

Points of View

Double Use of Travel Time

Every Extension worker I know has more work to accomplish than hours available to him. We're all forced to assign priorities and concentrate our efforts on accomplishing tasks that constitute the most pressing perceived need.

Unfortunately, this work load leaves little time for reading the many professional journals and reports so vital to us. This crowded schedule isn't unique to Extension. It has been experienced in almost every other professional field.

Recently I read about an information service available to doctors and stockbrokers through cassette tapes. This service placed its current professional journals and day-to-day stock market information on tapes that could be played by subscribers as they commuted to and from their offices.

This would be a way to increase the efficiency of Extension work. We spend many hours a month traveling to remote areas to carry Extension programs to the people . . . and this travel time is generally nonproductive. If we could subscribe to a taped version of the *Journal of Extension*, the



Extension Review, and other in-service information materials, we could receive training while we travel.

This "training-on-the-go" concept could be expanded to provide information in other areas. Subject-matter specialists could receive the latest research and application methods in their field. The overall picture of special programs, such as expanded nutrition or rural area development, could be presented to all Extension workers.

We all realize the need for keeping up to date in our chosen profession. Recorded information could help us keep current and improve our professional competence.

The cost of preparing recorded materials would be nominal compared to the time savings involved. Consider the number of hours travel time by all Extension workers and think of the potential if just one-half or even one-fourth of this time could be used as in-service training time. Other professions have found this a practical solution to a problem. Extension workers travel more than most professionals—shouldn't we examine this innovation in training for our use?

E. BLAIR ADAMS
Laramie, Wyoming

University Accessibility or Empire Building?

With all due respect to Messrs. Jensen and Strother, I find the potential for a bit of empire building lurking in the pages of their article "Making the University Accessible," in the Winter, 1969, *Journal*. The emphasis is on Extension with a big "E" as opposed to extension with a small "e".

There's some question about whether resident faculty members are reluctant to venture out of their ivory towers as we in Extension seem to like to believe. If my recent research is any indication, resident faculty members are relating to the "outside world" with greater frequency than we had thought. They are, however, interested in extension rather than Extension.

I received the impression from the article that Extension is the critical link in "making the university accessible." This isn't necessarily true. Some highly effective and important extension work is currently being done by members of the resident campus with little or no involvement on the part of University Extension.

I disagree with the position that all extension activity must flow through University Extension. Extension has become possessive of the outreach function. While this is often couched in terms of "coordination and elimination of duplication," I suspect that a far more important motivating

force has been the tendency toward empire building. The job to be done is far too large and the resources far too limited to worry about who does what, as long as the job gets done. In addition, the more that resident faculty members become involved in extension, the greater the probability that the position of Extension will be enhanced.

I'd like to say that I find little to argue with in the article. If Jensen and Strother's concepts were put into practice, I have no doubt that Extension would be a far more effective unit. With the exception of their plea for tenure for county agents, they've presented a philosophy that is sound and worthy of further pursuit. (Note: I find the concept of tenure distasteful. I suspect the cost of tenure in terms of the abuses it permits far exceeds the value of the protection it affords.)

The authors are eloquent in their defense of extension as being vital to the mission of a university. Their statement that "a truly well-rounded university can be great as much for public service as for graduate teaching and research" is worthy of further expansion. In an age when the demand for relevancy is heard with increasing vigor, it's likely that the great universities will be well-rounded universities.

GERALD UDELL
Wausau, Wisconsin