

# Collegiate Storm Is Brewing

the paint-up, fix-up policies of our colleges are inadequate for today's educational challenge

By EDWARD D. EDDY JR.  
President of Chatham College

UP TO this point in their history, the great majority of American colleges and universities, some 1,800 in number, have been behaving not unlike owners of single, disconnected pieces of beach property. Before the tourist season begins each year, they have busied themselves in painting the picket fence and re-shingling the roof in the hope that their cottages will rent for a slightly higher fee and that the tenants will be just a bit more desirable. Such minor repairs, they contend, may interest the kind of tenant who stays throughout the season, instead of the annoying type who checks in and out in a hurry.

In recent years, however, the property owners have been warned by prognosticators that a serious storm is brewing off the coast. Indeed, the storm may reach hurricane dimensions previously unrecorded. Suddenly the individual colleges discover that fences and roofs and long-term tenants seem fairly trivial compared to the potential severity of the storm. At each national and regional meeting of the educational real estateors, the stories of pressures on the high school senior and of the experiences of college admissions directors have become successively more fantastic.

No hurricane of any kind was ever given better advance notice. Every prognostication indicates that the colleges will be inundated by students within three to four short years. If anything, the storm analogy errs because it implies a momentary disruption. From all indications, the college demand is here to stay.

Answers aren't easy, but perhaps a few

intelligent questions help to give focus to a partial understanding of the hurricane ahead. An initial question could be put this way: *Are we willing to be realistic about education?* Are we in the colleges, for instance, willing to admit that we have not been entirely honest in our claims about the effect and the efficacy of higher learning? We have created conditions which now threaten to wreck us. We have sent aloft the airplanes to seed the clouds — and we wring our hands because the rain threatens to swamp us.

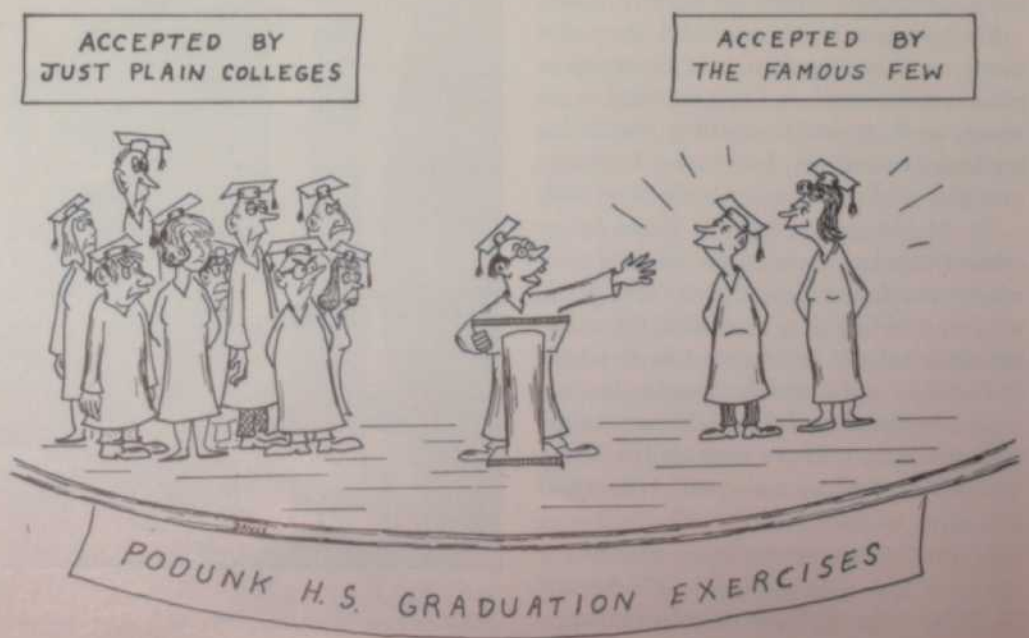
Several years ago John Gardner of the Carnegie Corporation warned against using education as a lure for status. He wrote in his annual report:

"There is in this country a distressing overemphasis on college education as a guarantor of economic success, social ac-

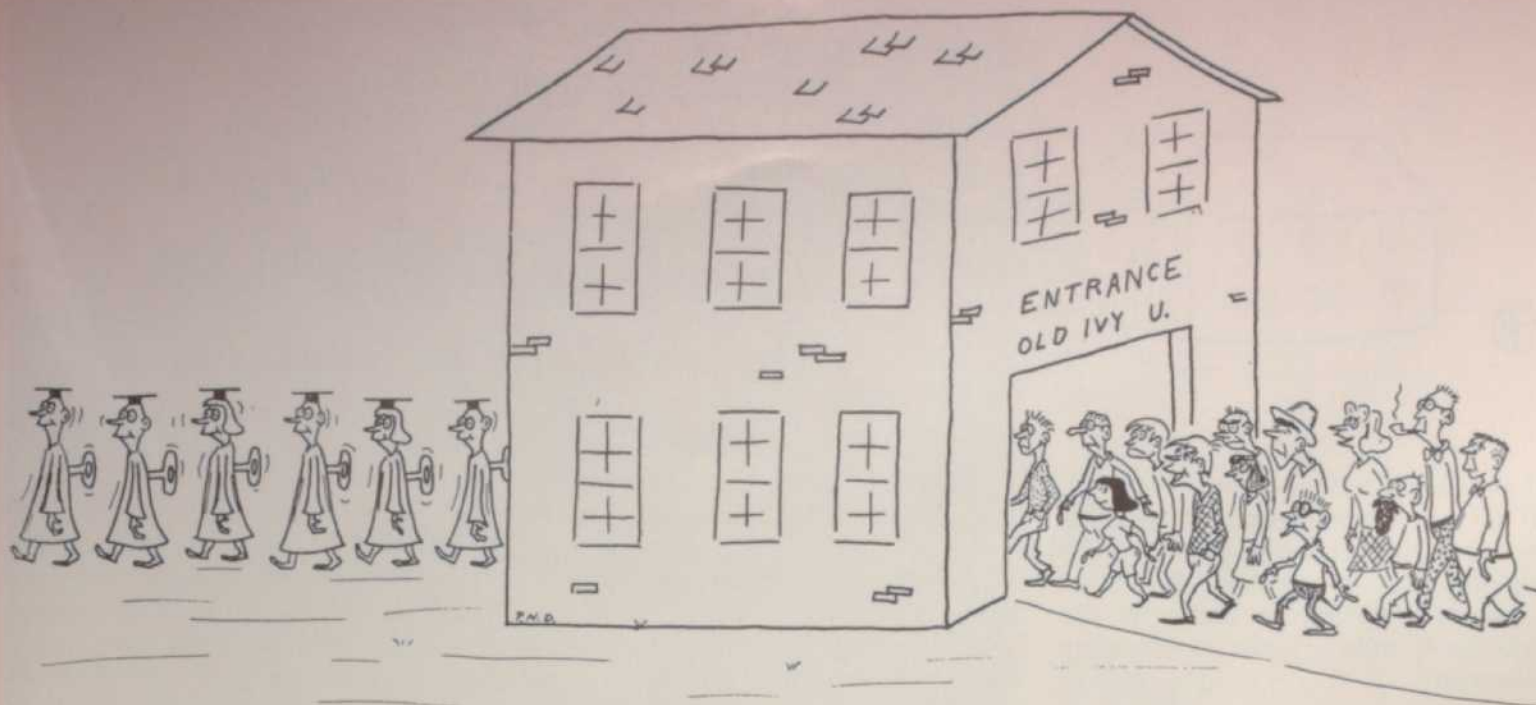
ceptability, and general human worth . . . [There are] widespread social attitudes which seem to equate a college education with human dignity and the right to hold one's head up in the world . . . The excessive emphasis on college education as the only 'respectable' outcome for a young man or woman has created a cruel narrowing of the conception of personal development beyond high school."

Are we willing to lend our strong support to building and supporting a different kind of educational experience for the student who will not benefit greatly from college, and to allow that experience to share in the prestige which we now claim for college alone? This is a question which guidance counselors, college faculties, and college alumni can help to answer.

Second question: *Are we willing to call*



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a halt to senseless collegiate comparisons? Not every institution of higher learning in this country could or should be facsimile of Harvard. And yet this is the trend toward which high school counselors, parents, and students are pushing the colleges. This tendency toward uniformity weakens all of us. We pride ourselves in public on our diversity and then, in private, pity ourselves for our differences.

Are we willing to encourage and support, then, the college which wants to be distinctively excellent at its own chosen level? We are in desperate need of intelligent non-conformity in higher education. And, in our guidance, we must protect the non-conformist colleges from receiving applications only from the ill-fitting and ill-prepared among students. Do we really believe in diversity in American higher education? If we do, let's support it in fact as well as in word. To cease competing and comparing requires the development of what John Gardner again has called "a point of view that permits each kind of institution to achieve excellence in terms of its own objectives."

SUCH a course will knock down completely the already leaning tower of prestige among certain colleges and universities in our country. But we know what the perpetuation of the forces of institutional prestige can do to the individual student. In his study of high school students, James Coleman concluded: "One gets the impression that these students and their parents have been so concerned about the problems of getting into the right college that they have nearly forgotten what a college education is all about . . . In some

highly privileged schools, the students go to the right colleges, but for the wrong reasons. In many small isolated high schools, the students have the right reasons, but they end up in wrong colleges." The perpetuation of prestige has helped to weaken the concept of learning for learning's sake. It makes a farce of some of our truly worthy academic endeavors.

In addition, the individual student may become the victim of the second-choice complex which plagues many a student and many a college. Perhaps one simple solution to all this would be for the secondary school to give recognition to *all* who enter an accredited institution and to stop bragging about the few who were luckily shoe-horned into the famous few.

Question number three: *Are we willing to believe in the diversity of students within the college as well as in the diversity of the colleges themselves?* Many high school counselors now are demanding that the college admissions officers tell them "what type of students you want." Such a course leads inevitably to a homogenized and pasteurized student body. The future of our common intellectual life is endangered if colleges are not willing to take a chance on the unpredictable. We should not want "types"; we should want individuals. Every college admissions reference form might well include two key questions: "Has the candidate ever been identified with unpopular but worthwhile causes?" and "Has the candidate ever done anything which is truly individual, distinctive, creative?"

If high schools force upon the colleges only one kind of student for each college, the colleges will return to the communities the homogenized product who is described

by Harold Taylor as "well-rounded . . . in the sense that all of the rough edges have been smoothed off until [he] is perfectly round, like a tennis ball with a little friendly fuzz on top."

The vitality of a campus and the development of the individual student come from a presentation of many points of view among both faculty members *and* students.

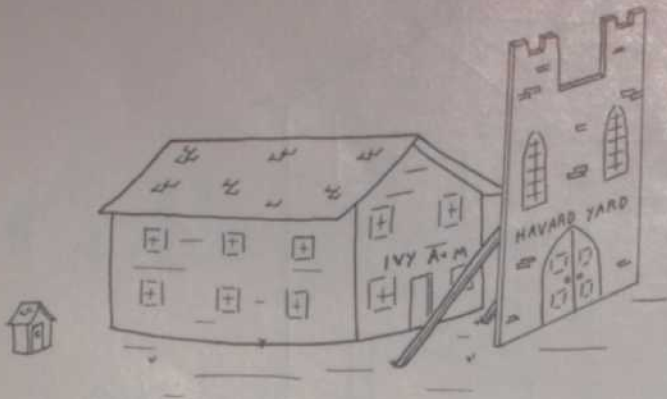
**M**OST of us believe firmly in equality of opportunity for the admission to college of students of ability — but do we also believe in inequality of opportunity once a student reaches college? The colleges will be deprived of this important inequality if all high school counselors seek to simplify collegiate standards by making all students distressingly alike at the outset. No college, for instance, is really helped by the easy descriptions which are appearing with distressing frequency in national magazines and in easy "guides to choosing the right college."

Question number four: *Are we willing to make the mighty effort to achieve genuine democracy in higher education?* We are faced with a shocking loss of talent because of socio-economic barriers. A recent University of Wisconsin study demonstrated "clear proof that socio-economic class has a marked bearing on who goes to college and that these differences are still great when ability, measured by intelligence tests, is taken into consideration."

According to the Wisconsin percentages, for instance, 63 per cent of all of the students whose fathers were in the professional and executive category had definite

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## "the extra-curricular life in college is geared to the student of yesteryear"



plans to attend college, compared with only 21 per cent whose fathers were unskilled workers. Until we have together made a gigantic effort to overcome these socio-economic handicaps, we cannot say that America is truly a leader in democratic education.

**Q**UESTION number five: *Are we willing to encourage the judgment and selection of colleges on criteria which are in keeping with sound academic aims?* This question presupposes our primary interest in the individual as a potential scholar, not as a status seeker. A parent looking for a college for a son or daughter might want to do two things beyond the usual. First, the parent could subscribe — and this, I admit, is rank heresy — to the student newspaper to find out what concerns students and how they keep themselves busy. In this way, the parent might isolate the two or three major issues seriously discussed on that campus in a particular year. Then the parent might seek answers to a number of embarrassing but perhaps pertinent questions. Among them could be included:

1. What is the average teaching load?
2. What has been the faculty turn-over during the past five years?
3. To what extent is there in-breeding in faculty administration appointments?
4. What is the pattern of dormitory living?
5. What is the realistic level of expectancy in academic work in campus life?
6. What books and magazines are in greatest demand in campus bookstores?
7. How many concerts, plays, exhibits, and lectures by visiting scholars were scheduled during the past year?
8. What is the record of graduate-school acceptances?
9. Has the college taken a stand on such national questions as the disclaimer affidavit?
10. Is there a clearly defined core of knowledge which the college expects in the four years of collegiate activity?

11. When was the curriculum last examined intensively and revised extensively?

12. What are the typical office hours of faculty members?

13. What are the extent and nature of faculty activities beyond teaching?

14. What change has occurred in the past ten years in the amount allocated for library acquisitions?

15. Is there a sense of community anywhere and everywhere?

Realistic answers to realistic questions such as these are the sensible guide to appropriate choice — not sentimentality over the dream of an alma mater which never was, or touched-up photographs of a building with no right to be.

Finally, question number six: *Are the colleges ready to adapt themselves to a different sort of student who is ready for a higher level of achievement all along the line?* Only when such an adaptation is achieved will we be meeting our obligation to the individual student. It is evident to many of us, for instance, that the brighter students are no longer the naïve and unsophisticated freshmen with whom we have long been dealing. And yet the freshman year of study in many colleges is still

geared to an outmoded concept of the student. We are smothering their interests by perpetuating the lock-step of lower-division study. We have not revised our courses and our programs to capitalize on the enriched high school program. True, many institutions are providing exemptions in certain areas; but, at best, exemption is only a temporary answer and not the permanent solution. Although high school preparation for college is still raggedly uneven, the colleges can assist by raising the standards of intellectual challenge in the beginning college years.

In the same fashion, extra-curricular life in college is geared to the student of yesteryear. By and large, American high schools have usurped for their own what we have traditionally considered collegiate-level activities. Interscholastic athletics now rival in form and fury the once-traditional inter-collegiate program. Student publications are often more expertly produced at the high school level. And the secondary school social life matches what we have known heretofore only at the college level. Students date earlier, smoke earlier, drink earlier. And they are tired, by the time they reach college, of decorating a gymnasium with crepe paper for the Junior Prom.

**T**HE colleges should not fail to capitalize on these changes by providing the kind of extra-curricular program with an intellectual emphasis which the colleges have long wished might be possible. It *is* possible now, if the colleges will only recognize the latent student interest and stop bemoaning the disinterest in the traditional.

As the level rises, however, the colleges must be wary of the over-encouragement given the over-achiever, just as they must be wary of all undue forms of competition which are basically unhealthy for the student. In the years ahead, colleges will be far less tolerant of the deviant in any form — for the simple reason that another, possibly equally intelligent, student is ready

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# Collegiate Storm Is Brewing

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to take his place when a vacancy occurs. Our concern for the system and the schedule never should be given priority over our concern for the individual and his right to be an individual.

In summary, there are some steps to be taken to lessen the impact of the storm:

We can be honest about education's value and not insist upon its social necessity for every individual.

We can cease our senseless competition, whether it is between public and private colleges or among the private.

We can provide room and encouragement for the necessary diversity in form and function among colleges and insist on diversity within all colleges in order to avoid a homogenized campus culture.

All of us together can work to be sure that American education is truly democratic because it does give equal chance to the student of abilities devoid of false preselection by class and caste.

We can establish new criteria for judgment by parent and student. In turn, we must then be ready to meet the new standard of student interest and ability.

The national admissions crisis, in which the individual student is often tragically forgotten, must be solved by the colleges and the secondary schools working together in the short time that is left. The storm warnings are up, but few of us are ready to evacuate. The colleges will do well to

keep repeating to themselves Gilbert Highet's admonition that the students "have no faults, except the very ones they are asking you to eradicate: ignorance, shallowness, and inexperience . . . It will be useless . . . to wish that there were only two or three, or that they were all more mature. They will always be young, and there will always be lots of them."

And to this we should respond with enthusiasm: Thank God.

## When the Last Class Is Over

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time he was president of the Big Six Swimming Coaches' Association.

Allphin has been a devoted worker in physical education. In 1951 while working on a special project with a graduate student, he surveyed 48 states and found that only 14 granted credit for physical education courses and that the average daily time spent in physical education in elementary and secondary schools was only 30 minutes. As a result of these findings he recommended that all states require four years of physical education in secondary schools, that state laws regarding physical education be specifically stated and that academic credit be offered in the courses.

Allphin was born at Sterling, Kansas, and came to Oklahoma Territory two years later when his father made the run at the opening of the Cherokee Strip. He received a bachelor of science degree from the University of Kansas in 1930 and his master's from the University of Iowa in 1935.

He and Georgia Caroline Burditt were married at Independence, Kansas, in 1926. He has been a member of the Methodist Church, Masons, Consistory, Lions Club, Oklahoma State Association for Physical Education, and served as chapter counselor of Beta Theta Pi.

Allphin makes travel a hobby. In addition to his frequent trips teaching swimming safety, he also took a physical education travel tour through European countries in 1936. On top of his many activities and teaching duties, he has found time to write some 35 articles on physical education, recreation and swimming.

Having followed such a vigorous schedule, it is understandable that upon retirement he plans to "just rest" awhile—but only for a while. Once he gets his second wind he expects to do recreation work on a part-time basis.

bears the title of data accumulation and communications, was effective January 1. Mr. and Mrs. Harder have two daughters, Melanie, 3, and Kathryn Ann, 1.

John E. (Jack) Heaney, '50journ, recently was named by the North American Aviation, Incorporated, to head the public relations operations of the firm's new Tulsa division. Heaney is a former *Tulsa World* reporter and later joined United Press International's Oklahoma City bureau. He later became an industrial writer for Shell Oil Company in the New York office and was transferred to the West Coast in 1958 to handle employee publications. He joined North American in 1960.

MARRIAGE: Randall Stanley Risdon and Mrs. Risdon (Evelyn Elledge, '50ba) have established a home at Lancaster, California, where both are with the Lancaster school district and Risdon is working for a doctor's degree at the University of Southern California. The couple was married in December at Los Angeles, California. Mrs. Risdon's hometown is Dallas, Texas.

BIRTHS: Maurice G. Duncan, '50bus, and Mrs. Duncan have announced the birth of a daughter, Nancy Lynn, on March 29 at St. John's Hospital, Tulsa. She is their first child.

Jack M. Graves and Mrs. Graves (Rosemary Champlin, '50ba) have given the names Laura Owen and Claire Marie to their twin daughters born March 2 in Oklahoma City.

Charles H. Johns Jr., '50, and Mrs. Johns, Denver, Colorado, have chosen the name Julie Marie for their daughter born March 22. She is their third daughter.

J. O. Scott, '50eng, and Mrs. Scott, have chosen the name Susan Lianne for their daughter born March 8 at Hillcrest Medical Center, Tulsa.

DEATH: Daryl Hopkins, '50 geol, died February 16 in Tripoli, Libya, where he was employed by an oil company. Survivors include his mother, Mary Hopkins, Norman, three brothers and seven sisters.

### 1951-1952

William J. Alley, '51bus, '54Law, has been elected to the board of directors of the Pioneer American Insurance Company at Fort Worth, Texas. He is also vice president and agency director of the company. He is married to the former Marilyn Walter, '51ba, and the couple has four daughters.

Don Bullock, '51bs, Ft. Worth, Texas, is employed as an electronic data processing programmer at General Dynamics Corporation in Ft. Worth. He and his wife, Naomi, have one daughter, Donna Carole, 5.

Dr. Stanley Coppock Jr., '51ms, has been appointed entomologist of New Mexico State University's extension service at Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Dr. James A. Dyal, '51ba, Ft. Worth, Texas, has joined the faculty of Texas Christian University as an associate professor of psychology. He was formerly at Southern Methodist University. Dr. and Mrs. Dyal (Earlene Russell, '52bus) have one child, Jack, 4.

James A. Peabody, '51ba, '53Law, Oklahoma City, and William G. Paul, '52ba, '56Law, Norman, have become partners in the law firm of Crowe, Boxley, Dunlevy, Thweatt, Swinford and Johnson in Oklahoma City.

Wayne C. White, '51journ, Tulsa, recently became assistant to the advertising manager of Kerr Glass Manufacturing Corporation of Sand Springs. White has previously been with the Tayloe Paper

## Hal Muldrow Agency

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