

WHAT FUTURE THE PROFESSIONS - 1960

Lectures 1-4
Feringer notes
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Lecture 1

1.What is a profession? What does it mean? In terms of: 1) what kind of a code of knowledge should be generalized throughout the world, 2) how our society threatens professional standards and undermines them, and 3) how we should respond to those threats. (p.3)

2.Obviously, a profession represents expert knowledge in some field needed by society such as dentistry or law or teaching, but it also must be underpinned by a code of ethics that goes beyond the technical aspects of that knowledge.

Ethics are essential because they form the bedrock upon which public trust is built. At all costs, trust must be maintained. **SO THE FIRST PRINCIPLE IS THAT THE PROFESSION MUST BE RECOGNIZED (TRUSTED) BY SOCIETY.** Usually this means backing by law.

3.There are three sets of relationships to be understood; 1) between the professional and his profession, 2) between the professional and his clients, and 3) between the professional and the law (authorities). (p.1-5)

The same applies to teaching, between 1) teacher and parents, 2) teacher and students, and 3) teacher and school board. **AND, AS IN ALL RELATIONSHIPS, THESE CLASH AT TIMES.**

4.There is a "body politic" that must exist first before all professions; ERH's reminds us that "the whole exists before the parts." The professional must be "called" and must be recognized by the society, which means someone else must bestow a name, a title on the professional. **NONE OF**

THIS CAN BE SELF-APPOINTED, as "...the recognition that the political and social names in a society are given, and not self-made....Somebody else has to make sure that you are a dentist in their eyes." (pp.10,11)

5.All of this comes down to three things, 1)a brotherhood of the people who do the same service, 2) people who are in need of that service, and 3) authoritative recognition by community leaders that the service is being satisfactorily performed.

6.Law should never be enacted unless it is valid for the next generation. Any idea that should live longer than a single life-time must be institutionalized!

Just as liquid water has two other states, ice and gas, so professions live in three time-spans: 1) the immediate (e.g. the dentist services a tooth ache), 2) the life-time of the professional as he relates to his profession, and 3) the service to humanity, which is recognized by law to apply to the next generation. **THERE IS NO COMMON DENOMINATOR BETWEEN THESE THREE TIMES; THEY ARE SEPARATE ELEMENTS OF A UNITY THAT INVESTS EVERY PROFESSION.**

7.This tripartite is expressed in three languages, the language of law, of the profession between professionals, and finally, the language of everyday activity, between professional and client.

The professional man then is also a layman a member of the "public," and a legislator who looks toward eternity. In each of these roles we represent three time-spans, 1) the immediate or present, 2) our own lifetime, and 3) eternity.

8.Finally, these time-spans represent a hierarchy of values, 1) eternity is most important (like dying for one's country), 2) second is one's life-time, and 3) and last is the present (the tooth-ache, so to speak).

Lecture 2

1.As "public," man is passive, unseen and unrecognized as an individual. Man, in his strength, has a title - engineer, doctor, dentist etc. (p.1)

a. Professional standards are universal, not bent by local mores.

b. Professional also means that one is changing the aspect of the technical or specialized knowledge.

c. Professionals are (or should be) "infected" with a spirit of the calling.

2. IN AMERICA THE PROFESSIONAL IS IMPOVERISHED! , because he is seen either as an individual or as a member of the "public," but never in brotherhood with his professional colleagues. (p.4)

3.IT IS CRUCIAL TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE "SELF" (as your flesh and blood individuality) and one's spiritual use of the term "I," as a professional. The professional, professing the opinion "I," is speaking within the learning, tradition, and research of the professional community.

4.One must understand the sequence in education. The sequence of learning is to receive knowledge, then to re-learn it in terms of his/her own experience. To re-learn, is to re-search. These are separate and necessary stages in learning. To research comes after the initial learning. To re-search adds new "meaning" to the learning.

ERH asserts that, today, we tend to assume the child can learn everything immediately, and thus "...our poor American child has no future, because all its imagination is destroyed when he/she is told `You can do everything now...'" (p.8)

The notion here is that, at the university, the professor is engaged in a new level of teaching in which "research" meant that the meaning of knowledge could be changed and created anew. (p.11)

5.Thus, the "high" in higher education recognizes this change in approach to learning. The professor has been recognized as having the authority to say "I" in the spiritual sense.

ERH cites the old man who got up in a meeting, having lived in the community for over 70 years, to pronounce the historical sense of values in the community. His "authority" was derived from his experience in the community and was recognized as such by the group at the meeting. (p.11) At that moment his "self" changed from a "we" into an "I" - a great mystery of transition.

Transition, authority, and experience are the social variables determine the destiny of the community through history. These are factors of social time. By contrast, the objects of natural scientific investigation measure time very differently, their focus being oriented toward spacial elements, i.e. the clock rather than phases or stages of a process. (p.12)

6.The "self," in the sense described above, represents spatial considerations, as do all concrete entities. Personally experienced events such as hunger, intoxication, and nervousness are expressions of the "self." However, when individuals act in the name of a profession, such as an M.D. writing a prescription, his "I" represents "authority" conferred by a group, just as a scientist pronouncing a new discovery. In these cases the social role represents a wider arc of time.

7.The Christian tradition has waged war against stagnation by way of attempting to balance between change and tradition. The Greek mentality was to see no change; life went in cycles of repeated experience, of forgetting what is to be learned through experience that should be acted upon to bring about change.

8.Change occurs by considering what idea is to be applied at the right time.

9.The churches in American are filled with cowards. "They have no social status, they have no

courage, they have no convictions, and they do what's pleasing." (p.15) His evidence is that no church "consecrates" divorces, and any church will marry the same person four times. His second criticism of the churches is their numerous "squabbles," and tendency toward fragmentation into sects. This, ERH asserts, is confusing and damaging to the lay persons attempting to follow "the true faith."

10.Regarding the issue of what ERH calls "corollaries," or in other writing, "paradox," he points out the constant decision between change and tradition. This is revealed in the different roles (and dress) of men and women. Women change dress each day, mens' stay the same. The reminding of this phenomenon represents a continuity from generation to generation that will "save the world."

Lecture 3

1.ERH begins this lecture with a discussion of the fragmentation between divisions of labor in the work force. HIS POINT IS THAT ALL PARTS OF THE `WHOLE' ARE INTERDEPENDENT. EACH PART COMPLIMENTS THE OTHER.

- a.Today, capital and labor are separated; unions fight CEO's.
- b.Historically, the peasant, the artisan, and the leader (designer) had to work together to build a cathedral.
- c.Today, it is the same; production depends upon the unity of unskilled labor,craftsmen (on the machines), and leaders who design, but the fragmentation causes undue disruption of this process.

2.ERH draws the conclusion that a flow of trained personnel is required for the chain of continuity to be maintained from generation to generation. It follows also that one needs to maintain a loyalty to a division of labor, to a profession, if a society is to properly produce the goods and services the next generation needs.

3.The Irish, French Canadians, and Italians were dedicated to the church because it offered them more than religion; it offered them a place in the world by way of teaching them to be loyal to a work, or to a plot of soil. (3 virtues: "stick-to-it-ness to place, to purpose, and to group). (p.11)

4.As a continuation of this point, ERH asserts that "...nobody is more superstitious than modern man, after he has gone to high school. Because he believes in the latest fad. He forgets everything that has existed before." (p. 12)

5.Today, more than ever before, a revival of professions depends upon an apprentice system, as in medicine. One role of interns is to re-establish craft.

ERH defines a law of LIFE: "...ALL GREAT REFORMS START AT THE TOP AND GO

DOWN TO THE BOTTOM. In complete contradiction to the gospel of the common man, nothing ever happens down below that hasn't happened first at the top." (p.17)

6.Today we are threatened, not only by soil erosion, but by SOUL erosion; it is a matter of caring for the community. "What we do to our neighbor and to the land, we do to ourselves." (p.21)

It is a decision from one's soul that calls us individually to be loyal to our work, to seek perfection (pride in one's work), and to work with others in a team spirit. (p.23)

Lecture 4

1.ERH is making the point of continuity and education (and by indirection toward the professions), by quoting the Bible.

ALONG THE WAY HE MAKES THE POINT THAT ONE CAN'T PROVE ANYTHING BY QUOTING THE BIBLE BECAUSE EVERYTHING HAS ALREADY BEEN PROVEN BY QUOTATIONS. (And the devil quotes as well - shades of the fundamentalists! BUT HE DOES ASSERT THAT ONE CAN PROVE POINTS BY QUOTING THE BIBLE AS A WHOLE, by which he means looking at the larger context of quotations, what precedes and succeeds any particular quotation.

a.His first quote is at the last of the Old Testament, where he states that a parent cannot concern him/herself only with his own generation; he must mind the future for his children, and the professions as well, and it is the role of the "elder" in society to see to this. (p.2)

b.The "elder" is beyond egotism, beyond the "I." The elder is wise, as "...the fruit of living in human society is not muscles, but wisdom. (p.5)

c.The elder would point out that every institution is good at times, and at other times bad, AND WE MUST BE ALLOWED TO SAY THESE THINGS. We must be allowed to be bored, disciplined, to suffer, "...to say it's terrible." (the education) Education is never all happiness. In other words, we must always invest part of our lives in the future if we wish for an improvement in community life.

2.There is a time to take orders, to listen (to commands), and ultimately to prophesy and to give commands (i.e. the 12 tones). ERH points out that each group in society may have its elders, and that the two groups that seem to have become deprived of elders are women and industrial workers. (p.9)

3.ERH enumerates other problems with professions. 1) They tend to look narrowly on creativity. (e.g. the story of the pharmacist who invented the lotion, unaccepted by the doctor, but which worked. 2) They must recognize that others participate in different roles that effect their profession, e.g. the parent who administers at home. In the practice of professions one must see the whole, including these different roles, and the roles must be respected by the professional.

Finally, 3) while we need rules that must be taught, we must also teach that there are exceptions to those rules, depending upon circumstances. And it is always our burden, as professionals, to decide when and where to make these exceptions.

What Future the Professions - 1969 - Review

The central issue here might be called the problem of how thought is circulated and its vitality maintained. The underlying assumption is that any idea that is to live longer than one human life must be institutionalized. What then are the problems of institutionalization that maintain the power of thought to change us? The topic of "professional" is used to apply, by inference, to the practice and teaching of all services needed by the community requiring professional knowledge from doctor, lawyer, or teacher to plumber, or carpenter. The author points out the disastrous consequences when any of the stages of professional practice become either corrupted or omitted, such as when the relationships between the professional and his colleagues, or his clients and the law, break down.

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