

A study of five midwesterners and
their educational needs and experiences
in the language arts

by

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An Explanation of the Subject and
Conclusions Reached through Interviews

Throughout six years as a supervisor in an English curriculum in Grades 7-12, where I have observed thirty teachers each year advancing communication skills in classrooms, a thought--or question--has recurred like an ache somewhere in the body. The question, never answered and rarely treated, has been, "Of what benefit will this study be to these children in life, particularly in adult life?" Attendance at six consecutive conventions of the National Council of Teachers of English has not produced much in the way of alleviation of the discomfort. Neither have four convention experiences as a program participant: programs which have dealt with writing essays (twice), duties of a department chairperson, and a session for supervisors and coordinators. In fact, the subject of adult needs has never been treated in those experiences. Much has been said of "relevance" in recent years, so much in fact that the word brings knowing smiles to the faces of teachers. "Relevance" always has seemed to mean materials of high-motivation, very much related or similar to the teen-ager's life and interests, with very little substance to thrust the teen-ager out of his or her provincial world into something broader and closer to what is defined as education.

I have often wondered why articles which have appeared in such respected publications as The English Journal or the more trendy Media and Methods have never seemed to touch the source where the

answer would seem most likely to lie, the adult world itself. As a supervisor, I have received a number of telephone calls each year from parents either in praise or criticism of some aspect of curriculum--or at times from another source, an employer either happy or dismayed by the language skills or lack of such skills in some recently acquired employee. These experiences may have been partly responsible for this investigation.

The school district in which I am employed is considered a leader in the current educational trend of Career Education, a concept frequently discussed and just as frequently misunderstood. Usually a school district is considered a leader in a particular educational endeavor if it has been rather generously financed by the federal government to carry out a designated project. Federal funds allow for extended contracts for teachers; and in one summer, one hundred twenty-five teachers in the district in which I am employed participated in a federally funded program in Career Education. I am one of that group.

In that summer of 1973, I began a dialogue with a broad range of adults about their experiences and their suggestions regarding the teaching and study of the Language Arts. So interesting and informative were my conversations that I soon developed them into taped interviews. I have continued the activity for more than a year. With the much publicized Career Education as a conversational beginning, I have sought to interview as many people as I could from as broad a scope

of experiences and employment as possible. I was careful to balance the number of men interviewed with the number of women interviewed. Of many patterns which developed, one I quickly noticed was the willingness, even enthusiasm, of adults to give an evening of their time to the completion of at least a one-hour taping. I was never refused. I am convinced that adults are eager to talk about their educational experiences.

It also seemed important to select people of different ages, the youngest twenty-two and the oldest sixty-one. I paid attention also to including different "walks of life" by means of interviews with people from business, agriculture, industry, the professions, and even the unemployed. Yet another determinant for interviewing was level of formal education, thus I conducted interviews with people who had dropped out of school after seventh grade to people with thirty hours beyond a Master's Degree or with degrees in law.

From this wide collection of taped interviews, I have studied five which seem to subsume most of the answers I received. The five, which I have written into profiles (I was influenced to write in this form from reading The New Yorker magazine), seem to sweep the entire population of people I interviewed. They include the seventh-grade dropout and the MA+30 unemployment statistic. They represent business, industry, agriculture, the professions, and unemployment--career fields which encompass all or most of the possibilities of employment in central Iowa.

The following six questions were asked at some time in each of the interviews. Considerable conversation of a probing or follow-up nature led to and from each question.

1. What communication skills--writing, reading, speaking, listening, observing--are most essential or advantageous to you in the work that you do?
2. What did you study in English in Grades 7 through 12 that is of most benefit to you now?
3. What did you study in English in those grades that is of least benefit to you now or has been of least benefit to you in life?
4. What do you feel ought to be included or stressed in English programs, Grades 7 through 12, based on the needs or demands that life has presented for you?
5. What communication skills do you tend to see lacking in society?
6. Do you have any advice for teachers of English in Grades 7 through 12?

Trite though it is, the colloquialism "different strokes for different folks" seems to be one of the significant discoveries. All of the five profiles, representative of all those interviewed, show a need for a variety of kinds of encouragement in learning language skills. The subjects frequently refer to teachers who "encouraged" them.

Of equal significance is the revelation of a need for variety in English programs and within individual English classrooms. Had the five been in the same classroom at one time, the point would be dramatically emphasized. But the fact that they were in different classrooms at different times makes the probability of a need for

variety in methods and approach even more startling.

Of some coincidence perhaps is the fact that the one of the five (Viva DeGrado) whose language performance appears the most demanding--the harsh responsibility of labor-management negotiations--has the least formal education. The one with the most formal education (Jeff Smull) is unemployed by his own choosing. However coincidental those facts may be, rare would have been the English teacher who would have made that prediction when either of these two people was a student. Interesting also is that the farmer in the group is decidedly the "intellectual" among the five profiles; in fact, he was the most intellectual of all those interviewed. While certainly no conclusions can be drawn from these interesting outcomes, at least some demolition of stereotypes has been accomplished.

The subject of different needs can be explained in more detail. Both Viva DeGrado and Michael Knoll have much to say about their seventh-grade English teachers, but the two teachers they describe seem to contrast with one another sharply. Mrs. DeGrado's gratitude is expressed toward a humanistic type of person with a keen sense of junior high psychology; Knoll's gratitude is expressed toward a strict and demanding teacher whose reputation frightened him into profitable learning. Yet both claim the respective teacher was encouraging. Other contrasts are also evident. Delores Winter's development of language skills seems to have been of great benefit to her socially and therefore economically in the business world; Jeff Smull probably spoke a standard English (which Mrs. Winter had to learn) before he took the

English courses he describes; but his knowledge of standard English has not been of significant benefit to him economically. In fact, the positions for which he now seems most qualified, teaching or journalism, do not pay nearly so well as positions in business generally do.

With the exception of White's, the profiles show a strong opinion that listening skills in society need improvement--at least all four isolated that skill as one where teachers should definitely place more emphasis. White's recommendation for teachers is close to being opposite to an emphasis on listening. He sees a strong need for an "extroverted communication" directed toward the external forces in life, the they's people often talk about.

Somewhat surprising also is that the five, again representative of those interviewed, are quick to point out that observing is a vital or the most vital skill; it is mentioned much more quickly and more frequently in the interviews than is either reading or writing. This emphasis on observing creates discomfort in a conscientious English teacher. The realization of the need for instruction in observing may even come as a stabbing pain. Uninformed indeed would be the person who thinks that in English classes skills in observing receive anything like equal attention to that paid some form of reading and writing. Elementary and college classes could be included with the classes in Grades 7-12, and it would make no difference.

My investigation makes a strong case for individualized instruction, for a need for variety in materials, methods, and

personalities of teachers. The demands for communication in the career world as well as in life appear to be many. It would be most ingenuous to suggest that this conclusion reveals something not considered before. The opinion that individualized instruction in the Language Arts is necessary to fulfillment in adulthood is a commonly held one. But I must say that my thesis is the first attempt I have seen in my experience to prove that that commonly held assumption is true.

Jeff Smull

Jeff Smull is unemployed. He looks upon himself as a child of the nineteen-sixties living realistically in the mid-seventies. He does not want to go to work and is not looking for work.

In either the narrow sense of Career Education--possessing a salable skill at high school graduation--or in the broader definition of "one's career is one's life," Smull is indeed a fortunate man. He has been employed full-time as a reporter for a daily Iowa newspaper and was an assistant editor of an Iowa weekly. He has also been a teacher, having taught college courses while pursuing a Master's Degree in English at Vanderbilt. He has collected at least thirty hours of credit above a Master's Degree. But he does not want to teach.

An "indigenous" romantic by self-description, he knows that he is among the six percent of the unemployed mentioned daily by the media in watchful tones. He does not worry about that. Not motivated either by acquisition of material goods or by advancement in a career, Smull and his wife and child live on a "minimal income by other people's standards." His wife teaches in a program for the home-bound; he does housekeeping chores in their small apartment and helps with the care of a pre-school daughter. The remainder of his life is consumed by self-fulfillment. When he was employed, he felt that many aspects of his personality were "atrophying," were "lying fallow," and it bothered him. He does write in private ways at times and is doing what he calls a "great deal" of reading. He intends to remain unemployed as long as he can possibly afford it. When he does go

back to work, he hopes to be employed in a way that will be all-consuming, in a way that will be so "enthralling" that he will not consider the aspect of fulfillment, a state of mind he never really achieved even when working up to eighty hours a week as a journalist. What a person is making or what career he or she is in usually has no relationship to happiness: "What makes a person happy or unhappy is all the tangential and peripheral things that involve his life," Smull insists. "The fact that a person is making \$25,000 a year does not mean that he is either happy or unhappy. It has nothing to do with the worth of a life or with the happiness of an individual personality." In that capsule he states his satisfaction with unemployment.

Smull considers himself typical of people who came to adolescence in the nineteen-sixties and achieved college age in that decade. He feels that today's twenty-year-olds are considerably different from him, his sister among them. A pre-medical student, she is what Smull calls very career-oriented, very directed in pursuit of a single goal. Most of his sister's friends seem very much like her, he adds.

Smull's educational experiences in the Language Arts seem right for him. "Turned on" to reading by a couple of English teachers while he was a student in a Minneapolis high school, what he remembers most about his experiences in Grades 7-12 were those two teachers. They had what Smull calls a qualitative approach to education, which he describes as one open to variance, willing to adjust to special interests of students, and "not so judgmental" in leveling a personal criterion

of achievement against the student. Smull contrasts this approach with that which made up most of his secondary education, an approach based on quantitative results, week-by-week progress in a syllabus moving all students through a given body of material and a predetermined set of standards. He considers the quantitative approach "comfortable" both for teacher and student, an easy mark for the student who can smoothly play the teacher's game. He feels that most students prefer that approach because it does not present the kind of frustrating challenge that a qualitative approach requires. He became interested in Tolstoy while in eleventh grade, and his teacher encouraged him to read more of Tolstoy rather than moving on to other writers specified in the course. He did very little writing in high school, and what he did lacked challenge. Usually teachers were specific in what they wanted and how they wanted it, as far as writing assignments were concerned; and completing the assignments meant simply carrying out the authorized plan. He admits that he had an innate sense of language which made "assignment" writing in high school not at all difficult, simply dull and of little benefit in advancing his writing ability. It was a simple procedure but placed very little responsibility on the student. Challenge in writing came in college when assignments were less specific and far more open-ended in scope. Such assignments in English classes (he has never had a bona fide journalism course) are much closer to investigative reporting or writing in which the result may bear little resemblance to the original assignment.

Of little benefit in his adult life has been the elaborate study of syntax which was sprinkled through his secondary education and heavily required in his college-degree programs. Although he admits little interest in the study, some alienation toward it, and less-than-ambitious application in syntactical matters, Smull now considers these studies simplistic in their approach to language. After having written for a living in sixty-to-eighty-hour weeks on a newspaper staff, he feels his "natural" ability to construct sentences, which he gained through reading, served him well. As far as he can tell, the syntactical studies never served him at all. "Language is so intricate, so complex, and so subtle" that the idea advanced in syntactical studies that if you can "tear sentences apart you will understand a sophisticated use of language is misleading." All effective writing is pointed toward an identifiable audience, and one considers effect at all times. This consciousness of audience is far more sophisticated than syntactical studies ever mention, Smull said.

Smull thinks he should have been required to write more, both in secondary education and college, but he rather thinks that something like "free writing" should be encouraged. Daily writing in a journal might come close to his recommendation. Powers of observation need to be increased in people in order for them to write well. Somehow, ways of teaching skills in observation must be found. Anyone who writes in any serious way must have keen observation. Free writing must be accomplished without threat to the student, perhaps ideally "taught"

by an empathetic instructor who writes himself. He believes writing based on observation should be stressed all through Grades 7-12, particularly and paradoxically in a culture which Smull believes to be very visually oriented (television), but a culture in which the young person's visual powers are numbed by over-stimulation.

In society in general, Smull sees the skills of speaking-writing-and-observing lacking. Most people really don't write much and probably don't need to, according to Smull, but communication on an aural-visual level in an effective way with another human being is a difficult and creative act, but usually essential to happiness. In a visual society, people do not seem to attach as much importance to interpersonal communication as their forebears attach to it. Just talking to another person is a very creative function if it's done well, and many people have become very lazy with their verbal faculties. Movies and television make this activity seem deceptively easy. One just sits there, and it happens to him. "You don't have to do anything; you don't even have to think about the message being delivered," in fact, it may be just entertaining. "Most people's lives are eaten up by this kind of communication," Smull believes. As a result, when people do talk they talk in cliches.

Smull believes English teachers in Grades 7-12 must think of English as a mother subject, multifarious, and the key to success in all subjects. Some basis for going into the world and using the language in the way that he is going to have to use it must be provided the student. And the student's use will probably be very different

from the use the English teacher makes of language. Very few students will become English teachers. It is not possible to predict what needs the student will have, but the only thing the teacher can do is vary the subject as much as is humanly possible with each student, following closely the student's interests and constantly watching for clues to that student's needs. A student will gain much more from reading Felson, if he's interested in Felson, than he will from reading Tolstoy or Faulkner. If exposure to a variety of writers can be made, so much the better, but a student should never be left with the impression that somehow he's lacking if he does not appreciate Faulkner. He may never need to appreciate him. The student's needs are his own. Teachers must learn that fact and try to remember it. They must operate within the concept that they have no idea what the student's needs in language will be ten years from now. Remembering this reality, teachers may become more alert to the student's current needs in language and less concerned with the fact that the student completed a sampling of works by the world's great writers. An identification of the student's current needs in language may be some clue as to what his needs will be ten or twenty years hence.

Smull's advice to English teachers seems to have been the right "advice" for him. The teachers who allowed him to pursue Tolstoy at the "neglect" of other assignments might be happy to hear that he is deliberately unemployed in order that he may continue his pursuit of personal interests, reading among them. But fortunately or unfortunately, the Minneapolis high school English teacher probably

will never know that. Smull would say that that teacher was alert to his needs in language at the time. Apparently his needs have not changed much in the ten years that have passed.

Smull is competent in all communication skills. He has been competent at the hard line of performance in employment. Although he took no journalism courses in either high school or college, he considers the conversion from English teacher to newspaper reporter a very minor challenge, possibly because he always wanted to write, he never wanted to teach, and will not be employed at either in the future. Of future employment possibilities, when they become unavoidable, Smull simply hopes for something that can capture his interest totally and consume his working hours. He once felt such an interest in politics, but his work in politics was not a salaried position. He has very much disliked the cross-ties of guilt he experienced during his employment-versus-personal-desires years. He has no goals. He likes being unemployed. He can withstand the pressures of society, the phone calls from previous employers, the clippings of job advertisements he receives from his in-laws, the common assumption expressed by acquaintances that he surely will soon be going back to work. He has learned to answer the comment, "I suppose you'll be going back to work one of these days," with a casual, "I hope not." He thinks he is satisfied and happy. He may even be approaching what Charles Reich tried to describe as a Consciousness III.

John White

He reads at least ten magazines regularly. He stays out of bookstores because of what he considers an alcoholic-like weakness to make purchases in them. Not yet thirty, he was nine years old and an avid reader when the family got its first television set, the same year they installed a flush toilet. Writing is an entertaining mental activity for him as well as a frequent necessity in his work. He does not remember learning either skill and cannot clearly recall when he could not do either one. He does recall his mother's reaction when he read his first comic book. She was pleased. School came sometime after that. He can recall virtually no writing assignments or requirements in his school years of Grades 7-12. His writing, he feels, has always been a "sort of plagiarism of all the writers" he has read. John White is a farmer.

A graduate of Iowa State University with a major in history and graduate work in historical methods, White attended three high schools during a reorganization process common in rural Iowa fifteen years ago. He recalls little in the way of Language Arts study in any one of the three. He does recall keeping an "English notebook," but his memory of the nature of the content he poured into it is dim. What he can recall of English classes consisted of picking out the accepted choice of usage from two or three possibilities. He remembers doing that regularly and at one time was proficient in distinguishing the accurate use of who and whom. It never became a part of his natural

expression although he claims he could use either pronoun accurately today if he "would just think a minute."

The communication skills White considers most important for a farmer are reading and observing. Except for radio programs seldom listened to in their entirety, the farmer has no way to learn in his field except by reading. Information about new herbicides, new processes of raising crops, availability of drugs to combat diseases in animals--all reach the farmer's consciousness through farm magazines, White insists. Any other means of knowledge would be through observing, watching what another farmer does, inspecting a herbicide plot, or observing new machines in action at state and county fairs. Writing, he feels, is becoming increasingly important for the modern farmer as more permits, more dealing with regulatory bodies becomes necessary. Recently he wrote a letter to the state resources committee asking for permission to "do some work with the river" that runs through the family farm. He regularly composes letters while driving a tractor, letters both of a business or political nature and letters to friends who write stimulating responses. He feels his writing skill is very little more than an absorbing of phrasing, the "ordering of words" of authors he has read. "Maybe when I was six or seven, I read a sentence that was phrased some way and now when I come across that situation, I phrase it in that order unconsciously." Two college teachers taught him to improve his writing by attacking his wordiness and by insisting on clarity

through accurate placement of antecedents. They made him realize that his writing was not always clear to someone who was not thinking the same way he was; the "antecedents just weren't there." He followed their advice and soon became an editor of a department newspaper and a helper in the correction of history exams. The teachers also helped him in organizing his writing: "sitting down and saying this is what I want to say, saying it, and summing it up." He wondered why he had not learned organization before. It seemed obvious to him once it was pointed out and for a time he wondered if he was simply "dumb" to have been around at least twenty years without realizing that there was a structural pattern to writing. His overall instruction in writing appears to have consisted of comments written on papers and a few sessions with a teacher on a one-to-one basis. His exam-correcting experience convinced him that college students were "by and large practically illiterate--or at least they couldn't write." His reading of examinations did not include correcting errors in mechanics ("it would have taken us forever if we had corrected spelling"), but the greatest source of amazement to White was the lack of content and substance in the exams. He read papers which said literally, "Gosh, Gee Whiz, the Roman Empire went to pot. Because the emperors didn't give a damn." The students had learned that the Roman Empire flourished and declined but were unable to speculate much less reason as to why this historical situation occurred. Many of them were simply unable to express anything historically significant in written form, he said.

White attributes all his fluency in language to his lifelong reading activities; he rarely uses a dictionary except when he reads in French. Rarely does he come across an English word which he doesn't understand. Yet he has never studied words in vocabulary drills.

He sees a great need in society for a kind of "extroverted communication," a bolstering of the individual ego to cope with the they, whatever or whoever that is: big government, big business, the many they's that people refer to as the cause of their difficulties, what might be called the external forces in life. Inability to communicate aggressively with elusive forces either through speaking or writing causes people to live victimlike existences, or at least it creates personalities which burn with resentment but are incapable of releasing it through such a simple means as a letter to a Congressman. He thinks that classroom exercises should be created in which the teacher plays a devil's advocate role and forces the student(s) to combat resistance in discussion, making the obstacles as formidable as the student can possibly continue to confront.

For himself, White considers speaking before an audience of two hundred people nothing more than having something to say, getting up and saying it in simple ways so that every person in the audience can understand the message. If visual aids are helpful in conveying the message, they should be used. He sees no need to develop his speaking ability beyond that point. He had no speech courses in

Grades 7-12 but took the required course at Iowa State. The requirements in the course were predictable and perfunctory and of little benefit to him.

White feels that the skills of reading and writing will never be obsolete and discounts reports he has heard that they will be replaced almost totally by audiovisual means of communication. Only if one seeks mass reception should he submit himself to the visual media, White believes. He also thinks that one becomes a member of a minority whenever he "joins" an occupational group, and significant information for any minority group can be obtained only through reading. Information for the farmer, for example, must be gained through reading farm magazines; the mass media simply do not address the farmer in any way other than with incidental bits of information such as weather forecasts or crop-report estimates. Anything specific--information or knowledge--in any quantity as to be of significance must come from published materials. The same would be true he thinks if one were interested in racing motorcycles. Any significant information about the activity would have to come from reading. Listening is not as commanding or involving as reading, which will probably never make the cassette tape as popular or convenient as the book.

White's educational needs and experiences seem very complementary. He makes it clear that he has a strong need for at least three of the communication skills: reading, writing, and observing and some need

for speaking and listening. He does not perceive conventional speaking and listening as a directed part of one's schooling; the idea doesn't seem to register on him, probably because it has always been such a natural part of his life. "Speaking out" in groups or confronting external forces in life he considers another matter.

He never planned to be a farmer. He thought about it when he was young but considered it nothing more than a "fantasy most farm boys have." He attended college because he was interested in learning, particularly history. He entered military service following graduation even though he had been something of a war protester during college days. He enlisted as a medic because he didn't want "anyone to tell me I had to shoot anyone else." He served as a medic in Viet Nam and flew regularly in a helicopter there. More than anything else, the experience stimulated an interest in the history and culture of Asian people, an interest he follows consistently through paperback after paperback. His farm dwelling resembles a small book store. Active in politics, he usually prefaces or supports a point with some explanation from history or allusion to a cultural phenomenon. Currently he is serving in a resource capacity for a man who is running for office in the Iowa legislature.

White attended graduate school two quarters merely because he received some money from the government to do so--and it allowed him to follow his favorite activity, the study of history. He does not want to be a professional historian. A farm which adjoins his parents' farm was for sale two years ago, and White bought it with

money saved from his military experience and with a loan based on family respect in the area. Increased farm prices and his curiosity in experimental farming have made it a highly productive if not lucrative venture. Already the land has appreciated considerably. He feels that he will live on the farm "at least three or four more years." After that, the farm purchase will be stabilized, and he will be free to do other things if he likes. He thinks he probably will do something else, but he does not have any specific plans as to what. Single, not yet thirty, and soon-to-be financially independent, he should be able to explore many alternatives in living.

It appears that his educational experiences in the Language Arts allowed him the freedom of development to which he has been accustomed most of his life. If they lacked direction (he can remember little of the study of Language Arts in Grades 7-12), at the same time they were not a discouraging or obstructing force in any way. For one who could read before he attended school, it would be hard to imagine how classroom experiences could have been a block. He seems a perfect example of one who learns both in school or in spite of it. Apparently teachers always recognized his language ability and allowed him plenty of room to operate in it. He expresses no resentment for any of his school experiences and occasionally suggests gratitude for some of them. He doesn't know how he learned to read or how he was selected to evaluate history examinations for three years as an undergraduate. Such experiences seem as natural to him as life itself. Living is learning, he says.

Michael Knoll

Michael Knoll was a personable athlete all through school. He even remembers defending Biff Loman in a discussion of Death of a Salesman when he was in eleventh grade. Five years out of high school, he says he has modified his ideas about athletics considerably. He considers his greatest success in his secondary school days was in athletics. He was a "nice boy" by everyone's standards; he was impeccably groomed even when slovenliness became fashionable, and adults responded particularly well to him. He was polite, good-looking, and considerate; attributes that usually lead to success in an Iowa high school.

His athletic success was erratic after high school. In fact, he had pretty much put athletics into his past when he enrolled at the University of Iowa the fall after high school graduation. He wanted to study law. He had always thought he wanted to study law. Lawyers seemed to be respected people who had good jobs. The year ended on a hectic note; the bombing of Cambodia sent students out of classrooms into peace marches; semester tests were cancelled, and he left Iowa City in early May "turned off" and disgusted. The school was too liberal for his tastes. It appeared to him that almost everyone there was "trying to find himself."

The desire to compete in athletics returned. He had been a four-sport letterman in high school, and he had very much missed participation in athletics during his year at the university. He decided to discuss the matter with some of his high school coaches.

The coaches pointed out the fine athletic program at Wartburg College at Waverly. It was also a conservative school, a church school, and it seemed much more to his liking than his experience at the University of Iowa had been. A Wartburg representative visited him and assured him that he would receive a football scholarship eventually if he attended school there. That fall he enrolled at Wartburg. The athletic factor was the strongest influence in his decision. A Catholic, Knoll had few other reasons for attending a Lutheran school.

While he did feel involved in the athletic program at Wartburg and did well academically, he found the cost prohibitive even with a scholarship. He had also decided that the pre-law course was not for him. He does not explain why. At the close of his first semester at Wartburg, he came home and enrolled at a community two-year college. Academic pressure was off, and he could take a part-time job. He was employed after a brief application interview in a hometown clothing store. He loved the work and was eager for the community-college semester to end so he could go to work full time. Usually it was more than full time. At his own initiative, he spent several nights a week decorating the store's windows, often from ideas gleaned from reading men's magazines. A retired man in the community noticed his window-dressing efforts and gave him many tips. The retired man had returned to the small Midwestern city to live after a long career as a decorator in downtown Chicago stores. They became friends.

All his work in the clothing store is a challenge to him.

He usually arrives at work early because he likes to work with new clothes before the store opens. He enjoys every aspect of the business: selection, buying, merchandising, selling, reordering, and window displays. The store owner has told him that he attributes an increase in sales to his fine work. He has received pay increases. Sometimes he considers going "on the road" in a promotional capacity and definitely dreams of owning his own clothing store.

The relationship of his school preparation for the work that he does is not altogether clear to him. His best subject in school was English, and he considers that fact to be due to circumstances which seem paradoxical to him. He well recalls his preoccupation in sixth grade, an anxiety about a seventh-grade English teacher! He had heard a great deal about the seventh-grade English teacher in the junior high school for which he was destined. The junior high athletes had told him she was "cruel, mean, and all sorts of other terrible things." Their constant advice was, "Whatever you do, don't get Miss Jefferson."* His own concern upon entering junior high school was in his scheduling fate with respect to a certain English teacher. He plunged into despair when his registration card turned up with "Jefferson" on it. He had no choice but to live out his fate. He memorized the long spelling lists Miss Jefferson presented, concentrated day and night on the punctuation rules she explained, and never went

*The name of this teacher has been changed in this account.

to bed until he had made the last usage choice in the homework assignment. He worked hard to improve his handwriting and practiced it regularly. Miss Jefferson was surprisingly kind to him. He thought he had some natural ability in English; for one thing he had two aunts who were Iowa English teachers, and one had become a consultant for Scott, Foresman in New York City. He did not mind Miss Jefferson's strictness, as long as she did not hit him with a ruler. As a matter of fact, he never saw her do that. She praised his work, and the only out-of-class communication they ever had was in a study hall once when she told him that she knew his Scott, Foresman aunt. He was too frightened to reply so he just smiled. Miss Jefferson turned out to be a disguised blessing. English was easy after seventh grade, although he never learned much after that. The tenth-grade teachers were still reviewing the punctuation rules he had mastered under Miss Jefferson. Now retired, Miss Jefferson comes into the store to buy gifts for her male relatives in other cities. He is glad to help her as she once helped him and even shows her fashions that he has researched in men's clothing magazines. He has told her that she was "worth all the other English teachers he ever had put together." She only smiled in reply when he told her that. He no longer considers her fearful; in fact, he thinks of her as a "very gracious lady." He thinks it is "funny how one's attitudes can change" and is grateful; Miss Jefferson's teaching helped him all through high school. Even in essay tests when he "couldn't tell what the teacher wanted," he always got credit for his spelling, handwriting, and flawless punctuation.

He liked his eleventh-grade English teacher, mostly from the way the teacher promoted free discussion and respected everyone's opinion. Even at the time, he was aware that the teacher made everyone seem important. While Knoll knew that he was an athletic hero and respected by other students and the faculty, he often thought other kids "who weren't anything in high school" were ignored in classes. Not so in the eleventh-grade English class. The teacher constantly sought the opinions and reactions of all the students. Knoll recalls that the teacher didn't "put me down" when he defended Biff Loman. The only thing he remembers learning in the class was a "formula for reading poetry." The teacher stressed how to concentrate on a few key words in the poem which would lead to the "hidden meaning" the poet was trying to express. He has used the technique in all the poetry he has read since then, and it has worked; it was especially helpful in a literature course he took at Wartburg. He also thinks the free discussions in the class stimulated his speaking and listening abilities. He especially appreciated the reciprocity the teacher created.

Listening and observing are of vital importance to him in the clothing store. And an appreciation of the customer's mood and attitude is especially essential. What the customer says when he walks through the door is the key to most of the sales situation which follows. If the customer says, "I want to look at a suit" and nothing more, Knoll speculates that maybe the customer doesn't really want to buy a suit or is buying the suit for an occasion which he really doesn't want to

attend or does not feel comfortable in attending. The salesperson must accept the reality of the situation, must empathize with the customer's mood at all times, and must try to fulfill the customer's needs. The most difficult customers are those who make it very clear that they want no help and are crisp in conveying that attitude. Any overture to assist them in looking at merchandise will probably send them out the door. The only recourse the salesperson has is to stand by helplessly, to ignore them, in a sense defying the definition of a salesperson. He must wait for the customers' moods to change, if they will. Discipline and patience are necessary.

He considers many people not to be good listeners. Often people do not say what they mean; to facilitate communication, people simply have to become better listeners. They must "listen" to what another person is not saying as well as what he is saying. This approach is vital in a salesperson. Sometimes the wants or needs of a customer seem to change from minute to minute.

Observing is another vital skill to the salesperson. A kind of stereotyping is actually helpful in ascertaining needs. When a customer walks through the door, Knoll notices what that customer is wearing, how he is wearing it, the extent of carefulness apparent in his dress, and the age of the person. Usually the clothing interests of the person will follow the image he projects. Always important in his sales work are the communication skills of observing and listening. Speaking helps too. The speech course he took in high school has been

helpful in his adult life. The kinds of speeches taught have not been as significant as the ease in speaking he developed, an ease he must maintain even in small talk and the friendly sounds the salesperson makes as he hopes to say the right thing to each customer. Now more women come into the store than they did two years ago. Men's clothes have become much more colorful than they previously were, and women consequently like to shop for men. A comment Knoll hears constantly is, "Men's fashions have become much more exciting than women's clothes. Why don't we get these kinds of things?" They appreciate the fact that he has observed or can estimate what sizes their husbands wear.

His job does not require him to read very much; in fact, except for men's fashion magazines and an occasional book a clothing company sends out, he does not read "on the job" at all. He does think he learned more about people in reading literature during school days than he did in a sociology class, but he nevertheless regards the information as "second-hand knowledge" and feels he has learned much more about people from the constant daily contact with customers in the store. He never writes anything except occasional short notes to a manufacturer penned at the bottom of an order. He feels that window-dressing is a kind of composition, designed to create an effect upon an audience, much as a piece of writing is designed to do. The window must capture the interest of the passerby; it must sustain his interest and create some memorable effect on him. Tone is important, just as consistency in word choice is important in writing. A beer stein is placed beside

a sporty outfit; wine glasses are arranged around a conservative, expensive suit. Beer is the "louder" liquor just as the bold-plaid sport coat is more casual and appropriate for more frolicking situations. Many non-clothing objects are used to create interest. Statues of Laurel and Hardy, revived humorists now considered "in," are placed near high-fashion clothes. A walnut clock with great character may flank a \$175 suit, a "gentleman's" garment. The creativity of the composition lies in selecting objects that are symbols of different tastes in life appropriate to different tastes in clothing for different types of men or at least different occasions. Yet the entire window must be pleasing as a total entity; colors must not clash nor can there be a quarrel between objects. Each place in the window at which the passerby looks must be an interest spot of its own but must coordinate with the window as a whole. He compares it to paragraphs in a composition. There must even be a transitional line from interest cluster to interest cluster, much like transitions between paragraphs. But Knoll finds window composition much more interesting than writing.

His life's plans center on owning a clothing store. Working and living are one for him. He has found what he likes. He has changed his attitudes about athletics, even though he considers athletics to have been a very positive force in his life. While he belongs to a businessman's Quarterback Club which meets weekly to discuss sports, he knows now that "the world does not owe an athlete a living." Today he thinks Biff Loman "a little too gung-ho" about sports in general.

He has eliminated the thought of becoming a lawyer from his life. All in all, he looks back on his school days with appreciation, especially appreciation for Miss Jefferson. Because of her, "my language is good, and I can speak anywhere." He can't imagine not being employed, can't understand why young people his age want to bum around the country hitchhiking the highways. He likes to travel in style when he can afford to travel. He attributes his consistent clarification of values to his parents. "It may sound corny," he insists, "but I really love my mother and father."

Delores Winter

Delores Winter makes a living by speaking, but she is not a "public speaker" as such. An office manager in a cabinet company, she does much of her work by telephone to dealers and customers in a five-state area. Most of the hundreds of people with whom she deals on a regular basis she has never seen; in fact, she has only seen two of hundreds. She does feel that she knows many of these people personally although in reality she does not. She has created faces to match the many familiar voices she knows.

Supremely important to Mrs. Winter among the communication skills are speaking and listening, since much of the daily progress of the company for which she works depends upon her ability to communicate by telephone. Usually a conversation will involve a four-digit amount of money, and she must be able to generate respect in that conversation.

A high school graduate with no college training, she attended a small Iowa school system all twelve years. The high school offered one English course per grade level. Much of the content of that course was a study of usage, phrasing, grammar, and some literature. She recalls very little experience in writing, but subsidiary skills in grammar, spelling, and punctuation were taught aggressively. She feels her experience in English classes was invaluable. The reason that they have been so beneficial is that her ability to speak in standard English, with good enunciation and perceptive listening, has enabled her to operate far above her "social class" with respect to

speaking and to holding a position which pays far more than high school graduates make--actually commensurate to the salaries of many college graduates. She works long hours, typically ten-hour days, and often does accounting for the company during evening hours. Her "best" subjects in school were English and mathematics, and she uses both every day in her area of employment. She took no courses in speech as such, but there was a considerable amount of speech taught in her English courses. Stress on oral reading with accurate pronunciation and adequate projection was common. She had no courses in journalism either, but she regularly writes press releases for political and service groups. Her releases are rarely edited by a daily newspaper. A private study of newspaper stories was responsible for her learning to do "newspaper writing." She read many news stories "very carefully," observing how they stressed certain points and how they attributed statements and quotations. Her first press releases received minor editing, but she learned from that, too. "The key is to get the emphasis where the writer wants it," she says, and "to read the story a few times aloud to see if it creates the public-relations effect the writer seeks." Perhaps without realizing it, Mrs. Winter's procedure in writing news stories closely resembles that used by reporters who are sometimes described as "chattering like monkeys over their typewriters." Always her flawless usage, strong syntactical structure, and "perfect" punctuation serve her well. It was several dozen stories ago that one was edited. She recalls that as a high school student she often doubted the importance of where a comma was placed

and sometimes thought the teacher had an exaggerated notion of its importance. Her attitudes have changed considerably. She considers her skill in language her greatest asset in her development as a person. It has been a consistent door-opener and has kept the "doors" open. She has never been laid off in twenty-five years although many people she worked with have been. She attributes all her skill in language to high school English courses. She is less enthusiastic about her study of literature, although a recent Donald Kaul column which compared a political situation to the story of Hamlet interested her. She could remember Hamlet from her high school English course.

She has had two other jobs in her adult years, one in a bank, where she used mostly math skills. A second was with an IBM company, and reading skills were important there. "A person has to be able to read directions carefully before tangling with those computers."

She feels observing and listening skills are very much lacking in society. She has known many people, even politicians, who were accomplished speakers but poor listeners. They never seem to grasp the idea that something like an "equal proportion between speaking and listening is probably about right." For her in her present employment, listening is every bit as important as speaking. In the cabinet business, listening for the mood or stress of the person on the other end of the wire is often as important as comprehending his or her verbal message.

She thinks schools should place much more stress on writing. Many people she knows seem handicapped in writing skills, and many have

asked her to ghost-write for them. Once she was involved in a letter-writing campaign to a Congressman about postal rates. She was shocked that she had to write most of the letters for the group, even for people who had attended college. Generally she is reluctant to deliver advice regarding the study of the Language Arts, reluctant to project advice toward people who are college-educated. She does think students who watch television at the expense of reading or other activities suffer in language-oriented work in school. Her judgment is derived from observing her two daughters. The reading daughter is by far the better student of the two, and only recently has the one who watches television regularly developed any interest in school work. Mrs. Winter has tried to explain to this daughter that a story in a book is very much like a story on television in structure and plot, but she doesn't feel the daughter grasped that concept until she reached the intermediate grades.

Mrs. Winter's educational needs and experiences seem complementary. She speaks warmly of school experiences and regularly attributes success in work and life to school activities "that come back" to her. There is a coherency in her life that makes the two mutually supportive. For her, the study of English has been socially advantageous. Her clear projection of language in both speaking and writing is usually associated with a percentage of those who have attended college. Until she makes it clear that she did not attend college, a listener tends to assume that she has done so. More important, her language skills bring

to her a respect that has been economically advantageous in on-the-job circumstances as well as enabling her to be an influencing force in the Midwestern society in which she lives. Like Willy Brandt, a more famous person of political interests, one "seeks influence in a democratic state in order to accomplish something reasonable." That attitude seems to apply also to Delores Winter.

Viva DeGrado

Forty-seven years old, Viva DeGrado has worked for the same manufacturing company for thirty-two years. She quit school after her seventh-grade year and today ranks at the top of her company in seniority. The company makes many kinds of gauges which are used in measuring pressure or vacuum in industrial enterprises. It is the fourth largest gauge company in the world. Mrs. DeGrado considers herself a specialist in gauges, a field which has "very few women as authorities." She thinks of specialist as a title that suggests bragging but at the same time says, "By God, after thirty-two years, there isn't much more to learn about gauges." The company classifies her as a master instrument maker.

She is president of the local union which she helped organize and the labor negotiator for the employees of her company, an activity which affects the five hundred families she represents at the bargaining table. She likes to think of herself as a negotiator both for the company and the workers, because "if it's an honest contract, it has to be for the good of both." The company is in large part the people who work for it. She is certain the company at times wouldn't agree that she is negotiating for the company as well; in fact, she laughingly says that she's been told quite bluntly that she is not too much for the management position in negotiations. She has been active for years in the CAP Council, defined as the political branch of the union which spelled out means Community Action Program. The CAP Council pulled out of the AFL-CIO mainly because the council

members felt the national organizations were not as active in politics as they thought they should be. "Politics actually are our bread and butter. One stroke of a pen can wipe out anything that we get in a contract. Therefore, we have to protect ourselves by being active in politics," she explains.

Politics has created another dimension of living for her. She is assigned as the hostess for Leonard Woodcock, president of the international union, whenever he comes to Iowa. She has met Ted Kennedy several times, and a Jefferson-Jackson appearance by Kennedy in Iowa is just another conversation with him for her. She maintains a low profile at such events because "sometimes it's a hellava lot more entertaining to stand back and watch other people make fools of themselves for a change."

She picked up a high-school equivalency diploma after a twenty-year interruption in her education. The test was easy. Too easy. So she took courses at night for four or five years. She hasn't received the second diploma because she thought most of the courses she took were "a little too stupid" to waste more time on them. She got A's in the English courses but considers them a joke. "I can't spell; I spell cat with a k; I never punctuate anything except for periods and question marks, and sometimes they're in the wrong place. I got A's because one of the teachers was scared to death of me. Shit, he wasn't going to take a chance of debating with me. He was anti-union and after he lost the first argument about that he dropped that subject in a hurry." She was disgusted with that teacher, four winters of

cold nights--"and it got a hellava lot colder in that classroom sometimes." She felt she had to go every time to defend some of the men who were attending the class. The teacher "talked down to them so terribly"; he knew they had to be in that class to get their diplomas; if they didn't, they would lose their jobs. Certain factories--why she doesn't know--insist that their employees have a high school diploma. She can't figure out why. "By God, you don't have to have a high school education to pull the arm of a drill press. I think you could take kids from Woodward [an Iowa hospital for the mentally retarded] and teach them that. But the companies say you have to have it." The "students" didn't dare fail so they never disagreed with the teacher, never set him straight, and just let him degrade them night after night. She felt secure with seniority on her job and didn't care whether she failed or not. She had a secretary at the CAP Council who would punctuate and correct spelling on anything she needed to write that was important, although she never "cheated" by having the secretary punctuate any of her school assignments. She didn't feel that would be fair. She just turned in her assignments the way they were and she got A's. "It was the stupidest thing. We all laughed about it." Now when she writes for publication, she and the union secretary "just howl" over her spelling and sentence constructions. "We're good friends, and I tell her not to make fun of those misspelled words. I got A's in English! It's a sad joke really; I wasted four years in night courses." She thought that some of the people in the course were quite intelligent in their own fields.

"They weren't educated, but they were not dumb. Every time I took the teacher down a notch or two the whole class enjoyed every minute of it." Nothing she studied was of any benefit to her, she feels; and particularly ridiculous was requiring adults to read Shakespeare. She does like to read on her own and tends to lose herself in books as a way of getting away from the union, the company, and people in general. Michener and Cather are her favorite writers, and she also likes to read magazines: Playboy and Ammunition, the latter a union magazine which provides concise articles on how senators have voted, the progress of national health programs, and other information she needs when it comes time to serve on the Negotiations Board.

But requiring adults who quit school in seventh or eighth grade and "who haven't read anything but Ann Landers or the headlines of a newspaper" to read Shakespeare aloud was another matter. She was surprised that many of the adult students could explain what passages meant or were about, but they simply could not read them aloud in any successful way. She is certain that most English teachers can't read Shakespeare very well either; if they could, they would be acting out Shakespeare on a stage somewhere. One passage she recalls was from Macbeth, the one she insists she cannot quote right. "I can't read Macbeth, let alone quote it--but anyway it was about this woman whose lover was getting cold feet and didn't want to kill the king and she was saying for God to take the milk from her breasts and tear something from her womb." The teacher asked her to explain it. She said that

it sounded like a hysterectomy, and the whole class roared. The teacher never asked her to explain any more Shakespeare. "Men and women of this age who go back to high school need to learn how to write and punctuate a simple business letter. A night or two of Shakespeare might be all right, but I can't see people in a factory quoting Shakespeare to one another."

The communications skill she sees most lacking is listening, and observing is a close second. Speaking is of vital importance to people who negotiate or have needs along these lines, but day-to-day factory life requires listening, skilled listening. People have to be able to hear instructions and comprehend them. When a foreman says, "'You pull the handle down here, and you push this stuff up against here,' you have to be able to remember." Once the foreman walks away, the listener is in that world by himself, and if he hasn't listened to the instructions, he is lost. "It's a hellava feeling to have a two-ton machine in front of you and not have caught all those instructions. It's your baby with all that money tied up if you do the wrong thing." Observing is also important, very important. Too often the physical-labor instructor knows the job so well that he or she forgets to give all the directions. He may forget to say, "OK, you get these chips out of here, in back of this here, before you push it up against the back. If you haven't observed the foreman brushing those chips out of behind there and then pushing it up against the back, you are going to have something maybe a hundred-thousandth of an inch off, but in a gauge that's an

important hundred-thousandths sometimes."

Body language is of high importance in negotiations sessions. She and a company official have been negotiating for years, and they know and spar with each other constantly. She can tell from his facial expressions and bodily mannerisms what kind of attitude she should take. "If he comes in and pulls his pants up just right, I know I've got him that day. There's just something about the way he tugs on his pants on a bad day that makes me think I can trick him somewhere in that day." The mannerism usually occurs upon his entering the room. "If he takes ahold of his belt and gives his pants a jerk, that's a good day for our side." She thinks he also watches signals about her. "He knows that I never use the word strike unless I mean it. He watches for all sorts of signs that that word might be coming." Just this past summer she negotiated for a cost-of-living increase. She thought the workers absolutely had to have it for survival. But neither the workers nor the company could afford a strike. Orders were piling up every day. Supreme diplomacy was necessary. "I had to convince the company official that the cost-of-living issue was of such importance that I would take my people out on that one issue--and only that issue--but that we didn't want to strike and that striking would not be a vindictive kind of thing." Emotional stability, a kind of steeling, is of great importance. "For four weeks we batted this issue back and forth. Every night until midnight we would work to get everything straightened out, but there was no progress on the cost-of-living subject. I just told him I was damned tired of arguing

it. I never threaten strike unless there is no other way. And I didn't threaten strike until the last day." The workers got the cost-of-living increase. She does consider the company official an honest man, not as compassionate as he should be but perhaps as compassionate as he dare be. She has no regard for people who will lie to one another across the bargaining table. "If you don't have trust, you have nothing in a negotiations session." She insists that the word strike must mean strike. When the word is uttered, the opponent must know that workers will be going out the door at a designated time if he doesn't respond. She is proud to say that she has never lied across the negotiating table and has never been actually lied to. Words are another matter. "Words, oh, he is an expert with words. And he will make me think he said something. And I'll say he said such-and-such, and he will say, 'No, Viva, what I said was...' and he's got me again. But to actually lie to each other, we do not." She thinks all companies would be much better off if they could establish real trust.

"Negotiations is an education I couldn't buy. You can't buy that out of a book. It's intense communication; my vocabulary has increased greatly; you learn to listen and to evaluate yourself as a human being. You have five hundred people whose lives are laying on your shoulders and what you sign your name to on that paper affects their lives." She says she has learned to control herself to the point where she does not go off an "emotional deep end." Stability is all important. She must always think of the five hundred, not

herself. Frequently huge benefits for people in seniority spots like herself will be offered, and they are "damned tempting." But the one thing a negotiator must always remember is that he is not negotiating for himself. That's where an emotional steeling takes place. She can almost understand "Nixon's crookedness" when it comes to bargaining for herself. But the negotiator must not fall into that kind of thinking.

While her high school night courses were "worse than nothing," she does express great gratitude toward her seventh-grade English course and considers it one of the most fortunate experiences of her life. What made it fortunate was its building of her self-confidence. "I had the biggest inferiority complex you ever saw when I went into seventh grade. We were an extremely poor family; we were Salvation Army; we were all the wrong things that children in those days ever were. Today it's considered posh to be poor, or at least we middle class people like to think that way, but we're full of shit. Any time you're poor, it's not posh." She had a widowed mother whom she seldom saw because of the mother's hours of working; and by the time she arrived in seventh grade, she felt worse than inferior, closer to "completely worthless." She claims that if one has been reared with a worthless feeling, there is "no way in Hell you can ever raise your own self up without help." The seventh-grade teacher was young and "gorgeous." The teacher put her in the back of the room and said, "I always put people in the back of the room that I know I can trust." She realizes now that the teacher was employing "strict psychology,"

but at the time she was overwhelmed by the compliment and tried hard to live up to it. On another occasion, she was at a school picnic--off in a corner because she really didn't want to be at the picnic and was feeling sorry for herself for attending. One of the other students told her that the teacher had said she was one of the wittiest students she had ever seen. "Therefore I proceeded to demonstrate that I was witty, and I'm sure I made a complete ass out of myself all day long; but if she thought I was witty, I was going to be witty." School got much more interesting after that. "I was beginning to make progress--even in looking things up in a dictionary--when I had to go to work the summer after seventh grade." In later years a tutor she hired to help her with spelling gave up on her. The tutor told her she was getting along beautifully in life and there was no need for her to develop frustration over her spelling. "After all, I had a secretary to help me if I wanted to write a book or something."

Mrs. DeGrado feels that far more listening skills should be stressed in Language Arts programs. Too often listening skills are taught by having the students listen to a record or tape, both impersonal. "Students should be taught to listen to one another," perhaps exercises where a student listens to another student and then checks with a tape recorder to see how closely he or she can come to repeating the speaker's message. Many factory people hear what they want other people to say, not what they are saying. Another stress needed is employment-seeking possibilities. She describes people who seek employment in factories as often belligerent and curt,

always because of a defensive attitude toward life. Their way of appearing competent is to appear belligerent. It's a ridiculous approach. "They need to learn how to make the prospective employer comfortable, to acquire some kind of empathy for the employer."

Liberated all her life, Mrs. DeGrado does approve of equal pay for equal work, long guaranteed by the unions. "Otherwise I've done about every damn thing I ever wanted to do." Her husband and she both have what she calls good jobs, employment circumstances which consume much of their lives. "He's European and looks at things very differently." For example, he considers politics a personal subject and, until five years ago, she didn't really know what his political leanings were. While she attended state political dinners, he didn't mention the subject. As a negotiator, she does not consider herself either a woman or a person, she considers herself a negotiator, a being apart from either one. She looks upon arbitration cases as exciting; she must prepare a speech for the professional arbitrator and "everything stands or falls on that person's decision." Arbitration is based on technicalities. Soon she will be involved in such a dispute. She feels "her people" have been "languaged out of" (not cheated) a seven-cent-an-hour raise. The entire case will involve interpretation of that language, obviously different on the part of the company from what the workers understood it would be. In addition to the speech presentation, she must submit a written brief of her side of the dispute. The company official will follow the same procedure. The arbitrator will

decide. Everything must be prepared to affect this one-man audience, very much like a judge in a courtroom. He will be a good listener, although she considers most people poor listeners.

"People don't even listen to their spouses," She thinks that "what is wrong with the world" is that people are not listening to one another, the government is not listening to the people, the leadership in unions isn't listening to the workers, and the workers aren't listening to their leaders. Another thing that concerns her is the demeanor of factory people around the formally educated. Among themselves, conversations often are on quite a standard level of English, with use of three-syllable words accurately and with impact. When a person known to be educated appears on the scene, such as a company manager, workers drop to this-here's and that-there's. She thinks it is hard to understand why factory people do this. Is it because they subconsciously think that educated people expect them to talk in the usages of non-standard English? She thinks it is difficult to conclude that they shift to another level of usage to be more comfortable; if they did, it would seem logical that they would speak this way among themselves. Is it somehow to shut the educated person out of the discussion, to foster a wall between them, a tacit request for the educated person to come into their "language" if he wishes to communicate? She cannot say. She admits to being frequently puzzled by this behavior in her co-workers.

One of her seven brothers and sisters made it through college, with the help of the Salvation Army. An Iowa teacher for many years

both in high school and college, the brother has returned to the Salvation Army to do ghetto work in Chicago. One of that brother's sons was a National Merit finalist and had "almost all his college paid for," but he dropped out in his second year of medicine, his sixth year of college. She's not quite certain why her nephew dropped out of medical school. He made top grades and didn't have to go to work. He got "scholarship on top of scholarship." She thinks it may be that "he's so bright that he just gets bored with everything."