

EDITORIAL

Notice: there will be no further communication
lectures are cancelled
all students are expelled
from Eli Mandel's
"Pictures in an Institution"

TEACHING: EDUCATION THROUGH COMMUNICATION

As a communication specialist working within the field of education, I encounter numerous ties between education and communication when teaching. In this editorial, several links between learning and sharing - educating and communicating - will be shown with the hope that these links will be useful to our readers.

Teachers have to communicate in order to educate. Both communication and education make up teaching. Communication is the means; education the end. While communication has many ends, in teaching its main end is education. Since amusement and propaganda are two other common general ends of communication, education is not the only end. It is and clearly should be the major one.

Although teachers may, in varying degrees, amuse their students and promote valued ideas, they must educate their students. Effective teachers communicate effectively on all three dimensions. Not only their subject matter but also their attitudes toward their students, themselves, and their vocation are all communicated more or less. While amusement and propaganda are parts of teaching, both should serve the ultimate goal of education. Both should be instruments used to educate: to induce students to learn something we prize and believe will help them to live as well as to earn a living.

We too often put education, teaching, communication, amusement, and propaganda in separate compartments rather than combine them into a whole. When we see no connection among these, schooling suffers. By arranging these in a way that best assembles this puzzle, the interlocking pieces form the rewarding picture of teachers educating through communication. By recognizing where these parts fit, that teaching employs the method of communication to attain the ends of education, amusement, and propaganda, the profession of teaching as well as schools and students profit from the usefulness and factualness of these united parts.

To any teacher, manager, salesperson, preacher, entertainer - the importance of communication is unarguable. To fulfill the ends of any of these professions, communication must occur. The lack of communication prevents teachers from educating, managers from controlling, salespeople from promoting, preachers from propagating, and entertainers from amusing. Whatever the end of the professional role, communication must be one of the means: frequently, the foremost means.

Whatever the medium of communication may be, to be effective, teaching requires extensive and skillful communication. Whether teachers speak, write, or sing their lessons, they must communicate with education in mind. Without communication, teaching stops and so does the profession of teaching, since teachers must communicate with colleagues and administrators as well as students. When the diverse interests, ages, and roles of teachers, students, and administrators are taken into account, the importance of communicative ability becomes obvious. The teachers's educational task is difficult and complex, yet impossible without the skills of communication. The results of teaching are never perfect because the primary educational tool of communication is never perfect. Communication always fails in some way somewhat. While the communication failure may be insignificant, it exists. Although the educational end of communication is never met perfectly, it is frequently met practicably. So the better teachers become at communicating, the better their chances become at educating.

As Eli Mandel notifies us, there will be no students and no lectures without communication. Teaching would be cancelled without communication. To think education exists apart from communication is a delusion which we should cancel and expel.