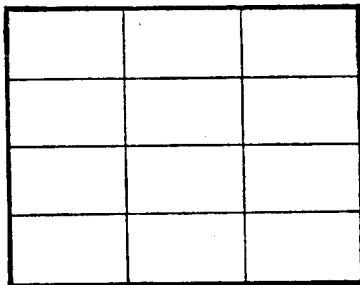


Scholarships + Fellowships

Mrs. Majorie Frank
 NASH
 1790 Burr



Big Sur California

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Dear Stearns:

It is the night before the night before Christmas and all through this small snowed house not a creature is stirring, not even a pack rat. I am consequently free from interruption and I'd like to answer your letters of Oct 30 and December 8 on scholarships + fellowships. As you can see by the number of pages of this letter it may be too long but I hope I won't bore you by elaborate expositions of the more obvious facets of ~~scholarships~~ scholarships. As a matter of fact I am going to avoid belaboring the theme and instead express free-hand a number of opinions which are personal and perhaps at times eclectic and in terms that will I hope sacrifice completely judicial balance to the hope of presenting you with, I hope, one or two fresh ideas that I could elaborate further if they have any interest for you.

Just for the sake of some structural advantages I'll take some points up in this order: 1) Terminology 2) Purposes 3) Setting 4) Selection procedures 5) Administrative Methods. There will be some exaggerations and extreme statements but more in the interests of clarity than complete accuracy to the third decimal point.

1. Terminology

I think we'd all benefit by realizing that aid to students

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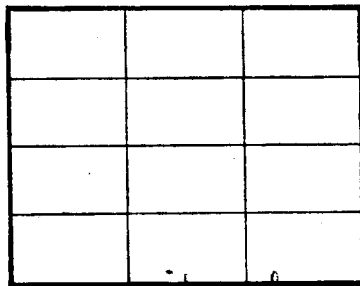
could be discussed a great deal more elegantly if we used the word scholarships for aid to students in high schools in colleges and in professional schools before they receive the degrees or certificates given usually to students in such schools. Then the word fellowships would be available specifically for post doctoral advanced workers no longer working for degrees. The present confusion is largely American: the English reserve the word fellowships for persons paid to do advanced scholarly work. It is probably a lost cause to try to have the words serve the reality that there are really two quite different groups but, damn it, I won't give in — I need different words for two essentially different things. And they are different, — in point of age or maturity, in size of stipends needed, in administration and in effect as well as purpose. I'll abbreviate with s-ships + f-ships from now on.

2. Purposes

Both s-ships and f-ships can and are given for one or another or a rather vague and loose combination of purposes. These may be.

(a) To help all kinds of education in a given ^{geographical} area, to a special race (e.g. negroes), or religious denomination, or class of society (e.g. A.F. of L. or other labor organizations, or callings (Neuman fellows at Harvard for journalists, ~~and~~ ~~relationships & fellowships in nuclear physics~~).

(b) To develop some special field such as nuclear physics, or psychiatry, or history or economics. Though these are usually of the f-ship type an adequately selective program may have to start pretty young and scholarships come to be recognized as necessary and a deliberate concession.



Q 3

to the principle of the plant nursery — with a large number of seedlings and a rigorous selection of the most vigorous plants after a trial of one to three years. And certainly a real concession to the principle of trial + error, profit and loss and other empirical evidences of "wastefulness" admitted to be inescapable.

(c) To combat the effects of inflation and prevent students who can almost but not quite finance an education they would have gotten without aid in other years. There are mostly in the s-ship field and put relatively less emphasis on merit and more weight on financial need. I'd rather see the long term loan practice further developed for such needs and keep s-ships nearer to merit and such considerations.

(d) To prevent parochialism or provincialism or other forms of inbreeding. Here the aid is given to allow the scholar or the student to leave for distant parts and find out that he is in the World — or at least in the U.S.A. When the National Research Council Fellowships in Medicine began I remember a candidate who was born in New Orleans when he went to High School. He got his AB at Tulane and then an AM there and an ^{PhD} ~~AB~~ there and an MD there. So he proposed to use his NRC fellowship for research in Physiology at Tulane. Fough! He needed to go elsewhere and was told so.

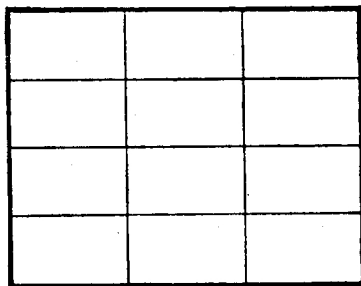
(e) To aid extremely promising young men to grow, and to expect more of them because they are able. This recalls the fact that coaches in football

work most easily on the "naturals". But if s-ships or f-ships are used for originality, brilliance, independence and the like rare traits then I think it stupid to limit the s-ships or the f-ships to any field or preordained group of fields. But it often happens. And too often we frown on the candidate whose past experience has been anomalous, irregular, and unbalanced. I get tired of seeing brilliant men rejected by routine regulations. It used to be the case in California that you couldn't be elected to ~~ΣΧ~~ Sigma Xi unless you'd had one year of Elementary College French.

(f) To give a deserving human being some part of a higher education. This is much more common in the scholarships field and rare I think in the f-ships group. It is really paying a college for dividing its unimproved "advantages" among a large number of students: it doesn't improve the level of teaching very clearly. But it gives the donor a pious thrill.

3) ^{S. of} The setting for s-ships and f-ships confuses many persons and committees as well as the recipients. Most higher education costs more than the tuition. So most students are ~~to~~ ^{on} any realistic view the unnamed recipients of aid in their education. This confuses the picture quite seriously, especially in weakening the rigor with which s-ships and f-ships are awarded. I'd like to see tuition bills sent to university + college students in this form:

Cost of your instruction (pro-rated cost of the institution	
divided by the number of students	\$ 3271.50
Reduction covered by income from endowments, gifts, ^{state} & subsidies	2771.50
Balance to pay (Tuition)	\$500.00



Only in that way can we get people generally to understand what tuition is and thus to understand whether a scholarship is for tuition or some part of it, or more than the tuition. I think the right view of ships and especially f-ships is that the institution is paying for the collaboration of a fine mind and character just as it pays ex for a productive human being on the instructional force. Mere youthfulness does not extinguish the importance of a fine mind.

In the general setting I think the following paradox draws attention: we all admit that the outstanding and essential characteristic of man is the length of his infancy and adolescent or pre-maturity period. That is what makes education and cultivation and culture possible. But we start kids at 6 in primary school so they get to college at 18 or thereabouts. We call those students brilliant who are brilliant for 18 and we proceed to reward the precocious and forget that slowness of maturation is the very thing that is the glory of man. If you want to see an expansion of this theme I gave a talk at the Alpha Omega Alpha on Emergent Ability which I enclose. Please return it when you are through.

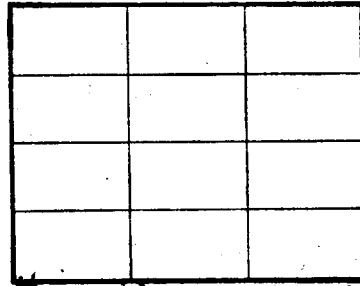
* Selection

The most interesting procedure for s-ships selection is what in England are called "school leaving scholarships". This is an award by a secondary school of a ~~full~~ fellowship scholarship to Oxford or Cambridge for three years and well paid (substantial in amount) to a member of the graduating class. This method has three advantages:

- (a) The school wants to have the best possible representation of the school - best in character and brains.
- (b) The choice is made on the basis of 6 years of close knowledge of the candidates
- (c) The recipient doesn't want to let his school down.
- (d) The annual award at graduation is witnessed by the whole school and its availability is clear to boys for six years
- (e) It is a drawing card for the school to have such an opportunity for a first rate boy.

In the f-ship field Haverford College has had for some 25 years a three year award of the same sort but for graduate work. It is called the Cope Fellowship (possibly Scholarship) and the President told me that the Cope Scholarship holders are nearly the Who's Who of Haverford. I would be eager to see more of this kind of award

We have found in the Rockefeller Traveling Fellowships that we do well to require that the candidate be assured a teaching paid position on his return from the fellowship. This protects us from the fellowship



being used as a means of getting rid of a brilliant but otherwise impossible young man who will not be useful to education because he will not be given a place. More important this stipulation gives a focus and a motivation to the recipient which is extremely valuable. I think the Rhodes scholarships would have been far better had this been a requirement: that the holder know what he was going to do after the fellowship was terminated.

One other point on selection: break up your committee into pairs with each pair working and reporting on each candidate. If you don't you'll find a committee of 5-10 is dominated by one or two and the rest don't say what they think.

I think that the ability to size up candidates wisely is not uniformly distributed among all the selection committee memberships and that you could well devise ways of detecting and quietly eliminating the members who have the poorest records at signing up the candidates. Think of Miss Thomas at Bryn Mawr and her remarkable record at selecting the following as instructors or young professors: Woodrow Wilson, William Allan Nielson, Jacques Loeb, TH Morgan, EB Wilson the cytologist, Koehler the chemist, and Fiddips the economist. There's a standard!

I was interested to have Adrian at Cambridge tell me that in Trinity College, ^{Fellowships} they think they are doing well if they pick 25% successes. He calls a success somebody who turns out so well you don't worry about the other 75%. Speaking of Trinity College Fellowships the Secretary of the Nobel Prize Committee in Medicine + Physiology, I. Hjeltnand told me that if they could do it they would reorganize the Nobel Prize to effect what the Trinity College Fellowships accomplish — but they can't break the tradition even though Nobel hoped his recipients would all be young men under 35.

5. Administrative Policy - Methods

These should reflect one or more purposes (q.v.) explicitly and not loosely or inadvertently. "Who wants everything loses everything" as a Brazilian proverb warns.

Most scholarships give aid that is too small, and thus it can be said that nearly every candidate is deserving, so the award committee never gets criticized. Most fellowships give aid for too short a time. Which reminds me of GK Chesterton's character in one of his novels who says "The work of my life is half completed: and with the aid of a whiskey and soda I hope to complete the other half tonight."

If more time more responsibility and more freedom from ~~direction~~ ^{and} geographical restraint characterized fellowships ^{perhaps} we'd have ~~some~~ such satisfactory results from 25% of the holders ^{that} ~~and~~ we could forget

about the rest. I wouldn't dream of restricting the place of study of a man good enough to bet on for a four or five year fellowship.

A most important point about a new s.-ship or f.-ship program is to start it ^{on} small scale in order to have the best exemplars you can find. They set the tone and standard. They attract a good crop of candidates in succeeding years. They eliminate the duds by their example far more effectively than the Committee.

Well its 1:30 AM ~~said~~ by my watch and perhaps by yours so I'll lay off.

Yours sincerely

Alan Gregg.