

The Lectern

# The Road Not Taken--PhD or PD?

Through The Lectern series, the Collegian presents ideas of outstanding faculty members who write on a subject of their choice. The first Lectern guest this year, Dr. Helen Adolf, was born in Vienna, Austria, and earned her doctor of philosophy degree from Vienna University. She came to the United States in 1939 and taught Latin in her first job. An accomplished linguist, Dr. Adolf taught German, French and Spanish at the Altoona Center before coming to main campus as professor of German.

By DR. HELEN ADOLF  
Professor of German

We all know what the letters PhD stand for: a long and arduous climb on a fairly well-trodden road. You walk and walk, plodding along, heartened now and then by a sign reading: "Requirement Met," until at last you reach what ought to be the top of a mountain.

Here I cannot help quoting the words of a former student of mine. Eager to explore the region around State College, he had conquered Mount Nittany, our local Gaurisanker. "What did you see there?" I asked him. "Nothing," he said, "so I climbed a tree." "And what did you see then?" "Well," he replied, "I saw the people sitting under the tree. They were having a picnic."

What had happened to the view? Too many treetops? Too thick a haze? Not enough elevation? Perched on top of his thesis, maybe the young Philosphiae Doctor—certified teacher of the love of wisdom—had surveyed chiefly all the other theses dealing with the subject, an exertion that left him with a parched throat, an empty heart (and pocket), and plenty of blisters.

Now this cannot happen to you if you are at the same time a PD. Why do we know so little about this mysterious combination? You will consult Webster's list of abbreviations in vain. The point is that whereas everybody proudly sports his (or her) candidacy for, or claim to, the PhD title, the PD is like a secret badge to be worn inside your coat only. It does not mean, by the way, "Police Department," or "Private Detective" or a "Person Displaced"—it stands for "Pedantic Dreamer."

Dreams in general—we shall deal with the pale variety of fantasies and intuitions only—are held in some esteem nowadays, thanks to the findings of



DR. ADOLF

depth psychology. But you need not look up Freud or Jung—old Homer will do. He told us that dreams issue either from a gate of ivory or from a gate of horn, and that they are false or true, as they represent (so we may add) either wishes or visions.

Now people who are obsessed with their meaningful dreams to such a degree that they can't even take a degree—all they can do, is sit and wait, hatching their visions, sprinkling them occasionally, or periodically, with an alcoholic solution—are called makers (shapers) of dreams, or "poets in residence."

Obviously, our poor devil of a Pedantic Dreamer is in a different position; it is not glowing images the gate of horn sends him, only dimly perceived relations. Instead of involving in Poetic Drunkenness, he has to study the facts to which these relations may apply, and facts cannot be studied without the meticulous observance of certain sets of rules.

According to many guide-books, the Rules of the Game come first: "Wanderer, teach your inexperienced feet how to make footsteps!" However, these rules should really come last, since they refer to the last leg of the trip, the Game of Getting Printed, which has, of course, its well-founded regulations.

More important by far are the Rules of the Craft, or Trade. Wanderer, before trying to blaze a new trail into the wilderness, absorb all the experience collected by your predecessors. Follow in their footsteps—although somewhere along the road you will have to part company with them, because of a growing uneasiness you will feel about their procedures. Those rules they set down

—do they coincide with the laws of reality? Laws you dimly perceive, thanks to your dreams.

This is the moment to tell you: don't be ashamed of being a dreamer, and of being called an introvert on that account. Inside us, we carry a portion of reality which enables us to understand certain portions of reality outside us; interpretation always depends on congeniality. All we have to do is to correlate the parts, exploring the outside, developing the inside. There will be a considerable amount of blundering in the beginning; that's why one should work on smaller jigsaw puzzles first.

So learn, observe, improve your techniques of exploration while still holding on to your dream, as the lonely thinker on campus holds on to his pipe. Not a bad symbol for your addiction, but a symbol only, for I am not advocating the cultivation of pipe dreams. We of the secret badge know that it is the love of the Maiden Sophia (alias Wisdom, or Truth) that animates our minds, that we are not the happy victims of a certain nasty weed . . .

But I am overstepping the boundaries of my personal experiences. To make amends, let me give you a couple of caveats as they befit a seasoned traveler, or traveler of many seasons.

First and last: be prepared to make sacrifices, both to the P—and to the D—part of your nature. Be really pedantic—don't hesitate, for instance, to serve in the House of Languages. And I do not mean only the rather familiar "foreign" ones, but the dead ones, the exotic ones, too. Having performed the menial tasks there, you will be rewarded with a key that may open up for you hidden treasures.

Your dreams will prove no less exacting. They may even ask you to throw away academic life completely for a shorter or a longer period—to do what instead? Missionary work, join the Merchant Marines, try your hand at the arts or plunge into whatever nooks or recesses inclination, duty or Providence may call you?

Detours are part of the itinerary, and the advantage will show upon your return to the Alma Mater. In fact, PD's have a tendency to become Prodigal (Sons and) Delayers. The fattened calf will be waiting for you at the Corner Room.

At this point I can hear the candidate for the title exclaiming angrily: "For heaven's sake! Stop it! This is going too far. All I wish to get is a degree!" Pardon me. Degrees, of course, are just a step, and steps should be taken resolutely and quickly. By all means, go and get it. But I thought you were anxious to climb a mountain . . . ?

# Thespians to Give \$75 Writing Prize

The first prize for the Thespians' playwriting contest will be \$75, it was announced yesterday. A second prize of \$25 will also be awarded.

The purpose of the contest, which opened last week, is to obtain the plot and dialogue of an originally written musical

comedy show that can be produced by Thespians for their fall show next year.

Persons who submit a script that is used, partially or fully, will receive credit toward membership in the club, according to Theodore Pauloski, president.

The contest is open to all undergraduate and graduate students.

Rules are:

● Each contestant may submit one or more scenarios and is therefore eligible for both prizes.

● All material must be submitted to the Employee Relations office, 303 Old Main, before noon Dec. 16.

● Each contestant must obtain a serial number from the secretary in 303 Old Main to be used on each item submitted. Names should not be used to identify material. The title of the script and the writer's name must be registered with the secretary when the serial number is received (This will permit judges to review the

material without knowing the author's name.)

● The entire show need not be submitted by Dec. 16. The first draft to be submitted should contain a scenario, character sketch and the complete draft of two scenes. The winners will be asked to complete their shows by Feb. 8, 1960.

● All material should be typewritten on one side only of 8½ by 11 inch white paper. The material should be double spaced with one original and four carbon copies.

● Scenarios should be the work of contestants only. In the event of collaboration on a winning scenario, the prize will be divided among the authors.

● All material submitted to Thespians will become their property. They reserve the right to use it at their discretion.

Complete information and tips on preparation of the scenario may be obtained from Raymond Fortunato, Thespian director, 303 Old Main.

# NBC Official Discusses Key To Effective Educational TV

The key to planning effective educational television lies in relating the professional broadcaster and the professional educator in order to permit both to make maximum contributions, Edward Stanley, director of Public Affairs for the National Broadcasting Company, said yesterday.

Stanley spoke before the University Communications Forum for Broadcasters which ended last night. The forum was sponsored by the School of Journalism and the Center for Continuing Liberal Education.

"It must be apparent to all of us, that if we mean to stay free we must intensify and deepen the fund of knowledge possessed by the generality of people," Stanley said.

He cited NBC's "Continental

Classroom" program as an effort to fulfill this need. "This is the first time so massive a communications instrument as a commercial television network has ever been used frankly and openly to teach," he said.

"People watch these programs not to be entertained, but to increase their knowledge." He added that he believes a certain amount of this kind of programming will become a must for television with increased coverage in the future.

"I would expect and hope to see great stimulation in the establishment of educational television stations and the creation of an educational network," Stanley said.

### Committee Names Gemmell

Dr. James Gemmell, professor of education, has been appointed university program director of the National Committee for Education in Family Finance

## Students Invited To Business Clinic

Students interested in attending the First Annual Management Conference are asked to register at the Hetzel Union desk before Friday.

The cost of the conference, which is sponsored by the University chapter of the Society for the Advancement of Management, is \$3 per person.

The registration fee includes cost of a luncheon banquet, which will follow registration Saturday, and a dinner.

Principal speaker at the luncheon will be Juel Ranum, assistant to the chairman of the board and director of public relations for the Whirlpool Corporation.

tions for the Whirlpool Corporation.

Arthur M. Weimer, dean of the School of Business, Indiana University, will speak at the dinner in the HUB.

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# CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN CHEMISTRY

A recent survey of research facilities disclosed that 205 chemical laboratories are located in the Pittsburgh area. Among the leaders in this field is the University of Pittsburgh, whose sponsored research effort currently exceeds \$12,000,000 annually and provides employment for 1,226 people. The demands of the local industrial laboratories and the University's large undergraduate population have accelerated development of its research facilities, the graduate teaching program, and the opportunities for Graduate Student Assistants.

Inquiries are invited now from chemistry majors concerning Graduate Assistantships for 1960. Graduate Student Assistants receive pay, tuition allowances and cash fellowships varying in total amounts from \$2,280 to \$3,700 per year. Low cost apartments are available for married students. Inquiries may be addressed to the Chemistry Department, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh 13, Pennsylvania.