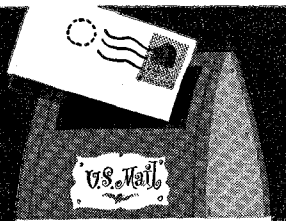


# Letters to the Editor



## Federal Research Grants

IN HIS ARTICLE "Higher Education: Fourth Branch of Government?" [SR, Jan. 18], Christian K. Arnold misrepresents the position taken by the House Committee on Government Operations and its Intergovernmental Relations Subcommittee, of which I am chairman, on the administration of research grants by the National Institutes of Health.

Mr. Arnold suggests that the Committee has opposed NIH's efforts to strengthen its relationship with universities in research and training grant programs in place of the direct Federal agency-individual investigator relationship that he believes erodes the university's authority. In point of fact, the Committee has expressed no such opposition. Rather, the Committee's criticism of NIH was directed at the agency's failure to work out suitable arrangements for obtaining the most effective use of grant funds. The Committee found that NIH was not adequately organized to supervise administration of the more than 15,000 research projects it supported. The Committee also found that NIH had not sought to reach an understanding with the universities concerned regarding the responsibilities they were expected to assume for the projects supported by NIH grants.

The author, moreover, has completely distorted the sequence of events with respect to the Committee's report and NIH's response. The quotation taken out of context from the Committee's report (House Report No. 1958, 87th Congress) represents criticism of NIH made *before* (not after, as reported in the article) NIH had adopted regulations and held a series of conferences with university administrators for the purpose of strengthening the management of its grant programs. The new regulations and procedures were adopted by NIH and its parent agency, the Public Health Service, without any participation by our Committee and only after the agency had expressed agreement, in hearings and correspondence, with the Committee's finding of a need for improved grant management.

L. H. FOUNTAIN, Chairman,  
Intergovernmental Relations  
Subcommittee of the  
Committee on Government  
Operations,  
House of Representatives.

Washington, D.C.

## A Problem Close to Home

THANK YOU FOR JOHN SCANLON's fine editorial, "One Step Closer to the Ultimate Answer" [SR, Feb. 15]. Insofar as democracies are the fanciful champions of individual freedom, the education of all their citizens is an especial charge upon them

lest they become shackled by that worst tyrant of all—ignorance. Many of our people today seem to greatly fear the much vaunted strength of the potential adversary, but would it not be much more sensible to be concerned about our own well-being? No healthy and consciously God-loving organism seeks to speed its own demise.

JOHN A. HANNUM.

Washington, Mich.

## Harvey on Springfield

YOUR ARTICLE QUOTES Dr. Olds ("Glenn Olds—Innovator at Springfield" [SR, Feb. 15]), as saying that when he took over the presidency of Springfield College in 1958 he inherited an "enfeebled" institution. Nonsense!

EDWARD J. SIMS,  
Assistant Professor of English,  
Springfield College.

Springfield, Mass.

## Art in Education

IN THE LEAD ARTICLE [SR, Feb. 15], Kenneth Scollon attempts to give reasons for including the arts as a necessary part of education. I'm not sure he completely answers the question. He speaks only to the importance of history and appreciation courses. The visual arts (for instance) encompass much more—the actual manual skills, such as drawing, painting, and sculpture, and their concomitant theories. If it helps to learn about what is written by writing, then it should follow that it helps to learn about painting by *painting*.

It would seem that in the teaching of art in history, Mr. Scollon makes the mistake of substituting his own experience of contemplation for the work itself. Students might learn what their teacher experienced (Cezanne's apples "booming across the canvas like kettledrums"), but this doesn't help the student to a relatively independent aesthetic experience. Art works have been misused too long as propagandistic flags to insure "correct" emotional responses. A distinction has to be made between what the artist intended and what the instructor imagines or wishes he intended.

PAUL L. NUCHIMS,  
Instructor, Department of Art,  
Western Michigan University.  
Kalamazoo, Mich.

KENNETH M. SCOLLON HAS TOUCHED A sensitive nerve of our educational system in his article, "Art in Education." Art in education is very important—even more now than at any time in the past. The onrush of science in our education curriculum has shunted the humanities aside and almost completely submerged the arts. A valiant effort is now being made to restore the

humanities to their rightful place again. But the arts remain sadly neglected. Mr. Scollon's fine examples of art in literature, painting, music, and architecture are indicative of how art can and should be taught.

L. B. ROSENSTEIN, O.D.

Vineland, N.J.

## Overanxious Parents

I HOPE THAT PROFESSOR MAGILL'S "Get Off Johnny's Back!" [SR, Feb. 15] will be available in quality reprints in the future. It ought to be required reading for all parents of all college-bound young people in all of the college preparatory schools in all parts of the country. It says neatly and cogently and dispassionately what all of us in this business have to contend with every year: with the parent who may even say (and believe it or not, I am quoting) "If my son should go to Harvard, I would consider myself a failure as a father."

ROBERT U. JAMESON, Chairman,  
English Department,  
The Haverford School.

Haverford, Pa.

THE ARTICLE REFLECTS MY OWN personal views—as well as those of other college students I know—on the subject of overanxious parents. There are entirely too many overbearing and "know-it-all" parents who actually think they are doing the right thing for little Johnny by telling him what his major should be and what courses to take. Perhaps the truth of the matter is that such parents are trying to mold their children into their own image or push them into areas in which they themselves were complete failures. As the article pointed out, there are those parents, too, of course, who nurture delusions of helping their children achieve enough success to create a "name" for the family. No wonder college campuses have become a potpourri of overemotional and neurotically frustrated individuals trying desperately to sever the ties that bind.

LESLIE BONNER.

South Houston, Tex.

AS THE WIFE OF A TEACHER and a former teacher myself, I was overjoyed to see a long overdue warning to overanxious parents as forthright and succinct as Professor Magill's "Get Off Johnny's Back!" These are words I have said (or, in some painful instances, merely longed to say) for years now, and as public preoccupation with education grows more overanxious by the minute, it becomes even more important to give expression to this warning.

Professor Magill confines his article to his experiences at the college level, but I would like to emphasize that these pressures exist at all levels—from the mother who forcefeeds her pre-school child in reading and writing skills and ends up with a remedial reading problem to the parents who switch their children from one school to another, seeking that nebulous something called an "ideal education."

The corollary to this destructive pressure on the children is the equally unreal-

istic pressure on the schools. Education is hailed as the gateway to some future Utopia, and when the poor child cannot cope with the prodding and the school cannot force a miracle, the parents never seem to be able to accept the responsibility for the failure. It's always the way the schools teach reading (Back to Phonics! or Back to McGuffey's Reader!)—or frill courses (Back to the Basics!)—or subversion (Back to Americanism!)—or some other nonsense—but never, never their own unrealistic demands.

MRS. NANCY CATALANO.  
Woodland Hills, Calif.

THE WORDS LEWIS M. MACILL wrote to "Overanxious Parents" [SR, Feb. 15]—"Get Off Johnny's Back!"—hit my husband and me hard. On the face of it we are the typical faculty parents: the well-placed, high-brow family with master's and Ph.D. degrees, Fulbright and study-abroad grants (the academic works), who have made a mess of their Johnny.

He went to a private school, academic-oriented, because he was slow in starting. His I.Q. was normal (whatever that is), and he was permitted to go on with his group, although he repeated the third grade. This was because of "immaturity and unreadiness." Eventually, in his limping fashion, he graduated from high school with a flock of sports letters, but no academic honors. He had taken his college boards three times and impressed the entrance officials across the country with the magnitude of his ignorance. A fine lad, responsible, determined, plenty of drive, a hard worker. I never knew him well myself—he was always so busy getting those flannel letters. But his ratings on summer work heartened our souls. He could always be counted on to carry through.

We tried to get him what he wanted. We had to give him a chance. But at what?

He had no specific talents, no real aptitudes for technology; although good, he wasn't interested. Liberal arts was out because he couldn't read. The fine drive got lost in the seeking. It was at this point that he was catapulted into the intellectual snobbery he got unconsciously from home and consciously from advisers, profs, and students in school. "You must be a college man. Nothing else is quite good enough."

We as parents tried to break this down early and offered the two-year institutions as starter. We got nowhere. He stuck like epoxy glue to the theories of his times, the Sputnik race and the get-rich noise in the educational columns of the newspapers.

No out-of-state college or university would accept his poor grades. They have their own mediocrities to look after. Our own institution accepted him so grudgingly we shied away. He was finally accepted by a two-year college near home with both academic and terminal programs. He took the professional courses loaded with sciences. What else?

We were very much aware of the danger inherent in his set-up. We had been in the education racket for thirty years (smart professor with a dumb kid). But Johnny stuck to his deadly grind, didn't

quite make the professional status, and was now accepted by an out-of-state university on "probation." He was dropped by that institution after a year. In my ignorance I had always thought a dropped student quit college. To my humiliation, I learned all the schemes of reinstatement and change of major of the dropout. He kept a sense of humor and called himself the "flunkie."

Before the final crash, he studied catalogues. He came up with a physical education program with physiotherapy in the future. Perhaps those flannel letters would pay off after all! But the admissions man thought he was wasting his time, and his own college professors didn't like his lack of drive. He was dropped again.

I wish I could say that our Johnny had been cruelly misjudged, that he found himself, and that he has finally made a four-year program with honors. But I can't. I can say only, after three years of misdirection, he ditched his whole program, coming out with about six months' credits. He has now accepted a two-year out-of-state institute (no sciences) and seems to have got his drive back. But this program can lead into a four-year stint which intrigues Johnny. But Johnny's mom and dad look with a jaundiced eye on four years, intending to wait and see, keeping fingers crossed.

NAME WITHHELD.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *It is our policy not to publish anonymous letters, but in this case we felt that an exception was justified.*

## Shared Time

TWO ARTICLES IN SR's February 15 issue have resulted in some research as to the extent of "shared time" in Pennsylvania.

Attendance records submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction for the 1962-63 school year indicate that 9,914 pupils in Pennsylvania shared their time between a non-public and a public school. Of these, 5,496 were in the City of Pittsburgh, and thirty-five school systems of the state were providing this service.

Mr. Powell referred to the Wehrle case which originated in Altoona in 1911. Our data indicate that 301 pupils of the City of Altoona made use of shared time between public and nonpublic schools—fif-



ty-two years after the original decision affirming this right.

You may be interested to know that a further development of this privilege has recently occurred. Pennsylvania has been fostering Area Technical Schools on a regional basis. Pupils attend their own high school half of each day for academic work and the technical school the other half for technical education. Pupils are now being accepted in the Area Technical Schools who attend a parochial high school for academic work.

We appreciate your reference to Pennsylvania in these articles. We are proud of our activities in this respect and see great possibilities in its development. Our philosophy continues to be based on the fact that public education shall be free to all qualified pupils under proper rules and regulations.

HAROLD O. SPEIDEL,  
Acting Deputy Superintendent  
for Administrative Services,  
Department of Public Instruction.  
Harrisburg, Pa.

EDWARD WAKIN'S ARTICLE on "shared time" leads one to believe that the experiment is being carried on in Detroit with the approval of the Detroit Board of Education. This is completely erroneous.

The writer probably is referring to the Cherry Hill School District in Inkster, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit but in no way connected with the Detroit Board of Education.

SOL DISNER,  
Principal,  
Pitcher Elementary School.  
Detroit, Mich.

## Nongraded High School

I HAVE NOT AS YET READ Dr. B. Frank Brown's book, *The Nongraded High School*, but in reading the articles pertaining to it [SR, Jan. 18], I was impressed by what one might consider the very audacity of the idea. Here is a system that for the first time attacks the growing trend toward conformity of education in this country. We are holding back the superior student and driving the slow learner far beyond his capabilities in a futile attempt to "equalize."

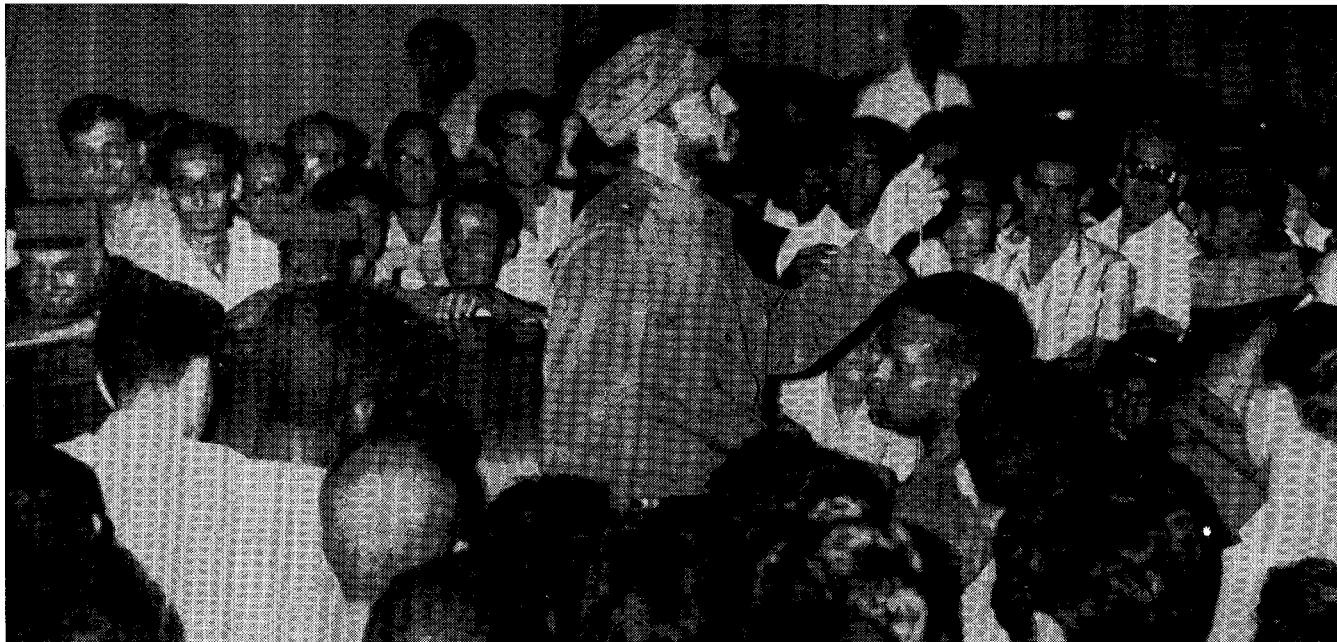
But Dr. Brown has taken recognition of the fact that intellectual equality is something that cannot exist, and even if it could it would be far from desirable. Human beings—even high school students—are individuals. Dr. Brown, having recognized this individuality, has found a way to encourage rather than deter its development.

EARL K. HOLT III.  
Providence, R.I.

YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT *Saturday Review* has done for the nongraded school movement. We are swamped with mail, and, while we have been scheduling visitors for as long as six months in advance, it looks now as if we were going to have to start scheduling for 1965.

B. FRANK BROWN,  
Principal,  
Melbourne High School.  
Melbourne, Fla.





"National purpose has been swiftly infused into the educational system."

—Wide World.

## Castro's "Crash" Program in Education

*Roy Popkin, author of this article, is a former newspaperman who has been associated with the American Red Cross for more than twenty years. In his capacity as public information consultant to the Disaster Services, he was sent to Cuba early last year during the Bay of Pigs prisoner exchange. Mr. Popkin and his associates were guests of the Cuban Red Cross. Because he has a daughter in college and a son in high school, he was interested in how the new generation of Cubans is being educated under the Castro regime. He visited the University of Havana, talked to professors and students, and gathered a store of written material about Cuban education. On the return trip he was in charge of a group of Cuban refugees, and had as his interpreter a former professor at the University of Havana. He talked to the professor at some length, comparing his own impressions with the professor's experience and knowledge. It was out of this combination of associations that Mr. Popkin's article took form.*

By ROY POPKIN

**I**N THE thatched-roof mountain schoolrooms, in bright airy university laboratories, in rural sewing classes, and in one-time mansions outside of Havana, Cuba's new "heroes of the Revolution" are building an educational crash program to create an "instant" socialist-oriented and technologically competent society.

Probably in no Western Hemisphere country, including the post-Sputnik United States, has national purpose been so swiftly infused into the educational system as in Cuba during the past four and a half years. The government of Dr. Fidel Castro is using the classroom to raise the level of adult education to the sixth grade, to create and supply technical and scientific skills for new or expropriated industries, and to develop responsible, craftsman-like workers in what was formerly a basic-

ly agricultural nation. From elementary school to university, from *actos*—the frequently called meetings of workers in a plant or field—to anti-illiteracy classes in the mountains, political indoctrination forms the foundation for all educational activities.

It is not education for education's sake or education because education is a good thing, *per se*. Rather, it is education for Cuba's sake, and the educators and students are hailed as heroes of the new Cuba. Cuban magazines and newspapers report educational programs with all the intensity and fervor that characterizes American news media coverage of a space launch at Cape Kennedy. Only teachers with an avowed affinity for the socialist revolution—whether they be *twelve* years old or sixty-five—can teach in Cuba's schools and universities.

Mobilizing teachers like an army, Cuba is educating its people with an

intensive and all-inclusive effort that could well become a model for other Latin American countries—for better or for worse.

In September, 1960, Fidel Castro appeared before the U.N. General Assembly in New York. His long, perorative recitation listed many goals, among them the eradication of illiteracy in Cuba.

Soon afterwards, more than 100,000 "teachers" were mobilized to do this. Teen-aged students were organized into Conrado-Benitez brigades, workers into "fatherland or death" brigades—*patria o muerto* is just about the biggest national slogan in Cuba today—and 35,000 professional teachers joined them in the "People's Education Army," which, according to the official government organ, *La Revolucion*, launched the "assault on valley and mountain to eradicate illiteracy."

Subsequently published statistics say

SR/March 21, 1964