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a clean
copy of this*

"Coming To Our Senses" will be remembered as a milestone in our long effort to somehow bring ourselves together and keep from dividing our educational purposes in ways that will destroy the spirit of this Nation. "Coming To Our Senses" is a dramatic document. It's creative. It's straightforward, and it's filled with common sense. As a sequel, Mr. Rockefeller and his colleagues have taken on this imaginative effort to establish conversations and plans of action across this country, and I am convinced that this is essential for the vitality of our Nation's schools. It is a special joy to be with David and those who have worked with him so diligently over the past years.

① ~~I come with one central theme. I am convinced that the~~
LIKE THIS THEME BECAUSE IM CONVINCED
~~arts and excellence in education are inextricably interlocked~~
~~and that we must have art in our schools because the arts~~
~~are basic/~~ not a frill.

I am often asked what I consider to be basic education."

(I have one response) In my view the ^{core of} basic education is the "centrality of language." Language is what separates us from other ^{forms of life} ~~beings~~, the porpoise and the bumblebee notwithstanding. Our capacity to communicate determines the structure and civility of our culture. If language is not well in place, there is no ~~basic~~ ^{fundamental} education and there is no social structure.

The arts are an essential part of the symbolic process and, indeed, the extent to which we become civilized as a people and exquisite in our communication is the extent to which we extend our symbolic language to include the arts.

Language begins almost spontaneously and usually with very little conscious help. Some of my earliest academic interests had to do with the development of language. It always seemed to me a miracle that amid all the babbling, all the clutter, all the confusion, a child in the earliest of months begins to ~~focus on the conversion of the~~ ^{convert} "real world" into the "symbolic world." In the first few months,

certainly during the first few years, the child begins to come out with those marvelously formed expressions of "mama" and "dada," and we immediately with great elation take those verbal ~~symbols~~ ^{play things} and connect them with something we call reality. Communication has begun / A MIRACLE HAS OCCURRED

~~What also represents this miracle of comprehension is the fact that nuances are captured that we take for granted.~~

AND YET We don't pause to understand how remarkably subtle the formation of "er" and "oh" ^{ah} actually are. We expect to hear that fine tune auditorially. We give no attention or skilled guidance to the child to make that subtle discriminating difference, but something goes on in this child's brain and in the signals it sends through the eighth cranial nerve to allow those speech patterns to be subtly established. That usually begins by the age of two or two-plus. If it does

comprehension
mouth tongue formation
8th Cranial Nerve

not, parents begin to panic. No parent ever says "Since my child doesn't speak at the age of three, it'll happen at the age of four."

When a child moves on to formal education ~~he or she~~ begins to convert the oral symbol system into something of a mechanistic design. Oral symbols become written symbols, which we convert into something we call "the printed word."

I think all children can learn to read just as all children learn to speak, because the speaking breakthrough is the profound conceptual breakthrough, and the conversion of oral symbols into the little freight cars we call written words is in some respects almost a mechanistic extension of a learning job that's already 90 percent completed. I reject the notion that children, a percentage of our children, cannot make that move.

~~BUT MY POINT IS THIS~~

~~But~~ ^{NO} culture can permit its symbol system to stop with auditory symbols alone or with the printed word alone.

- Gutenberg notwithstanding. Any culture that is called "civilized" ~~puts~~ ^{changes} its symbol system ~~into~~ ^{avances} the ~~new offices~~ of ~~any~~ communication ~~in which~~ ^{with meaning} feelings, and ideas can be/even/more powerfully extended/through the dance, through music, through mime, through the theater. ^{visual nts} ~~we~~ are doing one central thing, communicating, using varieties of symbol systems to send messages to each other.
- ~~WIDE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNICATION~~

About six months ago we had a marvelous luncheon at the Kennedy Center. We heard a panel that was sponsored by Arts for the Handicapped. I've been enthusiastic about Arts for

the Handicapped precisely because many of our handicapped children do not have skilled capacity to speak clearly, ~~or~~ ~~sometimes even~~ to write clearly. But many of them have the soul and the spirit and the inspiration to "create clearly." To deny them ~~that whole extension~~ ^{no full use} of symbols is to deny them the opportunity to say who they are and to affirm their own talents and their own identity. The arts and the handicapped belong together.

One of the panelists was Linda Bowe who appears every day or so on "Sesame Street." This beautiful woman is deaf. She cannot hear a sound and, therefore, cannot speak sounds except in a crude and guttural way. She communicates ~~first~~ ^{magically} through dance, but at that luncheon she used the signing methods with which the deaf very often speak, ~~and~~ ^{Linda} spoke to us a Robert Frost poem, "Two Paths Diverge in a Wood."

As she talked about the paths diverging and who she is and what she wants to become, and about the universe about us, a peculiar thing happened to me and, from what I could sense, to the rest of the audience. Suddenly I found myself not listening to the auditory interpreter who was bombarding my ears from across the room. Although I don't "sign," I was captivated by symbols of communicating that were meaningful and poetic and visually powerful.

It became ~~powerfully~~ ^{visually} clear to me that the spectrum of communication must be as broad as the human experience

itself. If I had any single test for the civility of any culture, I would ask one question: What is the ^{breath} ~~extension~~ of their language?

The crudest cultures have one method of communication. They use a club and say "I hate you."

The ^{gesture} first step is ~~to begin~~ oral language. The next step is to put language into "printed form," and the next step is to extend ^{by use} ~~to~~ through the visual arts and through dance and through miming -- all of the nuances of feeling that a culture has within it and wishes to release. The test of the quality of a culture is its breadth of communication, and that's why I say again the arts are essential as a "basic," ~~because they are centrally a part of the language process in our culture. To put it as pointedly as I can, the arts are there because they represent communication and its greatness.~~ ^{at its best}

It has been said that humans are distinguishable from animals because of language. I would take one further step. I'm suggesting that what separate humans from humans at their best are art, color, rhyme, rhythm, form, sound, and movement. The arts give expression to the profound urgings of the human spirit, which very often words and phonemes cannot capture. The arts validate our feelings in a world that deadens feelings, and they organize our perceptions and give meaningful coherence to existence.

Wallace Stevens in his poem "Anecdote of the Jar" put it this way:

I placed a jar in Tennessee.
And round it was, upon a hill.
It made the slovenly wilderness
Surround that hill,
And the wilderness rose up to it
And sprawled around no longer wild.

The arts, represented by that jar in Tennessee, can in fact tame the slovenly wilderness of modern life. They can give order and shape to chaos and establish for us patterns of meaning and beauty that other-symbol systems cannot.

The arts are essential because they are the highest form of language. They are essential also because through them we experience not only "creativity" but joy ~~too~~. as well

A very exciting thing happened last fall. Every year we celebrate something called American Education Week, and I write a canned speech or statement that I release. Usually no one reads it, but this time I got a call from the office of Mrs. Mondale, who cares deeply about the arts. One of her assistants said Mrs. Mondale would like to do something for the arts during American Education Week.

I don't know who suggested it first, but the idea emerged that possibly Mrs. Mondale and I could send a letter to the schools across the country and ask children to send some art to Washington. Either nothing would happen, or everything would happen.

AMERICAN
EDUCATION
WEEK

Well, in this case ~~not~~ because of the Commissioner, I suspect, but because of Mrs. Mondale ~~just~~ about everything happened. As of a recent count, we have had 10,000 responses.

These have ranged all the way from sculpture, to composition, to music, to poetry, to painting, to collages, to drawings and crayons from schools all across the country. All of them are creative, and all of them suggest something I call joy, something spontaneous, something that allows freedom. As someone has said, people engaged in the arts generally seem free. I have been filled with great excitement, and our offices from coast to coast are now hung with art.

I have always been touched by Lowell Russell Ditzen's little story of what happened one day when he and his two-year-old daughter walked from the house to the barn on the family farm. On that brief trek this little girl ¹stopped to pat the dog goodby, ²she broke away to catch a butterfly, ³she paused under the cottonwood tree to watch the wind shake the leaves, and ⁴she studied the caterpillar that humped its way across the path ~~all~~ all of this in the short distance from the house to the barn.

Ditzen asked himself: "When and why do we let living stop being fun? . . . Why do we quit observing and asking questions? How can we permit the precious, powerful self within us that wanders and ponders and appreciates to be suffocated?"

I care not about our age or our academic position or our curriculum -- we cannot shake that central question. Why do we make the transition from creativity to grimness, from perception

to insensitivity, from beauty to grim survival? If it happens in an individual, and if it happens in a culture, we are moving toward what I guess in a sociological sense one calls decadence.

Vachel Lindsay wrote:

Let not young souls be smothered out before
They do quaint deeds and fully flaunt their pride.
It is the world's one crime its babes grow dull,
Its poor are ox-like, \limp and leaden-eyed.
Not that they starve, \but starve so dreamlessly;
Not that they sow, \but that they seldom reap;
Not that they serve, \but have no gods to serve;
Not that they die, \but that they die like sheep.

The human tragedy is not death. The human tragedy lies in that quality of life and death like sheep.

I wish to make just one or two other points.

I am committed to the arts in education not only because they represent language at its best, and creativity at its best but because they are powerful as teaching tools as well.

I never really understood the power of the arts pedagogically until I visited the Soviet Union and China and discovered that,

CHINA
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on a mass scale, these nations have understood the power of the arts to communicate a message. It's true that in those countries very often the message is national and ideological, but never mind that, I'm speaking of pedagogical power.

I have visited in cities all across the Soviet Union in which the central social activity is the arts theater, in which they are using the power of the stage and the manuscript and the artistic function to get messages to children at a very early age, and pedagogically -- again, never mind the nature of the messages -- pedagogically it is absolutely sound.

We have picked that up in our culture through television. Some television is artistic and some is trash, but the fascination with it is in part the fascination of being taught through alternative strategies -- and the schools of America and the classrooms of America have some catching up to do.

My point quite simply is that, while the arts do serve affective education and we often use them for that, they can serve cognitively as well. We are beginning to discover what great artists have always known. The theater can teach history. Dance can teach social science. Photography can teach science and mathematics.

While I was still in New York with the university the legislature established something called the New York State Children's Theater, which is now an in-residence company spending half of the year presenting productions and the other

NY
CHILDREN'S
THEATER

half going out to schools for a week or two to use the arts to teach about the History, the culture, and the science that grow from a particular production.

I am suggesting that the arts can be a powerful vehicle by which we teach far more than the beauty of the arts themselves.

IV [One other point: The arts are important in education because they permit us to deal with something I call values. I know

we all get a bit squirmish, a bit uncomfortable, a bit embarrassed when we have to confront the concept of values in a culture. I think that's a very unhappy response. Without getting into the nuances, I can say at least this with confidence: The arts are important because in the arts we can talk about good and bad, we can talk about the power of values, we can talk about what seems to be better and best.

There is still a debate as to whether there ^{are standards to be taught} ~~is any~~ reference. I'll just have to make it very clear that in my opinion the arts are in fact imposing upon us judgments, values, ^{soundly} goodness, badness, excellence, and non-excellence and that there are very few places in our formal education structure where we can deal as straightforwardly with the making of judgments as we can in the arts.

[George Miller, in his book "Faith and Learning," said that a decent tentativeness is a wholesome expression of scholarly

humility but that these days we seem to have a kind of dogmatic tentativeness that makes it intellectually indecent to make up our mind. Actually, I think we are becoming more honest with ourselves. We are beginning to understand that education does not inevitably humanize. George Steiner reminded us of this in a powerful way when he said:

We know now that a man can read Goethe or Rilke in the evening, that he can play Bach and Schubert, and go to his day's work at Auschwitz in the morning.

Steiner asks what grows up inside literate civilization that releases barbarism. One answer is the loss of ^{some} the things called values. No frame of reference, whether esthetic, or intellectual, or ethical. *provide the seeds of barbarism*

I want you to know that I care deeply about the arts in education, professionally and organizationally as well. We have organized in Washington a Federal interagency committee to confront for the first time precisely the issue of arts in education and to see if we can get our own act together. I chair a group composed of representatives of the Kennedy Center, the National Gallery, the Humanities Endowment, and the Arts Endowment. Our first job was to find out what we are doing for children and schools. We're doing much more than any of us knew.

We're going to collate our information and put it into a directory for those of you who want to know what the resources for arts education in the Nation's Capital are. More than that, we are trying to get a little extra money to see whether we can get some pilot projects moving across the country in the name of all of these agencies -- to see whether you at the local and State levels can bring your resources together as we are trying to do in Washington.

I know the debates surrounding budget cutbacks in the arts. I only hope that instead of getting defensive, we can think creatively. I hope that while we fight for budgets we will also fight for a change of attitudes -- to make teachers of science and math understand that they are arts teachers too, for example. Geometry is the most dramatically interesting design system I know.

But the schools cannot do it all alone. We must also work for the connections that will allow the schools to use the resources that are just down the street -- industry, and the clergy, and science, and the art galleries.

While I've talked about arts in education, I stress again that excellence in education is in fact the goal. ~~It is my~~

~~WHAT I'm not through the air~~
~~SWOGESTING IS~~ ~~that our schools will help every student~~
achieve what on another occasion I called "the educated heart."

The educated heart means to me ~~a deep respect for excellence~~
~~wherever it is found.~~ The educated heart means an expectation of beauty, a tolerance of others, a reaching for beauty without

arrogance, a courtesy toward opposing views, a dedication to fairness and social justice, ~~precision in speech and thought,~~
a love for graceful expression, ~~and an audacious intellect.~~

I recognize that these are lofty goals -- some may say sentimental -- but I am convinced they are within our grasp, and certainly within our dreams.

In his poem "The People, Yes" Carl Sandburg put it this way:

Once having marched
Over the margins of animal necessity,
Over the grim line of sheer subsistence,
Then man came
To the deeper rituals of his bones . . .
To the time for thinking things over,
To the dance -- the song -- the story
Or to the hours given to dreaming,
Once have so marched.

During the long years of recorded history civilization has marched for many of us, at least some of us, over the margins of animal necessity, giving us not only the opportunity for freedom but obligation ~~at well.~~ What do we do with those moments available to us once we have marched over the margin of animal necessity? I believe that's the challenge that educators face, and ~~it seems clear to me that now is the~~ time for us to turn to what Sandburg called the deeper rituals of our bones.

THAT IS WHAT THE CHILD STUDY CENTRE
IS ALL ABOUT.