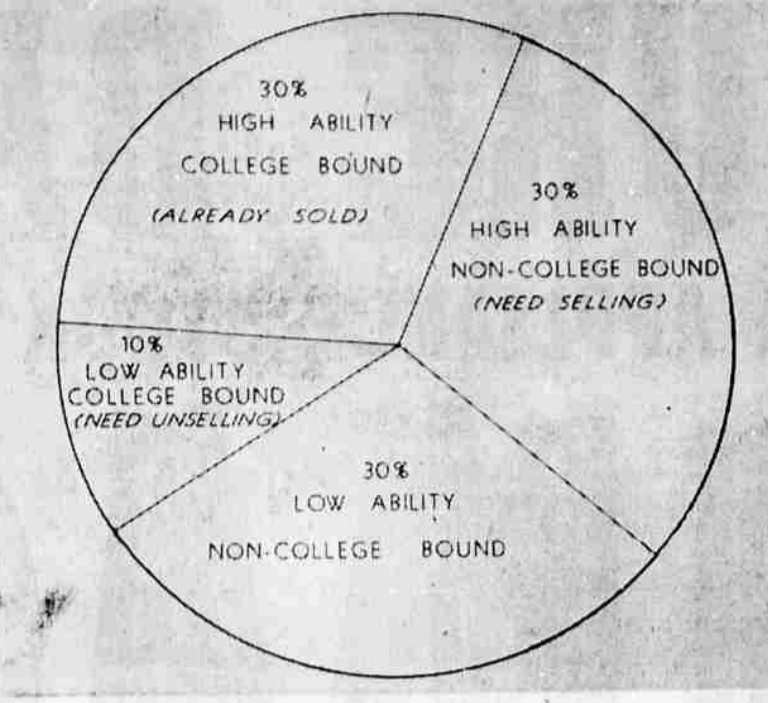


CHART OF LOSS—Oregon's loss of potential college and technical trainees is told in this chart. Percentages reflect findings of unusual "motivational research" study at Oregon College of Education, aimed to find out whether Madison Avenue advertising techniques can sell the value of learning.

Christ Prepared for Public Life With 40 Days of Prayer, Fasting

BY THE RT. REV. MSGR. J. M. KELLY
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Written for UPI

During the holy season of Lent our thoughts naturally turn to penance and sacrifice. We have as our prime example the forty days and nights Christ spent in the desert in prayer and fasting in preparation for His public life.

Son of God and totally sinless, He chose to strengthen His mind and will by an extended period of voluntary mortification. He knew well the grave burdens that lay ahead of Him—His task of teaching, the bitter opposition He would face, and finally His sufferings and death on the cross.

Most of us certainly will never be faced with the extreme trials and labors that Christ had to endure; yet we all have our own burdens and

countless temptations to face as we go through life. There is no better way for us to prepare ourselves than by embracing some voluntary mortification especially during these days. By giving up some of the things we like we will strengthen our souls and will therefore be much better prepared to face our problems and to live in the imitation of Christ.

Salem—UPI—A legal education series to be held as part of the Oregon Justice Department staff conference in Portland April 6 will discuss collecting debts due the state.

There are no earth faults to bar an English Channel tunnel, a study shows.

Since 1951 the total use of newspapers by advertisers has increased 40 per cent.

During the same period, color in newspaper ads has increased more than 100 per cent.

4 DAYS ONLY! — BEGINS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6th

Get a Beautiful 5x7" Picture of Your Baby

for only 49¢

AGE LIMIT 5 YEARS
One or two children in any one family will be photographed SINGLY at 49c each for the first picture. Each additional child under five, \$1.50 for the first picture.

Choose any one of several completely finished photographs... all in different poses... for only 49c. You will not be urged to buy, but if you wish you can buy the remaining photographs at only 1.25 for the first, \$1 for the 2nd and 95c for any additional pictures bought in the store.

PHOTOGRAPHER'S HOURS: 9:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Pixy Pin-Ups Exclusively at Penney's

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The American Laundry Has Sold Their Business

EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 1960

All American Laundry Customers Will Now Be Served by

Dumas Domestic Laundry
and DRY CLEANERS

30-32 North Riverside Phone SP 2-6154

Crystal White Laundry
and CLEANERS

811 N. Central Ave. Phone SP 3-6226

THE AMERICAN LAUNDRY OFFICE, 132 S. Central,
Will Be Open 2 Weeks for Your Convenience

this could be you!

A Father Says . . .

Savings at JACKSON COUNTY FEDERAL ARE . . . SAFE . . . SECURE . . . INSURED

4% per annum current dividend rate.

A Mother Says . . .

Saving Money at JACKSON COUNTY FEDERAL by the 10th . . . EARNS from the 1st!

4% per annum current dividend rate.

A Young Saver Says . . .

Your Savings Add Up Faster . . . at JACKSON COUNTY FEDERAL

Jackson County Federal

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"It does make a difference where you save!"