
The second talk was on medieval scholasticism and the third, on modern philosophy of science, was given by Herbert Feigl, one of the last surviving representatives of the Vienna circle. From this three-stage launching the series became quite discursive, ranging from archaeology and physiology to mathematics and economics. The Vikings as poets were discussed by one speaker and the structure of theoretical physics by another.

pared to tape the lecture and transcribe from the tape. It is incredible how incoherent in transcript a perfectly good, or even really exciting, talk can be. It is absolutely fatal to show the raw transcript to the speaker. He or she will throw up their hands in horror and that is the last you will see of it. Therefore an intermediate stage of editing by the organizer of the seminars, or colleagues, is absolutely essential. Indeed it is this, and the preparation of suitable introductions for the speakers, that constitutes the major part of the labor of such a series. The burden of it is enormously lightened if one is blessed, as we have been at Minnesota, with highly intelligent secretaries. Marsha Riebe, Laura Muellenbach and others here have been able to produce transcripts that only take three or four hours to edit. Without such intelligent transcription it can take six or eight hours to turn into grammatical and continuous form the eloquent talk that one so much enjoyed when it was being given. There is an occasional speaker who transcribes into connected prose, such as the late Jacob Bronowski, but these are the exception rather than the rule and the labor of editing from transcript should not be underestimated in planning to make a record of such a seminar series. The edited transcript should then be typed up for the speaker to go over and the organizer's work then consists in hounding his speakers until the manuscripts are returned. There is of course no need to make a permanent record of such seminar series but we have found it a great pleasure to do so when funds permitted.

The publications have more value, too, than as a mere record and recollection of a series of enjoyable talks for they may be sent out with offer letters to prospective graduate students. Here they serve as a certain touchstone. If a student is put off by them, their irrelevance to ChE and lack of solemnity, then we are only too thankful—such a person would hardly take to the atmosphere of a good graduate school. On the other hand, if it tips the balance of the decision in the favor of Minnesota as a graduate school we are appropriately

grateful. Of one aspect there has never been any question: their popularity with the graduate students is immense. It is not just a relief from the strenuousness of ChE, but is a definite challenge and opening of windows on wider perspectives. To the faculty they also offer an opportunity for wider contact within the university and have been enthusiastically welcomed whenever we have been able to arrange them. □

ChE letters

RANKING OF DEPARTMENTS

Dear Sir:

In the spring issue of C.E.E. you have published an article by Professor Griskey that dealt with ratings of Chemical Engineering Departments. I will not deal here with the particulars of the article since several members of the profession have done so in statements accompanying it. The article, however, points unwittingly to two major aspects of the current state of chemical engineering education.

Indiscriminate comparisons of Chemical Engineering Departments without regard to their emphasis and direction is ludicrous. Today there are departments which resemble applied mathematics; other departments act as industrial appendices. Then we have those places which emphasize bioengineering, physical chemistry, theoretical chemistry, etc., etc. To rate all these together is like comparing "apples and oranges."

The second point of this letter derives directly from the above notion. It is high time, I believe, to reexamine the direction of the profession as an academic discipline. Crouched somewhere between tenure, publications, and personal prestige, we certainly need to rediscover relevance in both teaching and research.

Some of Griskey's "top rated" institutions seem to forget that we are an applied discipline; that not all graduates intend to pursue academic careers; that there is such a thing as undergraduate education. (Over 80% of the students terminate their academic careers at the B.S. level). Perhaps the accreditation of certain institutions which call themselves Chemical Engineering Departments need to be reexamined and reevaluated.

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