

does social class determine

who gets the scholarships?

by james c. hockler
department of sociology

One occasionally hears the comment that an increase in tuition fees would not work a hardship on students from the lower socioeconomic strata as long as scholarships were increased at the same time.

The naive belief persists that poor but talented young people receive most of the scholarships. In actuality the children of middle class parents tend to receive them. They are better risks than young people from the slums for example. Their academic background is superior partially because their parents have helped them to learn the rules in the grade-getting-game. Those who give scholarships like to see a high success rate. The fact that a somewhat marginal student from an academically deprived background may need a scholarship much more desperately is of secondary importance.

In the United States the National Merit Scholarship program was initiated to provide educational opportunities for able youth from the lower socioeconomic strata of the society. Because of the advantage middle class children have in the grade-getting-game, the program based awards on competitive examinations and financial need.

The results, however, showed that a child whose father was a physician had 26 times as much chance of receiving a scholarship as a child whose father was a machinist and 71 times as much chance as a child whose father was a truck driver.

When the children of college professors are compared with those of laborers the odds are 1,000 to 1 in favor of the children of professors.

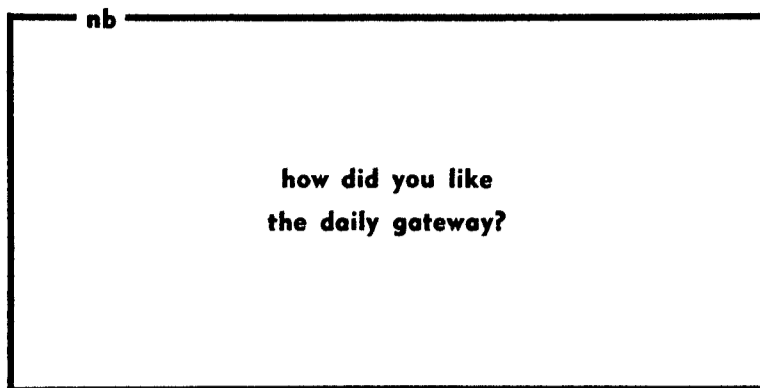
Does "natural intelligence" explain these ratios? A better explanation seems to be that children in middle class homes develop greater facility in manipulating verbal and mathematical symbols.

The National Merit Scholarships attempted to overcome the inequities of environmental background; most scholarship programs only go through the motions. Aggressive middle class parents badger both child and teacher to get higher scores. Children learn that poise, manners, and appearance help in the scholarship game. Conning the teacher becomes a highly developed skill.

Getting a scholarship proves to the neighborhood that Junior is upwardly mobile and that Mom and Dad have been virtuous parents. The college scholarship is a status symbol no less important than the new car or colored TV.

The question of "need" is still relevant in awarding scholarships but other factors intervene. Besides middle class parents (particularly professors) are very adept at showing financial need for their children. I know of one family earning \$12,000 a year which claimed they could not afford to send their only son to college. They got the scholarship.

Loans that charge no interest are obviously a help to students. But



how did you like
the daily gateway?

are middle class parents going to touch any of the cash they have stored away earning 6 per cent when loans are available? Some lower class families may scrimp and save for years but be hesitant to go into debt in order to get a son through college.

Those in the middle class have learned to live comfortably with debt and you certainly can't beat the interest rates on these college loans. For a professor proficient in writing up grant requests for research projects, loan and scholarship applications are a snap. The point is obvious—those of higher socioeconomic status are more skillful in utilizing the scholarship and loan system.

It is not only difficult for poor people to get into college, it is increasingly difficult to meet the living standards of the college community.

When the critic looks at modern university dorms and says, "they never had it so good," he is correct in assuming that college students live well. Their parents usually can afford it. And, to judge by complaints about dormitory food on some campuses, college students have sophisticated palates. They are accustomed to more than just a balanced diet. Modern universities do not provide minimal shelter and food for poor students. They cater to the demands of their clientele and that clientele is by and large middle class.

As a result the lower class student in financial straits is in an embarrassing position. The Quonset huts which appeared on campuses after World War II and provided a bunk for a few dollars a month have disappeared. The "mess halls" no longer exist that dispense inexpensive meals, lacking perhaps in delicacy but sufficient to allay hunger pangs.

Today's wealthy campuses not only make it more difficult for the genuinely poor to get by, but make it socially humiliating as well.

The above viewpoint would naturally be unacceptable to those who believe the Horatio Alger Myth—the "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" orientation. This view claims that success can be had by

all if only the individual is virtuous and industrious. According to this line of reasoning talented individuals will enter school and join the ranks of middle class society by a process of self selection. We do not have to create opportunity because it is already there. (Most of us realize that it helps to be White, Anglo-Saxon, and Protestant.)

The Horatio Alger Myth should not be dismissed lightly, however. It provides guidelines for middle class families. Like many myths it is useful in holding up ideals to major portions of the society. At a later period we learn that there may be superior techniques for getting one's fist in the economic pot such as cheating on income tax, political favoritism, marrying the boss's daughter, fleecing customers, or getting a Ph.D.

But the Horatio Alger myth does not fit so well when applied to the Indian boy born on a reservation along with six illegitimate brothers and sisters. One does not have to be a sociologist to realize that there are societal and cultural barriers to success and that these hurdles are products of the society rather than characteristics of the individuals. If we genuinely wish more people to share in our high standard of living some of these barriers have to be lowered a little.

The province of Alberta is lacking in facilities that have minimal requirements, charge low fees, and are willing to accept a high dropout rate. Such an institution, like the community junior college, would be oriented toward serving those who have talents as yet untapped by our rather narrow academic educational system.

The University of Alberta is obligated to tackle at least a portion of this task. At least those who have some academic competence should not be denied a chance for future training. Raising university fees would make it even more difficult for these young people to enter college.

It is somewhat akin to stepping on the fingers of a mountain climber who is just barely clinging to a ledge. He probably would have fallen anyway, but do we have to make it so certain?

letters

one-sided argument

To The Editor:

This is in protest of Bruce Ferrier's one-sided argument entitled "yankee go home." It does not reveal one of the real reasons for the war in Vietnam. The argument that the war in Vietnam is a "dirty" piece of American aggression does not hold for me.

I propose that it is not aggression but resistance. I say that the war in Vietnam is a fight to preserve the rights of all peoples, as a natural

right, to the freedoms which are basic to democracy. The Americans are making a stand to resist the forces of Communism which deny the free will of the people.

It is right for the United States to fight Communism in Vietnam because those that believe in the right to control their own destinies have an obligation to fight for that right, whether it is in their own country or in aid of a besieged country.

Communism is a repressive force that works on ignorance and until the Vietnamese are mature enough

Viewpoint

O! Fleming, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come;
Who saves us from the stormy blast
Of foreign movie scum.

Unfortunately, the second line is no longer true. The beloved film censorship board chairman is apparently retiring, after long years devoted to protecting Alberta's moral standards (and keeping the province a movie backwater).

The good colonel, long inured to the scummier side of life from his association with the forces, was probably the best man for the job. But he apparently has to go.

In his place, the Government of Alberta is choosing another film censorship board chairman.

The qualities of character, and (get this!) academic requirements are unlike any ever seen in the province.

Among other things, the willing, nay, panting, applicant should have "considerable experience in community, educational, journalistic, or similar work; university graduation with major course work in sociology, psychology, or fine arts; or an equivalent combination of experience and education."

Quite a handful. Note, however, that the requirements include no trite panderings about moral character. This is either an oversight or else the government feels that the applicants, born and raised in the good clean air of Alberta, will naturally be of outstanding character.

The duties of the board chairman are not onerous.

For example: He "views motion pictures and determines whether acceptable under the principles for censorship of pictures laid down." Unfortunately, the prospective chairman will have a hard time with this one. In a telephone interview, the present chief censor refused to indicate what these principles are. He intimated that they are not for public divulgence.

Also, the chairman "deals with public enquiries and complaints on censorship matters." Obviously, the easiest way to deal with them is to put them in the wastepaper basket. Or hang up on the telephone.

He is "responsible for editing of films (i.e. deletion of objectionable material)." Here the prospect must be careful. Although the prospectus does not tell where the deleted film goes once deleted, the thorny problem of deciding what will be deleted still arises. As Film Society members know, "deletion of objectionable material" means cutting out (1) the climax, (2) the central character, (3) the central character's bosom companion, or (4) the scene containing the meaning of the film.

This Government of Alberta Employment Opportunity has been lying in the National Employment Office for several weeks. But still no takers. Perhaps, just perhaps, the government will nepotistically seek its own.

Mr. Rodger is an arts student.

sleep-teaching

reprinted from unesco features

Something every student dreams of—learning while he sleeps—is fast becoming a practical proposition.

Psychologists and educators all over the world have been experimenting with sleep-teach techniques for several years now.

In Britain, a national Committee on Sleep Teaching has been formed to co-ordinate research and a number of companies are already offering specially-adapted tape recorders that will run all night long, repeating phrases from a foreign language or instruction in technical subjects.

The theory is that verbal messages get through to the brain even when the 'listener' is asleep and that, if the noise level of instruction is kept low and even, so as not to disturb the student's rest, facts are retained in the memory in much the same way as those absorbed by ordinary teaching methods.

But until recently, it remained a mere theory.

Despite apparent success in many individual cases—and inexplicable failure in others—the principles of sleep-teaching (or hypnopedia as it is coming to be called) had never been tested on a really large scale.

In October, however, the first mass hypnopedia program, sponsored by the Education Services of the Czechoslovakian Radio, began in the industrial city of Ustinad Labem, in northern Bohemia.

The experiment itself will last five months. The subject chosen for teaching by hypnopedia is English and instruction is being given via the piped radio network in the town. This will relay ten lessons, broadcast at fortnightly intervals, to the volunteer learn-while-you-dream students.

Each lesson lasts 12 hours—from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. The first three hours are given with the student awake. They consist of a high-pressure course of grammar and vocabulary.

At 11 p.m., a soothing lullaby is broadcast to send the student to sleep and for the next four hours, the radio whispers the lesson again into his sleeping ears. At 2 a.m., a strident signal is transmitted to wake the guinea pig up for a brief revision. Then he is lulled back to rest again while the radio purrs on.

At 5 o'clock, his sleep ends and he has to follow a three-hour review of the lesson before his hard earned breakfast.

to combat this force I believe the United States should remain in Vietnam and receive our support.

Allen Adams
eng. 1

thanks

To The Editor:

The cold weather we are blessed with makes professors and students alike think twice about staying in their "sunny" Alberta.

Students with cars that won't start (like me) and students who have to

walk some distance to university are rarely graced with the compassion shown yours truly on Friday morning.

I would like to thank most sincerely the lady in the blue station-wagon, LN 5410, who kindly offered me a ride. She had the astute insight to see that my legs were on the point of becoming forever preserved in ice.

Good luck to all shivering students who must resort to "shank's ponies" these days.

Marilyn Holeha
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