



GRADING STUDENTS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EDUCATION IS POWER

By Thomas E. Wilson

An important problem facing our schools today is that of how to evaluate the students effectively in order that the student may eventually be helped to an adequate self-evaluation. Since the student is the one most directly affected by evaluative procedures, it appears reasonable to assume that a fair evaluative system can give him security and confidence. Too often the grading, reporting, and testing appears to the student as something done to him, not something in which he is an active participant. It is necessary to consider the student as evaluative procedures are developed and to ask continually, "How does what is done affect the individual student?"

Research indicates that students are concerned about grading, reporting to parents, and taking tests. In some communities where there is a great deal of emphasis on getting into college, students may become tense about getting good grades and doing well on tests. By identifying the students' greatest concerns, a school system may be guided in those aspects of evaluation in which adjustment of policies is needed.

Several research studies reveal that anxiety is generated when report cards are sent to the home. If students are unduly worried about their report cards, perhaps reporting practices should be examined in the light of these questions: Is the report card describing the effort that the child made in terms of his ability? Is the report so infrequent that lack of progress can come as a shock to the parents? Could there be more continuous reporting to keep parents and students better informed? Is there pressure on students to "do better than the neighbors" or to "get good grades so that he can get into the best colleges" rather than to "do his best?"

It might be useful to determine what attitudes students have about the reporting and evaluative process. The student's feeling about standardized test, as a part of the evaluative process, may have a great deal to do with his level of achievement.

Some students consistently achieve below ability due to a conviction that there is no point in trying.

Giving the student help in understanding what his test scores mean, and in using them constructively, is as important as interpreting such scores to parents. Students need to see clearly where their potential lies as well as where they need to work harder.

An often overlooked but tremendously important item in the entire evaluative process is that of creating a good atmosphere for taking tests. Studies show that motivation to succeed can influence test scores. Making students anxious, or threatening them in any way may only serve to lower test scores.

Another area that should be given attention in an examination of the grading process is the evaluative results and the pupil-teacher reaction. A student may believe that a low grade was the result of having a teacher who was not good for him - and he may be right. Some students and some teachers do not get along. We need to examine policies that make it difficult, if not impossible, for a student to be transferred when it becomes evident that he and his teacher are not having a good year together. Or perhaps the organizational structure, insofar as grouping and assignment of pupils is concerned, should be restudied.

Let us reiterate that grading and the entire process of evaluation should bring the student satisfaction. Knowledge of progress or lack of progress, if seen in the light of the total evaluation process is helpful, not threatening. Evaluation procedures can raise the level of aspiration of pupils.

Black students need desperately to have their level of aspiration and their self-concept raised. This can be helped through a thorough examination of our evaluative process.

PIPED PIPER OF DEATH PLAYS DIABOLIC TUNE

ATLANTA, GA — The spectre of death hangs heavy over this beautiful booming city whose past and present are intimate with history. For the moment it is dancing in fear to the strains of a diabolic tune that is attractive to the ears of kids. For reason, or reasons, beyond comprehension, some deranged excuse for the human being continues to kidnap and cut down children who happen to be Afro-Americans. They are killed before reaching the fullness to enjoy the flavor of life. They are murdered in the blooming span of their youthful anxieties and their highest expectations. They are done away with before having the opportunity to forge lasting friendships, create natural antimosities or develop enemies. They are dying even too early to know the difference between life and death, to savor love or build a future.

Students of democracy could learn much from both the white and black citizens of this town who politically have swapped the doctrine of the confederacy to stand for the equality of humanity. Tear stained, and in a perpetual state of mourning, its full human mix has routed fatigue and confusion in a unified search to end a nightmare. One which dogs the days of the next generation.

CONVERSATION ROWE — Atlanta's Mayor Maynard Jackson has accepted, with unabridged enthusiasm, Sammy Davis, Jr.'s offer to bring his talents to the aid of the discretionary fund established by the city to bolster the investigation of the "missing and murdered children." The total talented one has inspired a national drive to stamp this holocaust on the minds of all Americans. Henry Porter, super artist who just moved from N'Rochelle, N.Y. to Atlanta, is doing the special poster for the March 10th big show "Mr. D" will host. Gen. Foods veep, Lee A. Archer and Bx Community College prexy Dr. Roscoe Brown have already pledged their troth. Help will also be forth coming from Hank Aaron, Joe Black, the Grayhound veep, Sam Hall, Pepsi, Ford's Levi Jackson, Gen. Motors' Abe Venable, Stan Scott, Philip Morris' veep and other corporate biggies now agonizing over this diabolic turn of insanity.

The Hon. Lee P. Brown, a most able lawman, is Atlanta's quiet and efficient commish of public safety. His police force, fire and transportation are shaking every bush, moving every rock and checking out every likely and unlikely place in search of bodies and clues. From our short personal observation we are of the belief that this kidnapping-murder spree isn't racially motivated. In fact the killer, or killers, the he or she, must be dark of skin to allow movement within the Afro-American community without raising the rumpus of suspicion and the danger of detection. With the finding of the body of 15 year old Terry Pue, as we came to town, the count is now 14-dead and 5-missing, two of them having disappeared as we labored over this piece.

FACTS AND FAVORS — The massive inaugural bash was an eye level view of how socially divided the whites and blacks are in this country. Only a few 'coloureds' were on the seen scene. Only three Afro-Americans were camera visible in the swearing in VIP section, Dr. Gloria E.A. Tooté, Ken Sherwood, whom she gave a seat to, and Chicago publisher, Charlie Armstrong... Art Fletcher has turned down an offer to fill the chair Eleanor Holmes Norton just vacated at EEOC. Perhaps he's privy to some insides as to what Prez Ron Reagan plans to do with the Equal Opportunity Commission... John Johnson was so upset with Ben Vereen's performance, the dancer-actor would have to straighten out the Leaning Tower of Pisa to make the cover of Ebony or Jet again. How quick he changed from "Chicken George to chicken s-it. I never was a good speller, ask my Isadorable... That pretty and astute Jewel LaFontant was very much on the seen, but not job hunting, they said. Dr. Tooté may not have been given a top spot yet in the new administration, but the world was made to catch its breath when the president kissed her on leaving the stand for all to see... They are expecting the job passers to reverse the order of command at HUD with a white ass't. sec'y heading Fair Housing, the sub-cabinet post held by Dr. Tooté under Nixon... FCComish Tyrone Brown, the only black on that body, has handed in his papers, he will join the DeeCee law firm of Steptoe and Johnson. He plans not to stump his toe but will continue to speak out about the progress, or lack of it, status and future of blacks and other minorities in the telecommunication industries.

WRITE ON LINE — Calvin Peete, the PGA's top tee to green black, almost made it in Phoenix last Sunday. His incredible stroking turned into three boogies on the home swing to drop him from the top of the leader board into a tie for third. However it was good enough for over 17Gs... Art Rust is about to become the target of some angry dime droppers. He could have his comeback X'train derailed... Young Kevin Williams, guard on the St. John U's basketball team, will not switch colleges after all. The school threatened court action and got a retraction from the Daily News that Kevin pulled a knife on a fella team mate... Steve Wonder'full crowd estimate of the marches for a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s holiday exceeded the U.S. Park Police by 65,000. Nobody said that cops could count... Fred and Carol Weaver's little girl Ann Weaver Howard gave them an 8 lb. 8 ounce boy to grandparent spoil... STAY LOOSE, AND ON THE LOOKOUT FOR KILLERS OF CHILDREN.

THE PLACE

Cocktails - Pool
WHERE GOOD FRIENDS MEET

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