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THE CHARACTER AND EXTENT OF
THE NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION IN OKLAHOMA

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THE CHARACTER AND EXTENT OF
THE NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION IN OKLAHOMA
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By

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INTRODUCTION

In the selection of a problem for special study as a part of the requirements for a Master's Degree, the writer chose the task of ascertaining the seriousness of the youth problem in our country (with special reference to this state); the solution which is being attempted in other countries and the soundness of the solution which is being worked out in our own.

That the youth of the nation are the trustees of posterity is as true today as it was when Disraeli observed it; that there exists a youth problem today in the way of unemployment and lack of training for youth is a fact so generally accepted as to require little proof. Our accepted educational institutions have apparently failed somewhat to meet the demands of the youth of our times; whether this failure is in subject matter offered or method of teaching we shall attempt to determine.

The National Youth Administration, an emergency organization set up by President Franklin D. Roosevelt for furnishing immediate relief and employment to the youth of the nation is the organization which today is most nearly meeting the demands of the youth and of the times. As it is generally conceded that Mr. Houston A. Wright has set up the most comprehensive program in the Oklahoma

National Youth Administration, much consideration will be given the " Five Point Training Program" around which that work is centered. An analysis of the methods used and results achieved by this organization will be given as well as the writer's criticism as a summary of findings of this thesis.

It might be well to add that the writer is in no way connected with the National Youth Administration except insofar as his duties as principal of one of the state's high schools allows and necessitates his cooperation with this program.

The writer wishes to express his deep gratitude and sincere appreciation to Dr. Haskell Pruett, and to Dr. J. C. Muerman of the School of Education of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. He also desires to mention his indebtedness to Dr. T. H. Reynolds, Head of the Department of History, School of Science and Literature, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. Gratitude is also due Mr. Houston A. Wright, State Director of the National Youth Administration whose cooperation has been very helpful.

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Chapter One

The Youth Problem in the United States

There are, in these United States, 20,000,000 youth between the ages of 16 and 24 years of age; of these 4,000,000 are in school, 8,000,000 are employed, 3,000,000 are housewives and 5,000,000 are out of school and unemployed.¹

In Oklahoma there are 420,000 youth of the same age; 200,000 of these are out of school and unemployed. "Out of school and unemployed" does not imply that these youth have completed their education, but in most cases means they have dropped out of school for various reasons and have not secured employment either because of lack of opportunities or lack of training.

Part of the unemployment among youth is doubtless due to the aftermath of the depression; part is no doubt due to lack of sufficient training. In the Third WPA District (which comprised Payne, Creek, Seminole, Hughes, Lincoln, Okmulgee, Okfuskee and Pottawatomie counties), the average education of youth employed by the National Youth Administration is fifth grade; this is presumably higher than in those districts including southern cotton tenant farmers.²

¹ Jessen, Carl A. and H. Clifton Hutchins, Community Surveys. Bulletin No. 18-VI, U.S. Department of the Interior. 1

² Wright, Houston A. National Youth Administration Survey. 1935-1936.

Many leading educators, when confronted with these figures, replied that doubtless the youth were "out of school" because of lack of ambition or ability. Mr. Houston A. Wright, State Director of the National Youth Administration in Oklahoma and one of the leading educators in that state, did not agree with this assumption. Consequently he requested a survey of all high schools cooperating with the United States Government through the National Youth Administration. In 412 high schools, 95 National Youth Administration students were valedictorians of their graduating classes, 98 were salutatorians and both valedictorians and salutatorians came from the ranks of the National Youth Administration in 37 of the schools, and 16.8 per cent or an average of 992 of the total of 5,904 students included in the study were elected to serve in a class or school organization.³

Not content with this, a survey was made of the 800 youth attending Oklahoma University through the assistance of the National Youth Administration. It was found that through the four classes, Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior, that National Youth Administration Students averaged one point higher than other youth. This proved rather conclusively that, given the means, many youth out of school would be back in school and would compete on an equal basis as to ability.

³ Wright, Houston A. National Youth Administration Bulletin
December 31, 1936.

It is true, however, that not all youth out of school wish to return to school; many left school because of lack of interest. This in itself is a very important criticism of our present school system. If many of the youth, whose interests educational institutions have attempted to serve, feel they are not adequately meeting their needs, thought should be given to ascertain wherein they are failing.

The problem of properly educating our youth is not a separate problem but is interwoven with our economic and cultural problems as individuals and as a nation. One is reminded of a story told of Joseph II. When *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* was first produced in the Vienna of those days, the Emperor said to the composer; "My dear Mozart, your music would be very fine if there were not such a monstrous number of notes in it". Our educational, economic and cultural problems are only fundamental tones in the entire problem of living; none may be considered separately. It takes the whole, properly harmonized, to create something more than a confused "noise".

Throughout the course of history there has not existed a problem so important as regards youth; never before have so many youth been on the highways and freight trains, making up that great caravan Maxine Davis calls the "Lost Generation."

4 Selle, A. W. Germany Ten Years After. Introduction.

The economic and educational aspects are closely interwoven. Without education these youth must necessarily seek employment among the day laborers. Taussig, noted economist, says "Common labor, it is true can never be dispensed with; but in many directions the need for it seems to be becoming less. If wages for this group are to rise it must be chiefly by a decrease of supply of labor rather than by an increase of demand; but that process of escape into other and better paid groups is the result of universal education and democratic freedom.⁵

It has long been thought that there is universal education and equal opportunities for the young people of the United States, but such is not the case. Of the 200,000 youth in Oklahoma out of school and unemployed, many do not have the minimum amount of decent clothes which would permit their attendance at school; many are handicapped by malnutrition, by environment, by lack of education of their parents which would enable them to see the desirability of further education.⁶ Carver, noted economist, says . . . "the curse of the poor is their poverty". One can readily see that it is difficult for the poor to achieve the advantages necessary for success because of the limitation of opportunities. It is an accepted fact that individuals tend to perpetuate themselves within their economic class. That is logical. Speaking of education,

⁵ Taussig, F.W. Principles of Economics. Chapter 48, 154.

⁶ Administration 300. Class of NYA County Supervisors, Oklahoma A & M. Summer 1937. Discussion.

Taussig says, "The very fact that a laborer has not had it, is an almost insuperable barrier to his children securing it".⁷ Ricardo says, "the scale once formed is liable to little variation".⁸ Such would be the concensus of opinion of many county supervisors of the National Youth Administration after a year or two's experience in the field.⁹ According to them it is often impossible to get the parents permission to have such defects as extreme crosseyedness corrected in order that the youth may have better opportunity to compete in the labor market and serve more efficiently. Parents of these youth often reply, "If the Lord had wanted them to be otherwise, He would have made them differently". The solution here would seem to be taking the child out of such environment unless we wish to follow in the footsteps of Lao Tze, the founder of the Taoist faith, and merely withdraw ourselves from evils which we presumably cannot correct. That is the attitude some schoolmen have taken to date, but it is not the better attitude and is most certainly not the one under which the National Youth Administration of this State is operating.

In addition to the problems outlined above, it is apparent that the present day educational systems have failed these youth who require a vocation, or trade, whereby they may make their living quickly. Many schools and colleges have failed the present generation as they have not

7 Taussig. Op. Cit. 130

8 Ricardo. Works. 15

9 Administration 300. Op. Cit.

adapted their curricula to the changing needs of our economic, industrial and cultural needs of today. Many youth do not find it necessary, or practical, to take the broader cultural training offered by the high schools and colleges of today; but they do require specific training which would permit them to support themselves and their families. It is as necessary for our schools to change with the changing needs of our people as it is for our governments to make like changes. Hence, if 5,000,000 of our youth are out of school because the schools have failed them; it is the problem of the various governmental and other agencies to analyze the cause of the failure and to correct it where possible. If 4,000,000 of our youth are in school (between the ages of 16 and 24 years) and 5,000,000 are out of school, apparently we have failed the majority of our potential citizens.

Consider the amount of money spent on education today; contrast the amount spent in Oklahoma annually with that spent in other states. In proportion to our wealth, the amount of money expended on education is embarrassing to one interested in the welfare of our state. If we recall that \$12,000,000 is expended annually by this state on the few youth who attend our high schools and colleges and not one dime on those who find it impossible to attend those schools, the situation is even more grave.

If we carefully peruse the report made to Governor E. W. Marland by the Committee on Education appointed by him

to make a study of education in Oklahoma; we are astounded to note that Oklahoma stands 47 among the 48 states in attendance and 37 in scholarship.¹⁰ And Oklahoma's wealth places her among the wealthiest states in the nation! If we give additional consideration to our attendance record, we find it another proof that our educational system, while perhaps not wholly failing, is not covering the field completely. This is not to be construed as a criticism of education for the writer is himself a school-man, but we must get an unprejudiced, unbiased, frank view of the situation if we are to assist in correcting the same.

If we consider the problem of taxes in connection with the problem of education, possibly there would be criticism as to the amount of money which would be required to adequately educate our youth. If, however, we take into consideration the vast amount spent annually because of juvenile delinquency, and the portion of this which might be saved by properly training and adjusting our youth to present day conditions, we realize that the amount saved in this one field would more than make up for the difference expended.

The fact that youth lack not only opportunities for training themselves for a vocation in life, but also fail to achieve employment after having obtained the training contributes to the problem of juvenile delinquency, vagrancy, and all those other problems comprising the "youth problem".

10 Marland, E. W. Report of Committee on Education, 1936-37

Maxine Davis in "The Lost Generation" says, "We have found a problem unique to our times; young men and women with intelligence and personality; with ability and training; and no opportunity to exercise these qualities. We have found unprecedented unemployment among the young. We have found that unemployment has afflicted them even more virulently than it has their seniors. We know that such adverse economic conditions have been the cause of restlessness and revolt in European youth. Avidly it has swallowed patent medicines for its heartache."¹¹

Thus there appears the need not only for vocational training but also for employment, or failing that for work experience, "job training" which will permit today's youth to gain something which will enable them to compete fairly with next year's graduates.

It takes only three or four years to corrode the firmest character. It takes only that length of time for a younger, trained generation to supersede a former one who has not received employment, and thus permanently place the older, inexperienced man or woman on the junk heap of life. "The failure of a single crop of children ruins a race. There is no come-back. A break of only 20 years in the continuity of tradition, habits, and standards of living changes a society more than a thousand

¹¹ Op. Cit.

years of slow growth. For each span of twenty years fixes the whole design of living . . diet . . clothes, games, loves, hates, philosophies, and cults. And only a few elements within the dynamic pattern need be added or removed to transform the whole.¹²

Could we only recover the flux of events in remote ages and observe them as we have been observing the devastations in Russia, Italy, Germany and many other lands since 1913, we would understand that most turning points in human history have coincided with profound changes in the prosperity, training, health or chemistry of most young people between five and twenty-five within the region.¹³

The youth problem, or "youth movement" in Europe is quite different from that of the United States. The European manner of thought, tradition, customs, government are such that they disagree with every innate instinct of the American man or woman. However, we should consider the method they have used in attacking their problems. Poland, Austria, Russia are training their boys in labor camps as a prelude to conscription for military

12 Davis. Op Cit.

13 School and Society. November 14, 1936

service. Their labor camps, like the Nazi work camps, insure that no boy escapes training for war. Yesterday one might have asked whether the democratic states would be obliged to follow this lead; today France supplies the answer. A bill is about to be introduced into the French Chamber providing for compulsory physical training for boys and girls from 6 to 21. The aim is to adapt French youth to the "new trends" by beginning to prepare them for army service in the elementary schools.¹⁴

Over increasing areas of the world the young are being regimented as they have not been since the days of ancient Sparta. All the autocracies begin as youth movements. This is not what we have in mind when we speak of the "youth movement" in the United States.

A solution of our problem must take into consideration the causes of the failure of the public school system; the attitude of the youth toward education, work, home and leisure. It must consider the environments of the youth and wherein the homes fail. In short a solution of the youth problem must furnish training, work, understanding of the problems of society, and develop the necessary attitudes and character to meet life's problems and solve them in a way which will be acceptable to society.

14 School and Society, November 14, 1936.

Germany's economic problem is most nearly comparable to that of the United States in connection with youth, training and employment and they have attacked their problems in a manner similar to that we have used. The United States set up the Civilian Conservation Camps which served boys only and dealt primarily with conservation, then added the National Youth Administration which offered a broader opportunity for the solution of the entire problem as peculiarly present in each state. Germany first conceived the Arbeitsdienst as a means of reducing the surplus in the labor market and the general improvement of morale. It rapidly developed from an emergency expedient into a permanent educational policy.

The government realized the social and spiritual benefit which all young men and women would derive from such work. They would learn much from doing hard manual labor and from mingling with young people from all classes of society. Because of its adoption as permanent, the development of the Arbeitsdienst has been slower than in the United States. It has been necessary to erect substantial buildings or remodel old ones with the intention of using them over a long period. There are, however, already several hundred camps throughout the country. The organization of the personnel and of the several groups is also more thoroughgoing and is directed from a central organization in Berlin.

The Arbeitsdienst, just as the CCC, seeks to improve the condition of the land. . . The goal in Germany is more immediate and is an outgrowth of the struggle to increase production. The objective is to prepare land so that it may be colonized by farmers . . .

It also has established camps in the industrial regions around Essen, Dusseldorf, Breslau, etc., where girls can do social service work.

Because of its deeply important educational nature the Arbeitsdienst is not strictly voluntary. All unemployed young people come naturally to the Arbeitsdienst for work and support. All men under 25 who wish to practice a profession must spend one year in the service, as must all college students, boys and girls, before entering upon a university course. Firms send all employees under 25 for a year's participation . .

The United States and Germany are blazing an important pioneer trail with this policy of giving particular support to their young people in a crucial time.¹⁵

The German program appears to be excellent as does the CCC in the United States, but the real solution appears to be evolving out of the work, experiments, and experience of the National Youth Administration, a government agency set up by President Roosevelt to solve the youth problem in the United States in its entirety.

The purposes of the National Youth Administration, established by an Executive Order of the President on June 26, 1935, were stated in his comment on the promulgation of the order as follows:

"I am determined that we shall do something for the Nation's unemployed youth, because we can ill afford to lose the skills and energies of these young men and women. They must have their chance in school; their turn as apprentices; and their opportunities for jobs . . a chance to work and earn for themselves . . ."

15 Selle, A. W. Germany Ten Years After.

After a brief review of the National Youth Administration's national program, we shall give particular attention to the National Youth Administration of Oklahoma under the direction of Houston A. Wright as that program appears to be the most comprehensive and adequate solution offered which will, in all probability, serve as the nucleus of a permanent youth program.

CHAPTER II

The National Youth Administration

The presidential letter of June 26, 1935, established the National Youth Administration and provided definitely for assistance to be given elementary, high school and college students between the ages of 16 and 25 years who had found themselves unable to continue their education. The purpose of this phase of the program was to extend part time employment to students of public schools and colleges in order that they might be employed and at the same time be furnished an opportunity to continue their preparation for life work.

This part of the National Youth Administration program was set up under three general heads namely School Aid, College Aid and Graduate Aid.

Youth assisted by Student Aid as these three divisions are called were selected by the various superintendents or presidents of the schools or colleges. The youth must be from needy and worthy families but need not necessarily be certified as relief youth as were those used on the "out-of-school" project division of the National Youth Administration program.

The schools were charged with the responsibility of setting up socially desirable work for which students engaged in School Aid activities might earn a maximum of \$6.00 a month. In many instances the school authorities

found it advisable to divide the \$5.00 allocation and employ two students at \$3.00 a month or even three students at \$2.00 a month. This enabled the Student Aid program to reach a greater number of students than would have otherwise have been possible. The work consisted of the cataloging of libraries, decoration of interiors, beautification and landscaping of school grounds, and similar forms of work which not only enabled the students to earn the small wage but also provided invaluable vocational experience.

College youth were allowed to earn a maximum of \$20.00 per month; averages in most cases were around \$15.00, however, with the type of work college youth were permitted to do about the same as that on which high school youth were employed.

Graduate students were permitted to earn a maximum of \$50.00 a month, the average payment to all graduate students participating in the program not to exceed \$30.00 a month. The work performed by graduate students consisted largely of research investigation.

The project or out-of-school youth program was the second national division of the National Youth Administration program. Only youth from relief families, certified to the Works Progress Administration as relief cases, were eligible to work on this phase of the program.

These youth, therefore, came from families whose case heads were working on relief for salaries of \$26.00, \$36.00 or possibly as much as \$56.00 per month. Inasmuch as many families had a relatively large number of children the income of the head of the family was not sufficient to cover a minimum budget for the family, the youth were therefore allowed to work to supplement the family income.

Youth were classified as Unskilled, Intermediate, Skilled and Professional receiving respectively \$10.00 \$13.00, \$16.00 or \$19.00 for 40 hours work a month depending on their skill.

At first only WPA youth were eligible, but in the spring of 1937 youth from families receiving Blind Assistance, Old Age Assistance, or Dependent Children's Aid were added as eligible for employment; in May of 1937 youth from Resettlement Grant families were added. On the whole only youth from very indigent families were permitted to work, youth handicapped by poverty, environment, health, lack of proper food, and proper housing, etc.

The only defect, or criticism of such a system is that it is not comprehensive enough. Youth from families not certified to WPA yet receiving general county relief were not eligible to work; in the opinion of many county commissioners youth from families receiving such relief should also be added to the list of eligibles.¹⁶

Certifications of families eligible for relief were made in November of 1935. No certifications of need have been made since that time, as a result of which many families needing relief then are no longer in a position where governmental assistance is required yet doubtless some few will accept it. On the other hand, many other families who would not accept relief until absolutely destitute and almost starving are now in a position where they actually need assistance and cannot get it as they were not certified in 1935. Hence, it would seem preferable that a new certification be made.

If this certification could be made by trained people, with a common standard of need, much injustice would be eliminated, or possibly injustice is stronger than we wish, possibly variation would be better. In the former certification, however, one county would have as many as 2600 families certified as in need, while in the adjoining county only 600 would be so certified. Possibly by some strange chance this was correct, but it seems improbable for type of land, means of earning an income and all other factors were almost identically the same, the only difference being the location of the family as regarded the artificial county boundary and the case worker judging the case. This, as a result, made opportunities for youth from families slightly different and again set up favorable and unfavorable circumstances over which the youth had no control.

Possibly a better solution of certification of need would be to let this responsibility lie in the hands of the organization interested in serving the youth. This would be practical if, and when, this organization is set up as a permanent institution and given a certain allocation of money to spend each year as are our schools.

However, let us get back to the National Youth Administration and its accomplishments. In the words of President Roosevelt this organization was set up to "give youth a chance to attend school; give them their chance as apprentices; and their opportunities for jobs . . . a chance to work and earn for themselves.

This would necessitate a very broad and varied type of program, one that would fit the many demands of individuals some of whom would wish conventional school or college training, others who would desire training in technical or vocational or mechanical lines; it would necessitate projects, or industries which would permit youth to work as apprentices and gain the additional training involved in actually doing a task.

The following pages state clearly the number of youth in the State of Oklahoma to whom those opportunities were extended by the National Youth Administration. It will permit one to judge the youth assisted in the various types of work and training. Oklahoma's figures will be representative of other states, yet it should be remembered that Oklahoma ranked first in number of youth employed in proportion to population and second in total number of youth working.

TABLE I¹⁸

SUMMARY OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN STUDENT AID BY MONTHS*

		WHITES	NEGROES	TOTAL
SEPTEMBER	Male	872	71	943
	Female	<u>1043</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>1141</u>
	Total	1926	158	2084
OCTOBER	Male	1628	87	1715
	Female	<u>1859</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>1971</u>
	Total	3497	189	3686
NOVEMBER	Male	2414	144	2558
	Female	<u>2665</u>	<u>174</u>	<u>2839</u>
	Total	5079	318	5397
DECEMBER	Male	2626	199	2825
	Female	<u>2853</u>	<u>225</u>	<u>3078</u>
	Total	5479	424	5903
JANUARY	Male	2890	207	3097
	Female	<u>3143</u>	<u>446</u>	<u>3359</u>
	Total	6033	433	6366
FEBRUARY	Male	4153	267	4420
	Female	<u>4302</u>	<u>264</u>	<u>4566</u>
	Total	8455	531	8986
MARCH	Male	4799	402	5201
	Female	<u>4933</u>	<u>407</u>	<u>5340</u>
	Total	9732	809	10541
APRIL	Male	4981	496	5387
	Female	<u>5113</u>	<u>373</u>	<u>5486</u>
	Total	10094	779	10873
MAY	Male	3727	281	4008
	Female	<u>3984</u>	<u>303</u>	<u>4387</u>
	Total	7711	584	8295

* 1935-36.

The above shows the participation of students in the high school student aid division. It should be noted that there was a gradual increase until April; this was a result of eastern schools in large cities not using their allocation of funds. Oklahoma asked for the surplus and received it. Another reason for the increase was the additional allocation for Drouth Relief in Oklahoma which resulted in more funds being set aside for use here.

18 National Youth Administration Bulletin, December 31, 1936.

TABLE II¹⁹

SUMMARY OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN COLLEGE AID BY MONTHS*

		WHITES	NEGROES	TOTAL
SEPTEMBER	Male	W 1717	51	1768
	Female	<u>1266</u>	93	<u>1359</u>
	Total	<u>2983</u>	144	<u>3127</u>
OCTOBER	Male	1692	54	1746
	Female	<u>1263</u>	98	<u>1361</u>
	Total	<u>2955</u>	152	<u>3107</u>
NOVEMBER	Male	1655	53	1708
	Female	<u>1305</u>	114	<u>1419</u>
	Total	<u>2960</u>	167	<u>3127</u>
DECEMBER	Male	1708	53	1761
	Female	<u>1341</u>	115	<u>1456</u>
	Total	<u>3049</u>	165	<u>3217</u>
JANUARY	Male	1647	50	1697
	Female	<u>1338</u>	115	<u>1453</u>
	Total	<u>2985</u>	165	<u>3150</u>
FEBRUARY	Male	1722	48	1770
	Female	<u>1319</u>	111	<u>1430</u>
	Total	<u>3041</u>	159	<u>3200</u>
MARCH	Male	1817	63	1880
	Female	<u>1441</u>	111	<u>1552</u>
	Total	<u>3258</u>	174	<u>3432</u>
APRIL	Male	1916	54	1970
	Female	<u>1466</u>	96	<u>1562</u>
	Total	<u>3382</u>	150	<u>3532</u>
MAY	Male	1895	110	2005
	Female	<u>1412</u>	109	<u>1521</u>
	Total	<u>3307</u>	219	<u>3526</u>

*1935-36

Due to the fact that the College Aid program of the National Youth Administration was a continuation of a similar program under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration the previous year, there was almost a complete participation on the part of the colleges from the beginning of the National Youth Administration.

19 Op. Cit.

20 Ibid

TABLE III²¹

SUMMARY OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL AID BY MONTHS*

		WHITES	NEGROES	TOTAL
JULY	Male	106	4	110
	Female	117	3	120
	Total	223	7	230
AUGUST	Male	281	16	297
	Female	291	25	316
	Total	572	41	613
SEPTEMBER	Male	4881	282	5163
	Female	4824	301	5126
	Total	9705	583	10288
OCTOBER	Male	6163	422	6585
	Female	6251	449	6700
	Total	12414	871	13285
NOVEMBER	Male	6635	446	7081
	Female	6760	456	7216
	Total	13395	902	14297
DECEMBER	Male	6932	498	7430
	Female	7123	513	7636
	Total	15056	1011	15066

* 1936-37

At the close of the school year of 1935-36, the National office authorized the Youth Administration for Oklahoma to provide student aid for those secondary schools which had summer terms. Table III shows participation for the months of July to December 1936, inclusive. Throughout the year of 1936, the high point of participation was in December when 15,066 youth received assistance.

21 Op. Cit.

TABLE IV²²

SUMMARY OF COLLEGE STUDENT PARTICIPATION BY MONTHS*

		WHITES	NEGROES	TOTAL
SEPTEMBER	Male	2512	123	2635
	Female	1981	189	2170
	Total	4493	312	4805
OCTOBER	Male	2660	235	2795
	Female	2070	181	2251
	Total	4730	316	5046
NOVEMBER	Male	2673	137	2810
	Female	2157	185	2332
	Total	4829	322	5142
DECEMBER	Male	2606	126	2732
	Female	2089	185	2274
	Total	4695	311	5006

*1936-37

Like the student participation in the high school aid, the highest point in participation came toward the latter part of the year in November in this case. This would indicate that the students as well as the school men were becoming more familiar with the type of service offered.

It might also indicate, and does doubtless to some extent, that more money was made available for use by the Oklahoma National Youth Administration as mentioned in a preceding discussion, both as a result of other states not using the money placed at their disposal and as a result of the Drouth Relief allocation for Oklahoma.

²² Op. Cit.

Aid similar to that for college students was also made available to students pursuing at least three fourths of a full program of graduate study.

Graduate students earned a maximum of \$40.00 a month, the average payment to all graduate students participating in this program not to exceed \$30.00 a month. Three colleges of the state received graduate aid allocations and in these three institutions a total of 52 students were employed with an expenditure for the year 1935-36 of \$6,122.75. Oklahoma had no negro graduate schools. Provisions were made, however, for negro graduate students to attend institutions in other states and receive the same benefits from graduate aid as were offered other graduate students.

The work performed by graduate students consisted largely of research investigation. One Master's Degree thesis on the work of the National Youth Administration was written the first year of its existence and at present it is one of the more popular problems considered by students in the School of Education at the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. Material for at least one other thesis is now being collected on this subject.

The following table gives the extent of the use of graduate aid funds for the year 1935-36.

TABLE V

TOTAL YEARLY EXPENDITURE FOR GRADUATE, COLLEGE AND STUDENT
AID IN 1935-36²³

GRADUATE	\$ 6,122.75
COLLEGE	364,838.62
SCHOOL AID	<u>326,568.65</u>
	\$697,630.02

TABLE VI

TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR FIRST HALF YEAR FOR GRADUATE,
COLLEGE AND STUDENT AID 1936-37²⁴

GRADUATE	\$ 5,212.40
COLLEGE	240,586.43
STUDENT AID	<u>223,966.62</u>
	\$469,665.45

Contrasting the figures shown in Table VI with those shown in Table V, a large gain may be noted, considering the length of time involved in both cases. This may result from many reasons one of which is doubtless due to one lesson taught during the depression namely, that the best jobs and the most security goes to the person who is best prepared in his or her field. Hence, there seems an even greater interest in graduate study as the depression disappears.

23 National Youth Administration Bulletin.

24 Ibid

According to the preceding figures we see that an average of around 7000 high school youth, 3000 college youth and 52 graduate students were assisted during the year of 1935-36 at a total cost of \$697,630.02. This would be an average of approximately \$70.00 per youth per year, which is not an excessive amount for either high school or college youth to spend on education in a year.

It should be remembered, too, that this was not a direct gift but that each youth rendered services in return for the money received. The value of the services depended on the supervision given.

One way in which we school men can cooperate with the National Youth Administration in its effort to be of service to youth is to give intelligent consideration to their purposes. If we select the work these youth are to do carefully, if we see that the work has training value and that sufficient supervision or instruction is given the youth to permit his doing the task intelligently and then if we demand that value received be given in both quality and quantity of work, we will be doing both the youth and the tax payer a service as well as assisting the National Youth Administration in their high undertaking. This will necessarily involve both time and trouble on our part but we are in the field of education primarily because of our interest in education and in youth and not because of the profit involved; hence this is only another means of rendering the service we wish to.

The project division of the National Youth Administration, the out-of-school division serving relief youth, in Oklahoma during the year of 1935-36 spent a total of \$434,185.71; the greatest number of youth employed during any one month was 11,450. These youth came from the 450,000 youth in the State of Oklahoma between the ages of 16 and 25 certified from the relief rolls. There are 97,000 of these families on the rolls of the Works Progress Administration.

This phase of the work is sponsored by local subdivisions of government. Advisory boards were established in counties and in communities of 2,000 or more. These boards assist in planning the projects and in securing the sponsors contributions. There are 212 local advisory boards with a membership of 1,222.²⁵

The Student Aid division is not so original a service neither is it so interesting to most people as is the project or out-of-school program. The service to the youth is also one which catches at one's imagination. These are the youth who will never have a chance unless someone reaches to them a helping hand not only in the more practical way of training and employment but in stimulating their ambition which has been almost ground out by constant discouragements, and in the way of inspiration and encouragement. It was interesting to note in a questionnaire given the county supervisors

of the project division of the National Youth Administration who were in school at Oklahoma A & M College this summer, for the purpose of ascertaining their opinion as to their duties all listed either individual consultations with youth for assisting in their problems, or to instill ambition in the youth or for the purpose of furnishing encouragement, sympathy or inspiration to the youth.

We have thought of the service rendered by the National Youth Administration in such terms as "youth served" and "money expended"; let us now give a more personal consideration to some of the experiments they have attempted, the more human angle of the program.

First consideration should doubtless be given to the "Five Point Program" which this organization has made popular in this state. Around these five points has been built the general program. This epitomizes the newer trend in education covering as it does the trend toward Vocational Training, preventative medicine or the health angle, training for more complete living by means of training in home arts and crafts. It is a program built for the same purpose for which our schools were set up, that of training for complete living. It has approached the problem from a newer and more practical angle and if there is such a thing possible the advantages are possibly with the youth from the relief families who participate in this program rather than with the youth who come from wealthier homes. An analysis of the purposes, means of approach and methods used in carrying out this program will

permit us to analyze more justly the work which is being done, as well as that which is being attempted by the National Youth Administration. If found worthy it is possible that we may find ways and means for assisting in this work as well as for coordinating it more closely with the regular school work for the tax-payers of Oklahoma are paying to educate all the youth of Oklahoma not merely a select group.

CHAPTER III

NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION IN
OKLAHOMA

Mr. Houston A. Wright, State Director of the National Youth Administration in Oklahoma, has visualized that organization as something more than an "emergency relief" measure and has set the following goal for his workers . .

"When every worker has cultivated proper health habits and had his physical defects corrected; has learned to perform some useful task well enough to earn a living doing it; knows how properly to maintain a home and understands the human relationships involved; has learned how to make profitable and pleasurable use of his leisure time; and has been grounded in the fundamentals of citizenship; then, and only then, will Oklahoma NYA feel that it has met fully its responsibility of adapting the unemployed out-of-school youth to the socio-economic scheme in a better way than the youth might have done."²⁶

This briefs the program, which is built around the five points of Health, Home-making, Citizenship, Vocational Training and Leisure Time Activities.

The primary interest to the youth, at least until he catches the vision of what the NYA is really trying to do for him, is the work involved, the 40 hours for which he receives remuneration. Speaking of these, Mr. Wright says:

"Many leaders in education, economics, and industry believe that our youth must be provided with a more integrated education - e. i., practical work in the field, laboratory and industrial workshop combined with studies and experiments in

26 National Youth Administration Bulletin. December 31, 1936

science, engineering and the cultural arts. They believe that this alone can give our society the type of men and women it must have to conserve our National Resources and to develop new economic frontiers."

"NYA work projects . . . to be of maximum benefit to the young people employed, must give them work experience that will be useful in their adult life and prepare them for full time employment in a relatively short period. If the National Youth Administration is to continue, the projects completed must be of such a character that the citizens of the locality are conscious of the project benefits not only of training to the youth employed but of the benefit to the community welfare or progress. This requires that the work undertaken be substantial and economically sound."²⁷

Thus, the work program of NYA in Oklahoma has tended more and more to become one of major construction for the boys and away from "weeding in parks" projects and other of like emergency "made work" nature. Every project on which youth are employed is carefully weighed and if it does not supply sufficient work training another of greater value is substituted. The preference now is given to major or minor construction or agricultural work for boys.²⁸

"In initiating a construction program the most important factor to be considered is the amount of work training that will result from its completion. In the case of buildings for NYA purposes, this objective comes nearer to being reached than in any other project, for the reason that throughout the construction of the buildings, youth are learning the practical fundamentals of

27 Op. Cit.

28 Kelly, James J. Interview. State Engineer for NYA.

building trades in a manner superior to many types of apprentice training and immediately upon the completion of the building this training may be carried on in woodshops, home-making centers, metal-shops and classrooms.

The project when complete provides an adequate physical plant for operation of the entire "Five Point Program". In some cases one building may house all the activities, or separate shops, home-making and recreation buildings may be built.

In considering a program of this type it is necessary to take into consideration the needs of the community for a particular type of training.

For instance near an industrial center, a shop building equipped to develop trained youth along the lines required by industry in that section would prove more successful for a start in the program than any other type of building if it were impossible to construct sufficient buildings to house all the units at the same time.

In many cases very efficient work training projects may be operated that are not the first need of the NYA but very desirable and important ones to the community in which they are located, for instance a camp recreation building similar to those under construction in Sapulpa and Henryetta or a library building in communities where there is none available. Sponsors of those projects in practically all cases are willing to furnish the material and supervision that gives training in building trades to the youth and also furnishes a place for the operation of recreation and citizenship programs."²⁹

Work other than construction is done by NYA youth, such as construction of street markers, danger and curve signs, historical monument and park signs, direction signs, sanitation structures, driveways, curbings, sidewalks, etc.

²⁹ National Youth Administration Bulletin. December 31, 1936.

The value of such projects to unskilled youth is enormous, furnishing them training and practical experience in brick laying, concrete finishing, plumbing, and many other trades in which they could easily earn a living. It has the added value of being interesting to the youth personally as most of them wish to build the building in order to get the shops so they may get further training they desire in wood work, auto-mechanics, or other trades. There is no problem of discipline or loafing as is found in some emergency adult work.³⁰

Girls are employed in public service work, chiefly filing, stenography, typing for governmental or city or county offices, library work, etc. Primary consideration, however, is given to projects including some element of home-making either sewing in NYA Sewing Rooms, where actual construction of garments is taught and practiced, or work in nurseries where girls learn care of children, supervision of their play, care of a house, laundry work, canning, cooking and serving of well balanced and attractive and inexpensive meals, proper budgeting of food, time and money.³¹

The work phase of the program taken care of, we may then turn to the Five Point Training Program.

30 Administration 300. Class of NYA Supervisors, A & M College, summer of 1937. Discussion of supervisors.

31 Ibid.

Primary consideration and value, is given by Mr.

Wright, to the Health part of the program. He states that the youth themselves would give this more consideration if they could only realize the importance of it and the value to them in ten years time.³² It is the aim of the NYA of Oklahoma to have every youth working on the program properly examined by a practicing physician, and to have all emergency remedial measures taken where necessary, as well as other remedial measures taken care of and physical defects corrected. It is the purpose of the NYA to set up a long time health program by encouraging youth to have necessary dental work done, tonsils removed, and other health corrections as soon as their finances will permit, or gradually little by little over a long period of time if necessary. Many youth respond to these suggestions readily with the result that much has been accomplished along this line.

In Payne County, every youth for whom time was reported in April of 1937 had received a medical examination and all emergency measures had been taken.³³ This is doubtless true of many other counties throughout the state.

32 Wright, Houston A. Speech. Women's Civic Club, Kappa Sigma House, Stillwater, Oklahoma. April, 1937.

33 County Supervisor, Payne County. Interview.

The Health Program as suggested by the State Office of the National Youth Administration of Oklahoma is as follows:

H-E-A-L-T-H³⁴

1. First Aid

Goal - 75% of project workers holding Red Cross First Aid certificates. A course taught by persons certified to be Red Cross teachers.

2. Physical Examinations

Goal - a physical examination for every project worker.

3. Follow up work under way on every possible case.

4. Required treatment for every venereal case.

5. Health classes:

Care of body
 Fundamentals of right living
 Effects of physical defects
 Effects of excess usage of alcohol, tobacco, tea, coffee and patent medicines
 Malnutrition
 Importance of sun light and exercise
 Cleanliness and clothing for health
 Causes and treatment of colds
 Communicable diseases

Suggested teachers:

Supervisors
 Local doctors and nurses
 County Public Health Units

MATERIALS:

State NYA office
 Outline on beginners courses in eight units
 Outline on advances courses in eight units
 Government literature
 Insurance companies
 Libraries

The second phase of the Five Point Training Program is that of "home-making". It is Mr. Wright's ambition that every girl working on NYA in this state shall receive training in home-making as the majority of them are potential home-makers and mothers. He suggests the following program:

H-O-M-E M-A-K-I-N-G³⁵

Suggested activities:

1. Class Possibilities

- a. Foods:
 - Meal planning
 - Budget buying
 - Preparation of foods
 - Serving
 - Use of left-overs
- b. Household Art
 - House cleaning
 - Care of rugs, drapes and upholstery
 - Care of glass and silver
 - Laundry
- c. Child care and care of the sick
 - Meal planning for children
 - Supervision of play
 - Home-nursing
- d. Sewing and Handwork
 - Fundamentals of sewing
 - Pattern alteration
 - Applique, embroidery, Sewdish darning, etc.
 - Rug making
- e. Maid's training course (material available in State office)

This suggested outline has undergone a rather thorough revision and a new and more comprehensive outline is now in the process of being printed which covers every phase of home-making.

This past summer twenty-six county supervisors of the National Youth Administration of Oklahoma attended summer school at Oklahoma A & M College for the purpose of gaining new ideas, and additional training which might be practical for their work. That the supervisors were interested, and considered the work important may be gathered from the fact that these supervisors attended, not at full pay or half pay but at their own expense with only a weeks notice that such a course would be offered. Much of the time, in the course, was spent on the Home-making phase of the program gathering new ideas and making them applicable to the needs of the particular youth with whom NYA comes in contact. The Home Economics Department of the College offered every assistance and facility for this work in addition to a keen interest, quick sympathy and excellent spirit of cooperation.³⁶ It was the concensus of opinion of the supervisors that much of the conventional home economics, taught in high schools and colleges, would not be practical for NYA for the reason that the income of most of these youth is now, and probably will always be, much lower than that ordinarily assumed by most schools to be that which will support a "minimum standard of living". The problem which confronts NYA on every side is how to do something creditable with nothing to do with, no money to spend for materials. In that the county supervisors and

36 Administration 300. Oklahoma A & M College. Discussion.

the NYA youth have come to a somewhat similar view as to the value of a dollar and the importance of making the most of it. This is especially noticeable in the field of home-making for the standard of living for these youth must be raised yet it will be hardly possible to raise the amount of money they will have to spend for several years.

The problem that the NYA is attempting to solve, is that of teaching these youth new standards, substantial yet economic manners of living which will be gracious and attractive. Inexpensive decorations, attractive renovation of furniture and clothing at little or no cost are the first things to consider after the basic problems of food, housing, cleanliness and health have been taken care of. Some of these youth have lived the greater portion of their lives in a tent on the creek bank, others have known what proper living conditions are but have only recently been taught the meaning of poverty; there are all classes and gradations of poverty, and all types of people within the group with which the National Youth Administration deals.

As all through the ages, there are a few people frankly not worth an investment of money or time on the part of society, but on the other hand there are many youth who with very little assistance and encouragement could, and will, be among the leading and outstanding people of

the next few years. Those are the youth which deserve our most serious consideration as school men and educators; they are the ones of whom the President was thinking when he said "we can ill afford to lose their skills and energies". They are the youth the National Youth Administration is attempting to serve. Give a youth of this type but a suggestion as to how his home might be improved with a bit of paint, a home-made piece of furniture, etc., and often he will return something very attractive.³⁷

Both boys and girls are interested in making their homes attractive and clean.³⁸ That is the ultimate aim of the home-craft program. In this field, as in many of the others, the youth and others are handicapped by the inability of the parents to adapt themselves to changing conditions; however, this is something that only the years may accomplish.

Watching the various county units of the National Youth Administration functioning, listening to the various supervisors discussions of problems and solutions, it is difficult to believe that future generations will not have been helped, and conditions improved in many ways, health, housing, standard of living, equipment with which to make a living.

The whole home-making program as visualized and as outlines by Mr. Houston A. Wright, is in itself almost a

³⁷ Otha Donohue, Area Supervisor, National Youth Administration.

³⁸ Ibid.

philosophy of living; the goal set for the NYA in this state is so broad that one could not expect its complete achievement in less than many years. Our schools have been working toward much the same goal for generations.

The third point of the Training Program, Vocational Training, needs little explanation. It is no longer a "new trend" in education but it is one we have, of recent years, come to agree is most important. The National Youth Administration intends to, and has already, set up training centers to teach youth almost any vocation he may desire. This does not confine itself to the more conventional shorthand, typing, etc., but includes auto mechanics, refrigeration, radio work, maid's schools, etc.

An intelligent survey is made of the types of training industry demands, the preference of the youth themselves. Often vocational guidance and advice is necessary on the part of the supervisor in order that the youth may select the type of training for which he, or she, is best fitted. Concerning this phase of the work, this is what the National Youth Administration has to say:

"If youth is to be trained for industry, we must give youth what industry needs." ³⁹

39 National Youth Administration in Oklahoma. December 31, 1936. Bulletin.

The following are suggested:

Possible activities with minimum equipment 40

Practical electricity
 Auto mechanics
 Refrigeration
 Latheing
 Radio
 Stone work
 Maid service
 Nurse id

Rural and Agricultural possibilities:

Vocational Agriculture
 Terracing
 Irrigation
 Soil Conservation
 Care of Livestock
 Scientific farm building and management

 Landscaping
 Tile irrigation

Introduction courses; youth to be taken in groups to visit the various industries and business establishments in local communities.

Company superintendents and business men may be asked to discuss definite and new possibilities in their particular industry.

Suggested teachers:

Smith-Hughes teachers
 Park superintendents
 Cemetery sextons for landscaping
 County agents
 Retired laborers

Materials:

Government literature; libraries
 Nationally known manufacturers
 Magazines

The fourth point, that of Citizenship, is one we have stressed in schools, in Boy Scouts, and other organizations. However, we have never contacted the youth to whom the National Youth Administration intends to extend the benefits of training in Citizenship. The Boy Scouts are composed of boys from families of the middle or upper classes (in regard to wealth); NYA youth come from relief families. The need would seem greater among this group for training in citizenship for, as we all know, when want raises its head among a family, or a group, crime immediately increases. It would, therefore, require a proportionately stronger sense of right and wrong, and of good citizenship, to assist the youth from this group in keeping the law.

It is commonly conceded that the depression has increased by thousands the youth to be found on freight trains, and on the highways. It is also conceded that juvenile delinquency is an expensive problem in our society, expensive not only in terms of money but in terms of lives. We, supposedly leaders in the field of education, should be concerned not so much in terms of money as in terms of human beings; lives properly directed. However, in the field of education to eliminate juvenile delinquency is also to cut the costs of government.

Suggested activities for the Citizenship training are as follows:

" . . . and has been grounded in the fundamentals of citizenship . . . "

Possible Activities⁴¹

Study of National and State Activities

Talks by municipal officials on Parliamentary Law

Patriotism lectures (illustrated)

Flag etiquette and Allegiance pledge

Lectures by school officials on History of Oklahoma. Resume of life of governors and Oklahoma leaders. Study and lectures on Oklahoma constitution.

Study of Community activities:

Discussion by old timers of significant facts in history and development of community.

Simulate with youth the governing of municipal and county governments.

Dramatization, through club activities, of pioneer days.

Discussion of operation of Utility and City Water systems.

Current events. Radio.

Analyze through the Club work, Roosevelt's Inaugural address, and through newspaper clippings follow up the results both in State and National law making bodies.

Make scrap book of news of national, state and community interest.

Teach appreciation of fine arts, especially music and dramatic art.

Applications of the fine arts in club work.

Contact and procure the cooperation of the American Legion, the Auxiliary and the Women's Federated Clubs in developing national citizenship.

Enlist the cooperation of civic bodies such as Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions in developing understanding of International citizenship.

Suggested teachers:

Supervisors

Municipal and county officials

School officials

Older residents who can give significant facts in history of community

Local business and civic leaders

41 Ibid.

Materials:

Current newspapers
 History books
 State and National Constitution
 Government agencies that will send out, at no expense, except postage, illustrated lectures on various phases of government activities.

The fifth point of the program Leisure Time

Activities is also an important one for the use a man makes of his leisure often determines his place in life.

The suggestions made by the National Youth Administration for use by county supervisors are the following:

Library:⁴²

Traveling library provided by State Library Commission
 Current magazines which local clubs are usually glad to provide
 Books of all kinds
 Newspapers

Indoor Activities:

Dramatic group
 Music group
 Radio programs
 Hobby group
 Amateur contests to develop talent
 Lectures to develop appreciation of art, music, etc.
 Parties
 Clubs and Youth Councils

Outdoor Activities:

Teams:
 Softball
 Baseball
 Basketball
 Tennis
 Hikes and Picnics
 Contests
 Swimming with Life saving certificates as goal

42 National Youth Administration in Oklahoma. Dec. 31, 1936. Bulletin.

Thus, we have the Five Point Training Program which the Oklahoma National Youth Administration has set up as a pattern from which to build.

The exact carrying out of these principles, the means and methods are left to the ingenuity of the various workers in the field which is true of the whole program. Aubrey Williams, Executive Director of the National Youth Administration, Washington, D.C., says this:

"I should like to emphasize the fact that the National Youth Administration's program has not been ready made in Washington and thrust in a definite and rigid form upon the communities. It has, on the contrary, been made flexible enough for adaptation by local individuals and organizations to meet a wide variety of particular needs. As a community program, with this difference . . . that it has been made possible by federal funds . . . it is providing thousands of needy young people, upon a sound and economical basis, with certain of the educational and vocational opportunities to which they are entitled."

Because of this fact, the National Youth Administration of Oklahoma, under the direction of Houston A. Wright, State Director, has been able to make greater strides than would have otherwise been possible.

It has set up the Five Point Training Program which in effect, is a practical education for complete living; it has carried on a very ambitious Work Program the major part of which has been construction for the purpose of furnishing work-shops for the youth. Many other experiments have been attempted, some frankly to determine their worth others which were of proven worth before they were put into

operation. Let us, therefore, consider some of the NYA work in this state which is of more interest because of its experimental and original nature; we may then have a sounder basis for our opinions as to the worth of the NYA program which is being carried on in this state.

CHAPTER IV

NYA EXPERIMENTS IN OKLAHOMA

One of the most interesting, as well as one of the first experiments attempted in this State was that of the NYA Girls' Camp similar to the CCC for boys.

November 1, 1936, a Girls NYA Camp was located at Stillwater, Oklahoma, sponsored by the Oklahoma A & M College and housed in barracks originally used for a CCC camp. One barrack was used as a reception hall, another for offices, a third for a recreation hall, a fourth for dormitory and a fifth for the kitchen and dining room, a sixth for project work room.

A staff of ten teachers, housekeeper, cook, etc., was selected with Miss Josephine Bell as Director of the Camp. Miss Bell was a member of the B & P W National Education Committee, and was formerly Principal of the Blackwell High School; she was a very capable, well trained, cultured and enthusiastic leader and was well known in educational circles. Her fellow teachers were all college graduates, most of them with master's degrees from various colleges and universities over the United States including the University of Columbia, etc.

One hundred girls, from the project division, were selected from the entire state. The first term of Camp was three months, as was the second, the third term, however, during the summer was cut to two months.

One would almost have to see the Camp to realize the friendly, gracious atmosphere which existed. However, one should have seen the girls when they first came to Camp, some without proper clothes, shoes, etc. It was necessary to completely out-fit many girls. As there was no fund for this purpose, it was a real problem. ⁴⁴

As there was a great responsibility on the shoulders of those in charge since most of the girls were 17 to 25 and had come from families where discipline was almost unknown, it was thought best to follow the college rules very closely, and if anything, even more strict rules were enforced. This caused a little unhappiness among the girls at first, with the result that several took themselves off home, some without the formality of a good-by. While this was much regretted by those in charge it was unavoidable. Possibly those were among the youth who would not have profited by the money and thought expended on them.

However, in several weeks after the camp started, clothes had improved miraculously; neater, cleaner, better groomed girls were the result. Manners became more gracious, and the atmosphere like that of a happy home. While the brrracks were frankly barracks, without paint, etc., yet they were as good as many of the girls had been used to and better than some had been living in. In a short time after the arrival of spring, flowers were blooming around camp, and everything began to take on a gay, homey look.

⁴⁴ Chandler, Emma. Home Economics Instructor. NY Camp. Interview.

Dancing was permitted in the recreation hall, and the hall was usually filled (on open nights) with happy youngsters. That the Camp was a success is attested to by the many girls who asked to stay for additional terms, only a small percent of whom were allowed to remain for more than the one term. Many clubs and other organizations who had the pleasure of hearing some of the NYA quartets, or seeing of the tap dancers, or being entertained by some of the other talented youth, will also agree that the youth derived much benefit from the camp.⁴⁵

Open house was often held for the townspeople, and was always well attended. Just before the summer term closed and the Camp was temporarily discontinued, the class in Administration 300 which had been meeting at the College was invited out to dinner. The class was entertained with a visit through the work rooms, and by various entertainment features at dinner. A fashion show of frocks made by the girls while at camp and modeled by them, was one item. A very hospitable and gracious evening's entertainment was extended by the Camp faculty, and youth.

Another interesting experiment has been the Bristow NY School. The City of Bristow owned a 15 room building, located in the City Park in the west part of town. They gave NYA permission to use this as an NYA School. The building was renovated, painted, and

45 Op. Cit.

redecorated by WPA at a cost of something like \$20,000.00.

The building sits on a high hill, overlooking the Park. Concrete paving leads to the Park and graveled drives go to the door of the building. A lovely swimming pool is not far distant in the rear of the building.

The staff for the school was selected with the idea of teaching both girls and boys. Therefore, the staff included a Director, Nurse, Purchasing Agent, Vocational Agriculture teacher, Home Economics Instructor, Manual Training Teacher, laundress, night-watchmen and cook.

As first set up the School planned to have complete Agricultural and Shops courses, and a thorough Home-Making course for girls. However, although the first term was conducted with 25 girls and 25 boys, enrolled from 5 counties in the Third WPA District, this idea has been replaced with that of specializing in boys work at the school and setting up a Home-Making Center for girls at Shawnee. This will allow the staff to be cut to three persons and will permit both economy and additional training for the boys in the way of laundry work, cooking assistance, serving experience, and many other phases of work which the boys would otherwise not receive.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Smith, Miss Hessie. Acting Director Bristow NYA School. Interview.

When the youth entered the school they were given a thorough physical examination, including Wasserman tests. An unusual feature of this group was that the Wasserman tests were 100% negative. The youth were also weighed when they enrolled, and regularly each week since. Four weeks after the school began, Miss Gilbert, R.M., reported that the girls showed an average increase in weight of two pounds and the boys showed an increase in weight of five pounds, some boys having gained as much as twenty pounds.

This gain in weight is more interesting when compared with cost of the meals which the youth had been eating as follows:

August 12	per meal	11.9¢	per day
August 13	per meal	10. ¢	per day
August 14	per meal	13.5¢	per day
August 15	per meal	15.9¢	per day
August 16	per meal	16.9¢	per day

These meals are well balanced, and the food is properly selected and seasoned. The writer ate at the School on August 14 and found the meal well selected, nicely served and very well seasoned. The meal (for which the writer had made no advance arrangements for staying) consisted of steak, potatoes, gravy, bread, butter, beans, onions, iced tea, and chocolate pudding. Additional servings of anything desired might be had.

From weight gained, and cost of meals, one is inclined to wonder just how much the meals cost at these youths homes, how well selected they are, etc. For it would appear

that the meals are not as carefully selected, that not as much is spent on them (as an average of 11¢ each) or that there is not sufficient quantity. However, it is possible that the regular hours have something to do with the gain in weight.

The Bristow NYA youth were permitted to swim without cost once a week, the boys on Friday and the girls on Wednesdays.

Regular classes in home-making were taught the girls, and the boys were instructed in agriculture and shops work. Classes in health were also given both girls and boys.

Some explanation should perhaps be given as to cost of these projects and the method of defraying expenses. In both the girls NYA Camp at Stillwater, and the Bristow NYA School, the youth worked sufficient time to earn \$21.00 per month at the rate of 25¢ per hour. This was earned, at the Stillwater Camp, by making hooked rugs, and other articles of like nature for use by the College or other units of NYA. At Bristow the girls were employed in making garments, and the boys in making furniture. This combined work and training.

Of this \$21.00, \$15.00 was spent for expenses incidental to food costs, sanitation, etc., for board and room in other words. The youth did their own laundry work, cleaned the kitchen, took care of the building. In some cases an additional dollar was collected for health

fees, etc. The balance was given the youth for incidental expenses, clothing, etc.

A third interesting experiment was the educational program for rural youth during the summer at the various colleges. This part of the NYA program will be continued during the winter term. Many colleges cooperated with the National Youth Administration during the summer in offering courses especially designed to fit the NYA Five Point Training Program. Among these were Oklahoma A & M College, Miami Junior College, Langston University, Northeastern State Teachers College and possibly several others.

The plan used on Oklahoma A & M's campus is probably typical. Approximately 400 NYA youth were sent to A & M from the project division (relief youth) and permitted to earn \$21.00 per month, of which \$15.00 was spent for board and room. There was no enrollment cost, or cost for texts. The youth were quartered in Murray Annex (girls) and in the 4 H Club Camp (boys). A supervisor was in charge of each group, and various advisors and teachers were employed by the college and the NYA.

Classes for girls centered around Home-Making activities, including sewing, cooking, canning, preserving, decorating, etc. Classes for boys were primarily soil conservation, terracing, agricultural work of all phases, shops work, etc. In addition to

classes, the youth enjoyed a summer of planned recreational features, sports, etc.⁴⁷

Another feature, or experiment, along the educational line peculiar to the Oklahoma NYA set up was that of the summer Training Program for the NYA County Supervisors, which has been mentioned before.

The NYA is administered through a central or State organization headed by the State Director, Houston A. Wright. The state is broken up into various Districts corresponding, more or less, to the WPA District and not entirely identical to the Congressional District. With the recent change in WPA Districts, doubtless a similar change will be made soon in the NYA organization.

At the present time, however, there is a District Supervisor responsible for the counties under his, or her, jurisdiction. The county is then more or less under the supervision of the County Supervisor and Assistant County Supervisors. Administrative expenses are kept within 15% of the total of the relief payroll; the supervisors ordinarily being the only workers in the county who are not from the relief rolls.

In many cases WPA teachers were used to assist in the supervision, but in many cases they were found to be lacking in the necessary personalit , inspirational qualities, and sometimes in training. It was the con-

census of opinion among the county supervisors in school at A. & M. this past summer that teachers for these youth should be even more carefully selected than were those for youth from the average home for the reason that their environment was bad, they were in greater need of encouragement, inspiration, excellent examples before them. Also if they had once given up school with every convenience, good teachers, etc., it would require more skill, tact, desire on the part of the teacher to be of real service than in the ordinary case. For all of these reasons WPA teachers were not given the heartiest approval, for WPA in most cases, lists on its rolls those who have failed in their chosen professions.

The NYA supervisors seemed to prefer to choose from the rank of successful business and professional men and women who are civic minded, and interested as the people who could be of most assistance.

In many cases where the superintendent of the city schools cooperated by offering the facilities at his command, the supervisors appeared to think the problem more or less solved.⁴⁸ Given NYAs practical approach to the problem, and the assistance of established educational systems, they believe the problem easily solved.

Thus, the challenge seems to be to educators to put their shoulders to the wheel, and help where help is needed with the thought of serving youth more completely and adequately without added cost and with

⁴⁸Administration 300. Oklahoma A & M. Summer 1937.
Discussion.

only increased expenditure of cooperation and "neighborliness".

The county supervisor's course, taught by Mr. Kenneth Campbell, Superintendent of Schools at Madill and an enthusiastic supporter of the NYA program, as well as a student of Education (Columbia) covered the five phases of the training program. Speakers of state and national importance were brought to the campus to discuss Health, Home-making, Vocational Training, Leisure Time Activities, and Citizenship, as directly applicable to the NYA youth.

The supervisors lived in the college dormitories, and observed a similar routine to that of the NYA youth, eating in the College cafeteria, etc. Classes met three hours daily for the supervisors, allowing them time to observe the classes for youth or to attend various other lectures or classes on the campus. At the close of the day, and often at the beginning, both instructor (Campbell) and supervisors could be found on the tennis courts or in the swimming pools practicing their theories as to Leisure Time Activity. If not there, the second best guess was that they were in the dormitory, or on the campus in groups of three, or six or on up to twenty-six, discussing the National Youth Administration's problems in their own county. Supervisors, like youth, agreed that the summer was both inspirational and educational and never would one find a more deeply interested group.

Another outstanding contribution to the NYA accomplishments by the Oklahoma unit, is that of the Youth Center idea which has more or less been suggested in the discussion of the schools and camps, heretofore. This is Mr. Wright's particular and favorite theory.

The whole idea is one of centering the training and work into "Youth Centers", with classes in all phases of the five point program outlines. This has been begun, in some cases from "the ground up" . . . with the construction of the building wherein the Youth Center will be housed. The ultimate aim will be to center youth in various places depending on the type of work or training desired by the youth. If a youth wishes training in trades, or professions dealing with the oil fields, he or she will be sent to the school teaching that type of work, possibly the one located in Tulsa. If a boy desires wood-work, or shops training he will be sent to Bristow, etc. The ultimate aim is to make these self supporting, not merely cooperative, with the youth owning cows, chickens, etc., raising and canning garden foods.

Some of these Youth Centers are now under construction for instance at Okmulgee where a four or five building unit is being built of native stone. These will furnish facilities for all phases of the program; there will be an 80 acre garden, etc.

Such a building project gives an opportunity for teaching the youth many phases of work, concrete finishing, plastering, carpentry, stone masonry etc. This will be of value to the boys in earning a living, or in seeing that their own homes are properly constructed in case they do not follow this as a profession.

Major construction because of the training and interest to the youth, is being given first consideration in this State as has been intimated elsewhere. Brick, stone, frame and even "mud" houses are under construction sponsored by various city, county or civic organizations.

One of the most interesting construction projects in the NYA state program is that of the Stillwater NY Building, located in Fair Park sponsored by the city, county and Chamber of Commerce.

This building is located on a triangular plot of ground; the building was designed specially for this location, the first sketch of the plans having been drawn by one of the youth on the program, Valor Thiessen. The plans were then drawn by Mr. John Duerksen, State Architect for the NYA; little change was made. The plans, as originally drawn, and as finally approved, are for a "V" shaped building. The point of the "V" being a circular assembly room, 40 ft. across. The length of the building is 100 ft., with each wing about 35 ft. in width; giving a total floor space of more than 5000 ft.

The material from which the building is constructed is as unique as is the floor plan. Top soil, chemically treated (using Prof. J. E. Kirkham's formula), and pressed into blocks composes the walls. This material when dry will take a pressure almost equal to that of concrete. It is almost perfect insulation and will result in a very comfortable as well as inexpensive and durable building.⁴⁹ The roof will be of concrete as will the floor; the building will be stuccoed and painted. It is also planned that murals (by youth among the group) will decorate the walls of the assembly room; the furniture will be made in the shops by the youth themselves.⁵⁰

This project furnishes a perfect work shop, or training center for both boys and girls, the boys in construction, furniture making, etc., the girls in decoration, etc.

The building will be used by the NYA, County Health Unit, and by other civic groups.

Thus, we have a sketch of some of the most interesting experiments and some which were most easily accessible for the writer to visit. Doubtless there are many more throughout the state.

However, these few experiments would tend to prove to us that the National Youth Administration in this state has approached its problems with courage and originality; there will be little that it will need apologize for in

⁴⁹ Kirkham, Prof. R.E. Head Civil Engineering Dept., Oklahoma & M. Interview.

⁵⁰ Kirby, T.E. District NY Supervisor. Interview.

years to come. Youth have been furnished not only relief employment but training for permanent employment, courage, inspiration and education for practical problems and for the real problems of life. Communities have benefited in permanent improvements.

It will be noted throughout that the projects have been designed to combine education, and experience; that much thought has been given to the type of work project, training involved and a well rounded and even cultural program. There has been a nice balance of class work, applied knowledge, work, play, sports, recreation, music, art., etc.

Perhaps we should then consider the opinion of the youth themselves; that of outstanding civic and educational leaders, and thus conclude our thesis with a resume of the value of the work done in this state by the National Youth Administration which is certainly developing "new trends" in education.

CHAPTER V

EVALUATION OF THE WORK OF NYA

It is difficult to evaluate the work of the National Youth Administration for several reasons. One of these is the fact that it is, as yet, too close too us. Unconsciously our political opinions or educational or social background preclude a wholly unbiased criticism. Having been reared in the tradition of formal education, cultural to a large extent, vocational training has been accepted only with many reservations.

There is also the question not only as to whether the youth will profit sufficiently but also whether they are material worth spending time and money on. If we believe in the value of heredity, it is possible that education (whether it be vocational or otherwise) will be in part at least wasted on these youth. This, too, is a relative question depending on the measure by which the family is judged, whether it be education, financial successes or otherwise. If we believe in the value or education or environment, however, and the inherent worth of humanity, the work of the National Youth Administration has some justification.

The writer attempted to attack this problem by interviews with supervisors, who were working of the program; he also talked with many of the youth to determine the quality of the material, their interests and reactions.

The county supervisors were as well prepared as the average school teacher. They were all quite enthusiastic, apparently feeling that they were pioneers in a new and interesting field, one that would be worth the effort and worry they had expended in its development.

In talking with the youth concerning the things NYA had done for them, seldom could a youth be found who was not enthusiastic in his or her praises. They were in most cases not thinking altogether in terms of the \$10.00 they received each month for five days work; they were thinking of the opportunities of accomplishment opened to them through this assistance.

Miss Ada Thompson, a talented little singer, who was in the NYA Camp and whose home is in Shamrock, Oklahoma, was quietly sincere in her statement of the benefit she had personally received. She remained at Murray Annex after the Camp closed and will continue her school next winter as a member of the NYA quartet which will actually "sing itself through college".⁵¹

Miss Willa Bounds, a youth from Stillwater, who had been at the Bristow School said . . . "We really worked hard. But it was fun. Nellie and I were the only ones who didn't cry when school closed and we were the last girls to leave

⁵¹ Miss Ada Thompson. NYA youth. Interview.

so there wasn't anyone to see us cry or we probably would have too. It was lots of fun. I learned a lot. I made some of the prettiest uniforms from unbleached muslin trimmed in pink muslin, with bound button-holes. It doesn't sound at all pretty, but it really was. I was proud of mine."⁵²

Miss Mildred Cochran, Pawnee, said, "They really keep you busy. Not a free evening. Working, classes and recreation planned for each evening. I've enjoyed every minute of it."⁵³

Miss Juanita Belveal, Cushing, said, "NYA has been a big help to me. I've learned many things . . . sewing, serving. Quite a lot of practical nursing. I'd like to go to the Bristow School but the folks need my money to help out at home so I just can't go; I hope to continue to work here though for I just don't see how we could get along without it."⁵⁴

Cleo Harmon, Cushing youth, said, "If I could find another job that paid better of course I'd take it but I'm working full time on the NYA building and not making a lot of money but I'm learning lots of things. It keeps my hand in at concrete finishing too."⁵⁵

52 Bounds, Willa NYA youth. Stillwater. Interview

53 Cochran, Mildred NYA youth. Pawnee. Interview

54 Belveal, Juanita NYA youth. Cushing. Interview

55 Harmon, Cleo NYA youth Cushing. Interview

So much for the youth, although letter after letter could be quoted with only a very few not realizing or appreciating the opportunity they were getting.

Judge Ross, County Judge, Ardmore, says, "Juvenile delinquency has been cut 90% in this county since the inception of the NYA program. We are thoroughly in favor of it".⁵⁶ Mayor Harris of Okmulgee says "Juvenile delinquency has been decreased 50% since NYA started in this city".⁵⁷ Public officials over the state where attention has been given to this problem are agreed upon the help which the National Youth Administration has been in the solution of the major youth problem.

Elmer Petree, County Superintendent of Osage County, says, "The writer believes that the NYA will be one of the forms of relief from the Federal Government to be made permanent and a part of regular school work. Right now the NYA for students out of school is receiving quite an amount of attention. This work has an important place to fill for those boys and girls who have not had a chance to go ahead in school. If the NYA inside school can be carried on successfully there, of course, will be a smaller number requiring the work outside the school ranks.

⁵⁶ Ross, Judge County Judge, Ardmore. Speech before NYA State meeting, Capitol High School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. December 19, 1936.

⁵⁷ Harris, Mayor Edgar. Mayor of Okmulgee. Speech before NYA meeting in Stillwater, October 26, 1936.

"The National Youth movement has been successful. It is filling a place educationally and industrially in the lives of many boys and girls that were bewildered by events of the depression. After the depression is over, we will still have many of these boys and girls out of work because of machinery taking the place of workers. The NYA can take care of those unfortunately situated boys and girls as well in normal times as in the depression. This work should be continued even after the effects of the depression are gone.

" . . . The results of NYA work in the past two years show that if continued the work will help a class of boys and girls who need the experience". 58

Dr. Henry G. Bennett, President of Oklahoma A & M College and one of the leading, if not the leading educator in the State has been one of the most loyal and sincere supporters of the National Youth Administration. Hardly a paper in the state but has quoted Dr. Bennett in praise of this work during the past six months.

Dr. E. H. Black, Superintendent of Schools, Bristow, is also loud in his praises of NYA and was influential in the adoption of a statement in it's praise which was passed by the Oklahoma Educational Association this past year.

58 Potree, Elmer. Superintendent of Public Instruction, Osage County. Letter.

Hence, the writer concluded with the statement that the youth problem in the United States calls for deep consideration on the part of all interested citizens, and especially the school men of the nation not as an emergency relief problem resulting from the depression but as an ever present problem. We are tempted to wonder,

"Is a body of permanently unemployed people to be the inevitable outcome of our improved technological processes?"

"What is the implication for education arising from groups of unemployed, deprived by social conditions from earning their own living. The attitudes generated by this condition are of increasing concern to schools. In our thinking of this problem, it is important to speak of 'the attitudes resulting from unemployment' rather than of the 'attitude of the unemployed'"⁵⁹

"That the problem of youth continues to call for attention is proven by the fact that of the 751,042 youth people eligible to attend the public schools in 1935-1936, there was an average daily attendance of 497,974!"⁶⁰

Must it necessarily follow that "the curse of the poor is poverty", as Carver stated? Must we necessarily follow in the footsteps of Lao Tze, the founder of the Taoist faith, and withdraw ourselves from evils we cannot prevent and assume toward them an attitude of "imperturbable meekness", or shall we rather follow in the footsteps of Confucius, whose theory was more or less the opposite of that of Lao Tze, about whom this story was told:

⁵⁹ Kirkendall, Lester A. How Unemployment and Relief Affect Education. Journal of National Educational Association. April, 1937.

⁶⁰ Marland, Gov. E. W. Committee on Education Report.

"Confucius went to see Lao Tze who, according to the Taoist traditions, read to the ardent young teacher a lecture, the burden of which was advice to cease meddling with matters which were beyond his control. It was characteristic of Confucius that he did not reply but the advice of Lao Tze was lost on him. He was a practical man . . . "61

In analyzing the National Youth Administration program, we might compare it with that of Confucius who taught a "well rounded curriculum"; his three principle subjects being history, poetry and literature. After these came four others, proprieties, government, natural science and music. He had pride in those pupils who displayed oratorical, administrative or literary abilities, but he avoided feats of strength, prodigies, disorder and the supernatural.⁶²

"He taught the value of the family and human nature's unrealized capacities for self-improvement. But his interest was in fitting men for better citizenship, not in the founding of a faith".⁶³

How little has our viewpoint changed in the years. Confucius' "well rounded curriculum" and the "Five Point Training Program" of the National Youth Administration have many similar ideas and the purpose of both are primarily the same. The goal Confucius was striving to reach is the same goal both the NYA and the schools of today hope to reach. Naturally the methods used in reaching our proposed goal may be different as different conditions exist,

⁶² Barton, Bruce. What Can A Man Believe. 106.

⁶³ Ibid. 107.

but we realize the purpose and problems are basically the same. It convinces us, too, that we are not so advanced in our thinking as possibly some of us thought; that our ideas are quite conservative and our method of approaching our problems not at all extreme.

There is no doubt but that Mr. Houston A. Wright has thought deeply concerning the youth problem; that he has done much research and has arrived at a possible solution for this problem, or the many phases of it; a solution based on sound pedagogical principles, and sound economics.

He has a vision, reaching far down the years, of the help we may render youth and society. If sometimes his theory sounds a bit idealistic, we are reminded of the story of Sir Christopher Wren, to whom London owed so much of what is finest in its architecture and especially in the character of its central churches.

"He has received for his compensation a salary that was less than that of the American unskilled worker but as his epitaph says truly, his work was 'not for his own but for the public good', and will keep bright his fame forever.

"One morning he passed among the workmen, most of whom did not know him, and of the three men engaged in the same kind of work he asked the same question, "What are you doing?". From the first he received the answer; "I am cutting a stone". From the second the answer was: " I am earning three shillings and six pence a day". But the third man straightened up, squared his shoulders and holding his mallet in one hand and his chisel in the other, proudly replied; " I am helping Sir Christopher Wren to build this great cathedral".⁶⁴

⁶⁴Op. Cit.

That story may be applied to the youth which the NYA program is serving; if they have caught the vision of what this opportunity may mean to them, they will go far.

It might also be applied to we school men. We may either be "finding odd jobs" to allow the NYA youth "to get in their 40 hours", we may be "helping them to earn their \$10.00 a month", or we may be helping the youth take advantages of one of the greatest opportunities of a life time. We may be helping the National Youth Administration build a permanent, and badly needed, youth program which will assist in correcting juvenile delinquency, which will teach youth the value of "Health, Home-making, Citizenship, Vocational Training and proper use of his Leisure Time". With schools, youth and government cooperative, nothing will be impossible of achievement.

We will thus be aiding the President to accomplish his desire that . . .

" . . . we shall do something about the Nation's unemployed youth, because we can ill afford to lose the skills and energies of these young men. They must have their turn as apprentices; their chance to work for themselves; their opportunities for jobs . . ." ⁶⁵

Summarizing the findings of this thesis, the writer believes that so long as some 200,000 of the youth in our state are "out of school and unemployed", through no fault of their own, a very definite youth problem does exist.

⁶⁵ Roosevelt, President Franklin D. Administrative Order.

He is convinced that so long as Oklahoma stands 47 among the 48 states in school attendance, and 37 in scholarship, there is a need to reorganize our school systems, and to determine wherein they are failing.

He is convinced that many youth are unable to attend school because of lack of money for clothes, proper food, and supplies. This need is not altogether a result of the recent depression. Therefore, he believes there exists and will continue to exist a need for assistance through some government agency.

After consideration of the work achieved and the training program set up by the National Youth Administration in this state, the writer wishes first to commend Mr. Houston A. Wright and his staff on the commendable results achieved. He then wishes to add his endorsement of this more integrated type of education which combines work and training. In his opinion this is ideal for the type of youth who will take advantage of it, youth whose families will not have the money, or established business, in which the youth may be assured a start in his career when his training is finished.

This seems to be one of the newest trends in education, and one which will expand as the years go by. This is only in its infancy, and naturally will require some

study, experimentation and adaptation to changing conditions of the time. But our experience with other vocational education trends in the past only point to further integration of this type.

The "Five Point Training Program" of the National Youth Administration is basically sound and founded on the most fundamental desires of mankind. It points the way toward a practical education for complete living, a goal toward which we have been striving for many generations.

If youth, educators and government continue to join hands, feeling as the third worker for Sir Wren felt, that we "are helping to build a youth program", it will not be long until . . .

" . . . every worker has cultivated proper health habits, and had his physical defects corrected; has learned to perform some useful task well enough to earn a living doing it; knows how properly to maintain a home and understands the human relationships involved; has learned how to make profitable and pleasurable use of his leisure time; and has been grounded in the fundamentals of citizenship; then, and only then will we feel that we have met fully our responsibility of adapting the unemployed out-of-school youth to the socio-economic scheme in a better way than the youth might have done . . ."

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