

Getting Along with the Public

By STEWART HARRAL

Every State University Faces The Problem of Interpreting Its Objectives in Terms That Appeal to the General Public

IF all the folks who criticize the University were laid end to end—how comfortable they would be. No aspect of campus life has escaped the caustic pen of self-appointed critics. Much of this criticism has been cleverly, even brilliantly expressed, but the criticism is often superficial, illogical, and essentially unsound. Some of it, on the other hand, has been sanely constructive and useful. If we were to believe all that the critics say, we should inevitably be forced to the conclusion that little if anything is right with higher education today.

As someone remarked, "It's not that the people don't know enough about the University but that they know so much that ain't so." It isn't enough just to hope that some day the public will understand the institution. Every effective means possible must be used in interpreting the aims, processes, character and results of higher education.

Into the vocabulary has come the term public relations, which means many things to many folks. Some think it synonymous with the ballyhoo of the show business. Others think of it as promoting something untrue and unethical upon the public. Still others believe it to be a method of presenting favorable facts and situations and concealing others. A few persons think of it as sinister propaganda which is directed toward an unsuspecting public.

The simple fact of the matter is that public relations is merely relations with the public. It is the art of getting along with the public.

To better understand this definition we must know what is meant by the public. In reality, the University has many publics—alumni and former students, faculty members, regents, students in residence, business, professional, civic and religious groups, in fact, every citizen of Oklahoma is a shareholder in the University and as such is entitled to share in its dividends.

It is significant to note that what these publics think of the University—rather than what the University personnel thinks of them—to a large measure determines the success or failure of the institution.

Since every division of the University

touches some public, directly or indirectly, each division has public relations aspects. Human nature being what it is, it is not strange that Mr. John Public knows more about the new backfield star than he does about the important research work that is being done in many laboratories of the University. But the discoveries of scientists often change the lives and habits of thousands of Oklahoma citizens.

Even the most intelligent persons are often unacquainted with some of the basic functions of the University. To hear some folks describe it, one would imagine O. U. to be a cross between Miami Beach and a public dance hall. Thousands of persons come to the campus annually, many of them to attend football games, banquets and other festivities. Naturally, some of them are inclined to believe that it is a paradise for pleasure-lovers, and that a four-year stay for most students is a constant round of pleasure and recreation.

If these same folk could visit classrooms, laboratories, studios and offices during the week they would be impressed with the seriousness and earnestness with which students and faculty members go about their tasks in following a sound program of education.

The great majority of Oklahomans, despite the utterances of self-appointed critics, want a great university. The long and useful history of the institution is argument enough that it has always been of service to the commonwealth which it serves. Its very atmosphere breathes the spirit of helpfulness and of interest in the problems of its constituents.

The University recognizes that it will be repaid many times if it takes its public into partnership and demonstrates that it does not stand aloof from, but is a part, and an important part, of the human and practical affairs around it.

Fulfilling its part in the national defense program, for instance, the University has trained almost 2,700 college and non-college students since June 1, 1940, to fill technical and skilled positions. Instruction has been given in engineering drawing, machinists training, aircraft welding, civilian pilot training, naval reserve, basic and advanced R. O. T. C. training.

The services of the institution are numerous and varied—issuing a monthly bulletin on business conditions in the state, sponsoring short courses for many groups, ranging from ministers to museum workers; furnishing high school students with debate material, analyzing materials for

highway construction, advising folks who have ambition to become writers—these and hundreds of others—are some of the service functions of the University.

Service activities of the school will be greatly expanded through the University of Oklahoma Research Institute. The institute is to be largely self-supporting, and is being established "for the conservation and development of the natural, industrial and human resources of the state of Oklahoma."

The University's most significant contribution to Oklahoma's welfare has been to train and educate thousands of persons who have taken places of leadership in all professions and in service to society through homemaking and humble fidelity in ways past charting or finding out.

In all of its activities the University places emphasis on sound scholarship, good citizenship, and the duties of the individual to the community and the commonwealth.

Because of its complex and far-reaching program of state-wide service and because it renders so much in intangible ways, the University obviously cannot enumerate all those reached through its numerous channels.

Every mail brings dozens of requests for information and help. It may be a letter from someone who thinks he has discovered gold and "would some of your geologists examine the materials which I am shipping and let me know." A recent letter contained the request "Could you tell me the details of Washington Irving's trip through this part of the country?" A worried mother wrote "How can I keep my little boy from stuttering?" Each request gets the attention of an authority who can either supply the information or refer the questioner to the proper source.

Training youth for future leadership—aiding business and professional men with their problems—preserving and promoting the highest values in the state's rich culture—sponsoring research for better development of Oklahoma's resources—these are some of the kaleidoscopic forces which make up the University of today.

Public relations? All of the multitudinous programs and far-reaching activities, service functions, and ideals as carried through all channels of life by all groups—faculty, students, alumni and others—constitute the University's public relations. With continued interest and support from citizenship of the state, the University will continue to advance and to make its service functions more effective.

News From the Campus

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 42)

start toward a literary reputation which could easily, by a little more flowering, become a literary legend like those of Boston and its area just before the Civil war, San Francisco right after that conflict, Greenwich Village in the World War period, or Chicago in the 1920's."

Dinner for Brandt

President Joseph A. Brandt, one of the founders of the campus chapter of Delta Tau Delta, was recently honored by the fraternity at a dinner.

State Senator Charles B. Duffy, '22law, Ponca City, first pledge of the fraternity, was toastmaster, and Paul G. Hoffman, Delta Tau Delta national president and head of the Studebaker Automobile Company from South Bend, Indiana, was principal speaker.

Soldiers Guests

A series of campus entertainments for soldiers stationed at Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma City, is being sponsored at the University by a student committee supervised by Virginia Reinecke, director of Union activities and assistant counselor of women.

Entertainment includes dinner at sorority and independent women's houses and various programs presented on the campus. The committee has charge of issuing invitations and providing transportation for the guests.

Rebuke to Steinbeck

Brisk, vivacious Jewel Wurtzbaugh, English professor whose alumni friends are numerous and scattered, closed the covers of her favorite literature books last summer and took a vacation tour, hitting most every state except Georgia and visiting alumni along the way.

Miss Wurtzbaugh doesn't agree at all with John Steinbeck's conception of Oklahoma. As a partial antidote to the Steinbeck influence, she wrote a report upon her return to Norman, telling about graduates who are located in many states besides California and doing quite well in their various fields.

Some of the alumni she encountered during her travels were Paul Eldridge, '19ba, writing a novel and working on a master's degree in Iowa City, Iowa.

Lucille Gafford, '21, teacher in Chicago, Illinois, spending the summer in Boston, Massachusetts, doing research on a history of the Boston theater.

Agnes Sibley, '36ba, finishing work for a doctorate at Columbia University and preparing a book on Alexander Pope.

Kay Burr, '36ba, on the staff of *Collier's* for a time, writing a column in New York City used by 25 newspapers throughout the country.

Suzanne Arnote Holloway, '36ba, honeymooning in California, and Lois Wilson

Langhorst, '35ba, '38eng, '38arch, on a honeymoon in Wyoming.

Spencer Barefoot, '29ba, '31ma, writing books and Mary Hackett, '31ba, '33ma, vacationing in California.

While at Harvard and other universities, Miss Wurtzbaugh chatted and reminisced with former classmates of her colleagues on O. U.'s English department faculty—Professors L. N. Morgan, Sanford M. Salyer, Roy S. Hadsell, J. P. Blickensderfer and Joseph H. Marshburn.

Law Smoker

With more than a score of outstanding Sooner alumni of the bar and bench on hand, the Junior Class of the School of Law last month staged its annual smoker in honor of the Senior Class. A roster of five speakers comprised the program at the all-Law School gathering.

Dean John G. Hervey, '23ba, '25law, spoke briefly. Guest speakers with mixed humor and seriousness told the embryonic lawyers what the lay public, their fellow lawyers, and the judiciary expect of them. The speakers were Tom R. Phillips, publisher of the *Holdenville News* and president of the Oklahoma Press Association, John H. Cantrell, '21ba, '24law, Oklahoma City attorney and president of the Oklahoma State Bar Association, and Justice Thurman S. Hurst, '12law, of the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

Dean Emeritus Julien C. Monnet, who retired last spring after 32 years at the head of O. U.'s School of Law, concluded the program with thanks for the tributes paid him by every previous speaker, with expressions of appreciation for the co-operation he received from alumni during his tenure as dean, and with assurances that the Law School will reach new heights under the leadership of his young and capable successor.

Sigfrid Floren, '41ba, president of the Junior Law Class, presided.

Among the prominent guests, in addition to those who spoke, were Justice Ben Arnold, '20ba, '25law, of the Oklahoma Supreme Court; Judge Bert Barefoot, Criminal Court of Appeals; Albert Hunt and Frank P. Douglass, '16law, district judges in Oklahoma County; Aubrey Moses, '26ba, '28law, Cleveland County judge; Otis Blankenship, '33ba, '39law, Cleveland county attorney; Walter Scott, '31law, Oklahoma City, secretary-treasurer of the Oklahoma State Bar Association; Fred Suits, Oklahoma City, editor-in-chief of the *Oklahoma State Bar Association Journal*; Eugene Ledbetter, '14law, and Raymond Tolbert, '12ba, '13law, Oklahoma City attorneys; and George Miller and Ben Huey, '31law, Norman attorneys.

Morale Booster

Praise for work done by the University Extension Division to boost civilian morale in Oklahoma was handed Herbert H. Scott, '26ba, '26ma, director, at the National University Extension Association executive com-

mittee meeting held in November at Chicago, Illinois.

An official in the United States Office of Education, complimenting special services which aid national defense, said these services were begun by the O. U. Extension Division more than a year before the defense movement was under way.

For the use of state schools and other groups, the Extension Division provides lecturers on many phases of national defense and government, patriotic films, and leaders for forum discussions.

Teapot Tempest

A two-day campus sensation of the last month was a skirmish between the *Covered Wagon*, campus humor magazine, and the Panhellenic Council.

Gene Campbell, glamorous but non-sorority editor of the *Wagon*, wrote in her editorial column in the magazine that Panhellenic was "being too high-minded" in its drive to keep news of sorority and fraternity social events out of newspapers.

"They are trying to dictate," the co-ed writer wrote. "They issue proclamations, ultimatums and decrees and then write little letters around to see that their rules are being enforced. We might say, in fact we will, that they're a little too big for their britches."

Daisy Lockewitz, president of Panhellenic, declined to comment, but Amy Lee Hill, publicity director, answered to the extent of stating "We are just asking for co-operation and are not being dictatorial." Miss Hill also took exception to the *Covered Wagon* observation concerning the fit of Greek Letter britches.

The *Oklahoma Daily* gleefully headlined the "Battle of Britches," with pictures of the principals involved.

The *Norman Transcript* suggested that the phrase "they're a little too big for their britches" seemed a pretty vulgar expression for one girl to apply to another, and put in a few words for the Greeks.

"Fraternities and sororities have raised their standards in several ways in the past dozen years," the *Transcript* said editorially. "They have established study halls, and employed scholarship advisers and tutors to raise the scholarship of their members. They have taken more interest in general University affairs, and have reached out to help others by giving Christmas parties for underprivileged children and taking part in various welfare and charitable activities. All of these things fit in with the desire of the groups that their social activities be subordinated in the newspapers to more important phases of University student life."

The editorial added, however, that "one other way in which the fraternities and sororities can withdraw further from the public spotlight is to tone down their social activities as well as ask the newspapers to tone down the stories. Numerous elaborate and costly events take place on the campus each year. The Christmas dances and spring

formals are among them. These events are bound to attract considerably more attention from the newspapers and the public than would less showy events. They could be more informal and less elaborate without lessening the fun and satisfaction that participants get from them. That, after all, is the best method of avoiding the spotlight."

Within a few days Editor Gene Campbell plaintively protested that she wasn't mad at anybody, the Sooner football team walloped Kansas, and the Battle of the Britches receded into campus history.

Compliments to Band

For the last 12 years, the University Band has stopped at Denton, Texas, en route to the Sooner-Texas game at Dallas, in order to present a Friday night concert at Texas State College for Women.

Twelve years is long enough to get pretty well acquainted. So band officials were justifiably pleased when President Brandt of O.U. received a letter from President L. H. Hubbard of T.S.C.W. last month, in which the band was highly praised, both as to musical excellence and the character of its personnel. Wrote President Hubbard:

"For some 12 years we have been having this 'Oklahoma party' and I am glad to report to you that it has become one of the most popular occasions on our campus and one to which our senior girls (the hostesses) look forward with keen anticipation. The conduct of the Band on these occasions is admirable and you will be glad to have me tell you that they reflect great credit on themselves and on the University. Professionally, too, the band is, in my estimation, an outstanding musical organization. I have heard none better."

Ruling Made on Transfers

Control over transfers of funds within any of the state institutions of higher education rests with the State Regents for Higher Education, Attorney General Mac Q. Williamson, '11, ruled last month. Approval of transfers of funds previously rested with the governor.

Good Neighbors at O.U.

Forty-two students representing 15 foreign lands are enrolled in the University this semester, with the greatest number from South and Central America.

Eleven students are from Venezuela, four from Colombia and four from Mexico. Other countries represented are Canada, Turkey, Germany, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, Costa Rica, Philippine Islands, Syria, Panama Canal Zone, Brazil, England and Japan.

Fashion Note

Sunday clothes and high heels are taboo at O.U. football games as far as student members working with the Undergraduate Life Committee are concerned.

In a recommendation recently handed down by the group, the wearing of comfortable sports clothes instead of dressy

clothes at sports events was suggested. Resolution opposing the "dolling up" was presented by Emil Stratton, Carnegie, president of the Independent Men's Association.

R.A.F. Flier Returns

"This is anybody's fight except America's," says Bob Moore, '38, Duncan, who recently returned to the United States after serving with the American Eagle Squadron of the Royal Air Force.

While visiting friends at the University, the flier related some of his war experiences to students and faculty members at a Norman Forum meeting. As an R.A.F. pilot, Moore took part in aerial combats with the

Nazi bombers. He lost 20 pounds living on British rations, he said.

Despite the fact that he fought side by side with British pilots for more than a year, he still doesn't think America should get involved in the war.

Best Grades

Pi Lambda Phi fraternity, with a grade average of 1.587, holds the highest average among fraternities for last semester, figures released by the Interfraternity Council show.

Winner for the previous semester was Beta Theta Pi fraternity, with an average of 1.528. Runners-up this semester are Delta Chi and Beta Theta Pi fraternities.



Christmas Books for Children under 12

[Alumni Reading Guide]

COMPILED BY THE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY SCIENCE

LEIF THE LUCKY, by *Ingri and Edgar d'Aulaire*. Doubleday, Doran and Company, Garden City, New York, 1941. \$2.00. "*Leif the Lucky* is cause for joyous celebration . . . The d'Aulaires are perfectionists and artists of great integrity. Leif's story is epic-like, but the lovely lithographs in five colors really make the book a juvenile masterpiece . . . Boys and girls will appreciate the touches of humor."—*Library Journal*.

THE LITTLE IGLOO, by *Lorraine and Jervold Beim*, pictures by Howard Simon. Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1941. \$1.50. "A picture book in cold blue and white, about a resourceful little Eskimo boy who knew exactly what to do when he and his dog were caught in a snowstorm far from home. Just the right kind of dramatic build-up and simplicity of plot for younger readers. Large type."—*American Library Association Booklist*.

NOTHING AT ALL, by *Wanda Gag*. Coward-McCann, New York, 1941. \$1.50. "*Nothing at All* takes its title from an invisible dog by that name. It has an old world flavor and magical quality that sets it far above most modern picture books . . . Happily the ending finds *Nothing at All* a stunning black and white see-able dog."—*Library Journal*.

PADDLE-TO-THE-SEA, by *Holling Clancy Holling*. Houghton Mifflin and Company, Boston, 1941. \$2.00. "*Paddle-to-the-Sea* is a little Indian figurine seated in a canoe one foot long. He is the creation of an Indian boy, born of this boy's dream and desire for adventures that were unobtainable for him . . . Reading this should be an exciting and satisfying experience for 9 to 12-year-olds, although the book is picture-book size."—*Library Journal*.

MAKE WAY FOR DUCKLINGS, by *Robert McCloskey*. Viking Press, New York, 1941. \$2.00. "The Boston Public Garden has never appeared in more attractive guise than in this engaging book. The story of the family of ducks raised on the Charles River and brought back to the pond in the Garden, through the traffic of city streets, by its anxious mother is founded on fact . . . Robert McCloskey's unusual and stunning pictures will long be a delight for their fun as well as their spirit of place."—*The Horn Book*.

AN AMERICAN A B C, by *Mrs. Maud (Fuller) Petersham and Miska Petersham*. The Macmillan Company, New York, \$2.00. "A combination picture A B C book and primer of patriotism, with the letters of the alphabet representing attributes, ideals, people, and events in the history of our country. The text is brief and serious, but appropriate for this kind of book. The illustrations, color-

ful and dramatic, are, however, the main interest of the book. Grades 3-6."—*A.L.A. Booklist*.

PETE, by *Thomas P. Robinson*, illustrated by Morgan Dennis. The Viking Press, New York, 1941. \$2.00. "Pete is an airedale with personality, a great favorite with the dogs of the neighborhood and enthusiastic member of the family. Whether he is just chasing pigs or getting together with the gang, excitement is right up Pete's alley. Never a dull moment in this crisp humorous dog story. Morgan Dennis' many drawings bring Pete and his gang to life."—*A.L.A. Booklist*.

THE LEAST ONE, by *Ruth Sawyer*. The Viking Press, New York, 1941. \$2.00. "Deeply significant story . . . of a boy's love for his pet burro. There is a spiritual quality found here that is rare in children's books . . . Leo Politi has done the illustrations."—*Library Journal*.

TAG-ALONG TOOLOO, by *Frances Clarke Sayers*, illustrated by Helen Sewell. The Viking Press, New York, 1941. \$1.50. "Emily, Ann, Susan, and Virginia did things together, but Tooloo's plight was that of the youngest child who is left behind if the others can get away in time. But the glimpses of 5-year-old Tooloo in her Texas home show her quite capable of finding compensations . . . A fresh and amusing story for little girls, happily illustrated."—*The Horn Book*.

AUNTIE ROBO, by *Mrs. Ann Scott-Moncrieff*. The Viking Press, New York, 1941. \$2.00. "The amazing adventures of 11-year-old Hector and his eccentric great-grand-aunt aged 81, when they sneak away together to escape adoption for Hector and an institution for Auntie Robbo. Highly original, delightfully capricious, quite unmoral, and slightly giddy."—*A.L.A. Booklist*.

I KNOW SOME LITTLE ANIMALS, by *James Sterling Tippet*, with pictures by Flora Nash De Muth. Harper Brothers, New York, 1941. \$1.00. "Spontaneous and childlike verses about small creatures which intrigue little children—the firefly, grasshopper, spider, squirrel, turtle, mouse, and the like. Attractive illustrations in black and white make this a pleasant book of poetry for children aged 4-8."—*A.L.A. Booklist*.

SNOW BEFORE CHRISTMAS, by *Tasha Tudor*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1941. \$1.00. "From its very first words 'Over the hills and far away,' this little book sparkles with the enchanting beauties and homely fun of winter time in an old New England country house. Ages 4-8."—*A.L.A. Booklist*.

(Any of the above books may be ordered from the University Book Exchange, Norman, and will be sent postpaid if remittance accompanies order.)