

KALLSEN: ONE SHOULD BE A person first, teacher last

Education today is going through a revolution.

Not only are curriculums changing, but also the stresses in teacher education and teacher-student relationships are changing.

Miss Barbara Kallsen, who teaches English here, says there is now a greater question of how to make education as meaningful as possible to the students.

"Teachers have to make education relevant to students. They have to know what is going on in the students' world. In college, teachers' teachers talk about educating the whole student," stated Miss Kallsen.

She attended the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and majored in English education.

"Teachers have to know something about their students as individuals. This is because situations and problems that arise may differ depending on the student involved. Misbehavior in a class may be related to some outside problem such as parent or family troubles at home. If a teacher knows this she may handle it.

"A student who sleeps through a class could be working too many hours at his job or is simply bored to death. A teacher should find out where his problem lies.

"Teachers are limited by both class time and the number of students they have in a class when trying to give a student individual attention," Miss Kallsen stated.

She feels teachers should give as much of their time to students as possible. They also have to be able to get away from their work.

"One of my teachers once said that a teacher has to be a person first and a teacher second.

"If I go home at night and feel like going to a movie, even though I may have 600 papers piled up waiting to be read and corrected, I think it is better to go to the movie.

"Like everyone else, teachers need a teacher. They might be a better teacher because of it.

"They have had a chance to relax and may at the same time may have gotten some new insight to bring back to class.

"Teacher must know her limits. You can't let yourself become so involved that you never have a chance to relax. However, this may differ with individual teachers.

"It is important for a teacher to care about the kids they teach."



COLONIAL SCHOOLS

They did not believe in spoiling the child by sparing the rod

Students grade teachers

"The wall between teachers and students is beginning to deteriorate. . . barriers are being broken down and teachers are really trying to understand the students, believes Andi DeWahl, sophomore.

Andi and other Ramsey students were asked for their opinion on teacher involvement with and concern for the student.

"Most teachers aren't willing to stay after," Andi said, "they don't feel they're obligated to and so they won't. But then there are some teachers who really go all out. It depends a lot on the teacher, some really try, some don't and some don't know how."

Vaughn Harrison, senior, "From my limited experience I would say that teachers really are trying to get involved. They are keeping everything flexible. . .

they don't stick within the confines of the cours, which I think is really relevant today."

Vaughn continued to say, "The students interests are changing, and the teachers are adjusting to it. There are some teachers that are really dedicated, and there some that are just in it for the buck—their dedication dies soon; but there really is basically no difference between the teachers I know here and those in Africa."

Lorinda Wilson, sophomore, believes that classes should be divided for fact and slow students. "Then," she continued, "the slow kids who need individual help should get the teachers that get more involved with kids." Teachers involvement, she believes, really depends a lot on the teacher.

Lorinda also said that she believes most teachers have "pets" who they are much more willing to help.

"I think the young teachers are usually more involved, at the same time it really depends on the individual teacher," said Steve Judge, junior, Steve believes that since every teacher is an individual there is no way you can evaluate them as a group.

Grinda Toenjer, junior, said, "Teachers won't change unless students ask questions and demand changes."

She believes that teachers have to evaluate themselves and their method of teaching to be able to present relevant material and keep in touch with the students.

Johnson reveals Changing trends

Dr. Dale Johnson, Assistant Superintendent believes that education in general is going through a phase of great change.

"There is a shift from traditional methods of instruction to more student involvement. I think this is the most central change in recent years. Learning is a process that students and teachers have to co-participate in.

"The skills the student has to develop are ones of knowing where to get the data and information and how to use it."

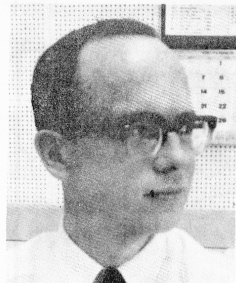
Dr. Johnson feels that the attitudes of the teachers towards changes in education have been "excellent."

"They were a crucial element in change,

particularly in our district. We have had a program for three years where any staff member who has an idea can submit it for consideration. The first year of the program we got 18 proposals for various improvements. Last year we received 41, and this year we were overwhelmed by 54 such proposals." Of these 54, Dr. Johnson says that 48 will go before the school board for acceptance. "Teachers will assume a different but crucial role in coming years," he continued. "They will be acting more as diagnosticians and educational experts as opposed to their traditional fact-giving role."

Teachers evaluate their profession

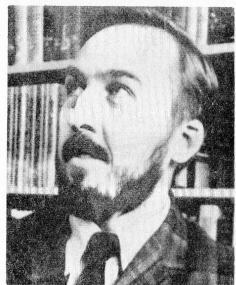
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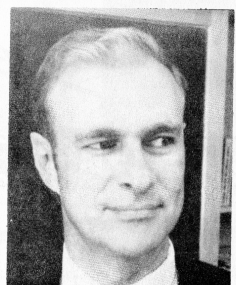
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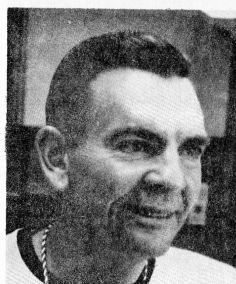
Mike Hanily



Curtis Johnson



Ted Molitor



Lars Overskei



Kathleen Detjen

With the coming of greater teacher activism at Ramsey, especially the "withholding" of extracurricular activities last fall, faculty attitudes toward different facets of Alexander Ramsey have become more and more important in the school.

In an attempt to explore these attitudes seven Ramsey teachers agreed to air their views to Blueprint. The participants were Lars Overskei, the football coach and phy Ed instructor, Earl Ireland, math teacher, Ted Johnson, social studies teacher, Kathleen Detjen, German teacher, Mike Hanily, English teacher, Ted Molitor, Chemistry teacher and Minnesota teacher of the Year, and Curtis Johnson, Chairman of the Social Studies Department.

The experts were picked because they were either representative of what the rest of the teachers in the interview were thinking or because they seemed to represent unusual points of view, at least in this group.

But remember in the final analysis, the quotes are only personal opinions and are only representative of the faculty, as a whole, in so far as the teachers making them are members of and participants in the faculty. Also remember that these opinions were given under relatively unusual circumstances, in a taped interview that would be printed--this might have had a strong effect on which opinions were presented and how they were presented.

The interview opened with a discussion of faculty attitudes toward the community beginning with the effects of the withholding action last fall.

Ireland: . . . it seems as though the only thing the public has become upset about is salaries. . . When curriculum is an issue the average citizen simply doesn't (become involved).

C. Johnson: I think, (since last fall) the community sees teachers as a more valuable commodity. . . not as a public servant who will do its bidding but as a professional who is employed to carry out certain services on a contractual basis.

Hanily: When we consider the perspective that the general public has on the teachers. It is basically what they remember as a student 20-30 years ago. . . We are in the process of redefining the role of the teacher and I think some of the confusion that we see resulting is (because of the difference between). . . their perspective on our role and our perspective on our role.

We really don't understand one another. If you say (to parents) 'independent study', 'mod-

ular scheduling', 'self-direction'. I don't think they understand. They weren't educated in the same atmosphere.

Ireland: Certainly the emphasis is going to have to change, in the past we've taught a lot of facts in the school and at that time it was all right, facts weren't doubling very fast. Now there doubling every seven years.

What implication does this have for us? We have to teach students how to learn on their own, how to learn individually. We just can't teach enough facts to take care of this student throughout his lifetime.

Molitor: I think what we are doing is emphasizing process--the way of getting knowledge. People are going to have to get knowledge by themselves, out of school and I think we're trying to teach this. . . I see where we're groping to emphasize this for a while and we're eventually going to swing back.

Hanily: How consistent is this approach? Is it conceivable that a student could go from process learning (in one class) back into the middle ages of learning. . . in his next class?

(There were scattered nods and comments of "Yes" and "Certainly, of course" from most of the rest of the teachers. But they also seemed to agree with C. Johnson when he said, "It seems to me that at least the intent is present in almost all classes." Detjen, Ireland, and Molitor also gave examples of "process learning" in German, Math, and Chemistry respectively.)

Blank: How do you think most of the students feel about this new type of learning--do you think they really prefer it?

Ireland: I think you will have as many opinions as there are students. But it is how students will have to learn 10 years from now.

C. Johnson: Students in old forms. . . They are most secure in old forms. They may ask for process learning but when process learning comes and it's difficult they would like to return to the more secure form where the teachers tells them what to do.

A school has to reflect the society that the student is going to have to live in and today people are asked to work together. . . so it seems to me we have to talk about study with small groups where students can learn to interact bring together ideas and to come to some sort of a group conclusion.

T. Johnson: The idea of working together as a group is important, however, individual instruction fits in. . . so that a person learns how to be actual functioning member of a group. Right now a lot of students just sit there and don't contribute.

Blank: How are these changes reflected in the rules and regulations that govern students here at Ramsey?

Molitor: Are we talking about rules that govern

a student's physical behavior or his mental behavior? I think that without question you have to control physical behavior when you have 1800 people in one building 8 hours a day, 9 months a year.

Mental behavior I think is a little different. In some cases there may have been attempts to control mental behavior but I think the trend is to less control--to more free thinking. There is an attempt to control physical behavior within our school but a lot of people confuse this issue. They say, you're controlling us here in the hassles to keep the halls clean, O.K. we are. But we're not controlling how these people think and that's important.

C. Johnson: I think there is more free thinking now. (In the social studies now) . . . we ask students to make a judgement, a tentative judgement that seems valid for this time (until some thing else comes about this seems like a good rule of thumb seems valid for this time. Until something else comes about this seems like a good rule of thumb to follow. (This is what project Social Studies. . . tries to do.)

Hanily: What percent of the student body would you say is involved in this approach?

C. Johnson: Ultimately it seems to me all of them must be.

Hanily: But what percent is now?

T. Johnson: I tenth grade class, 4 eleventh, and 3 twelfth.

(note: to the nearest significant figure this is about 20% of 1700 students)

Blank: What are your feelings toward district and school administration in general? How do they affect the faculty?

Molitor: This district is one of the best in terms of change, I think they're more receptive to change and they have many more experiments (in progress). . . here than any other district I know. I can't really see how they could do much more.

Overskei: I think now the faculty has more of a voice in things that are going on than we did. C. Johnson: Yes, and I think we're going to have more than we have now. . . they are starting to listen to us.

Blank: Do you feel the administration is listening to students as it is listening to you?

Overskei: I think students are getting what they want. If they want something they usually get it.

Molitor: If students really want something and they really push for it I'm sure the administration will give it to them. You see often only a small part of the whole student body is really behind something and maybe another part of the student body. . . is opposed. . . This makes it very hard to tell what students really want. I think the administration has done a good job of (determining). . . what students really want and need.