A WORLD SYSTEM OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

Colleges and Universities as we have known them gobble up young people and process them into specialized servants of civilization. Young people are trained (to confine their thinking to established disciplines and restrict their behavior to established patterns) by older people who are themselves quite confined and restricted. But, since the glories/tyrannies of civilization are incompatible with our continued survival on Spaceship Earth, it is necessary to transform these institutions.

The word “university” implies an institution concerned with the universe, an institution concerned with individuals as whole human beings in relation to their whole environments. So let’s imagine a university system which includes all people as members and which is designed to enable us to continually learn a better living in the universe. This would be a general organization, conterminous with “society,” which would enable us to cooperate in learning to live and learn in the universe. Through this university, we would have access to the accumulated wisdom and technology of humanity.

Let’s begin by recognizing that each person is a self-organizing system and constitutes a university in her (sic) own right. Individual universities can form family universities, family universities can form neighborhood universities, and so on. Within family universities, we can learn to be loving and healthful in the primary activities of living. Within neighborhood universities, we can provide for kindergartens, seminar and information facilities, suitable homes and gardens, a transportation pool, etc. At the community scale, we could support a cooperative store, a basic health care team, a small research and development group focusing on housing, food production, waste management and communications, an exchange program with other communities around the world, and such other facilities as may be appropriate for seventeen hundred self-actualizing persons. At each degree of scale, there might be a university council with responsibility for orchestration of living/learning so as to achieve optimum synergy. The university councils would work to insure that we do not lose sight of whole human beings and communities as we move to develop and apply our knowledge and technologies. Concurrently, the colleges would work to insure that our concern for the well-being of all human beings everywhere will not bog down in mere good intentions but will be supported by a surge of creative activity, each person being enabled to make his or her special contributions.

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NONSENSE IS THE FOURTH DIMENSION OF LITERATURE