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THE EDUCATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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The Educational Press Association of America was organized at Denver, Colorado, in 1895, by representatives of leading educational magazines of that day. Purposes set forth then--"mutual protection, fraternal union, and united strength in advancing educational principles and methods"--have evolved into the present purpose as stated in the EPA constitution, "to promote the cause of education by improving the quality of educational journalism."

EPA History and Development

Probably the first educational periodical in the United States was the Juvenile Monitor, which did not long survive its founding in 1811. Its successors were also short-lived, only fifteen of the first hundred created living longer than five years. Not until public education spread and standards of teacher preparation began to rise was there a substantial potential readership for the periodicals.

By 1870, educational magazines were mushrooming: how-to-teach volumes, published commercially; journals to serve local and state needs, issued by state education associations; magazines created by national organizations; periodicals directed to specialized groups within the profession, such as administrators or rural teachers.

The editors of these magazines attacked their problems individually until 1895, when twenty-three organized the Educational Press Association. The organization in its infancy was chiefly concerned with postage rates and advertising standards and procedures. By 1917 interest had broadened

to include professional activities, with discussion at the annual meetings of such topics as the scope of educational journalism and classification of subjectmatter in the periodicals.

In 1923, the Committee on Standards, under the chairmanship of Joy Elmer Morgan, editor of the NEA Journal, established standards as to magazine size which were immediately adopted by a large number of periodicals. This committee also set up a working programme for the EPA and established the first yearbook.

Publication of this yearbook, of materials for editors (EPAGraphs), of the Edpress News Letter after its ceation in 1938, and the holding of annual meetings where a variety of professional and technical topics were discussed continued as chief activities of the association until 1946 when--during the presidency of Bernice Gostie, editor of Minnesota Journal of Education--another milestone was reached.

In that year at Madison, Wisconsin, the EPA sponsored, in co-operation with the School of Journalism of the University of Wisconsin, the first Edpress Workshop. Attended by thirty-three members of the EPA, this "educational press institute" grew out of a "repeated expression of need for knowledge of magazine techniques and for an interchange of experience among fellow craftsmen." Editors--working with experts from editorial, printing, and publishing fields; with members of the School of Journalism staff; and with each other--discussed common problems and together found ways of solving them.

The educational editors' workshop--initiated by the EPA and developed extensively by the Rural Editorial Service (see page 7), with which the EPA co-operated--has become the most effective instrument for inservice education of staff members of the education press. Here editors diagnose shortcomings of their own publications; compare ways of overcoming these weaknesses; and consult with typographical, editorial, and other experts. Improvement in the magazines, as a result of these workshops, has been tremendous.

In 1956, under the presidency of W. Henry Galbreth, editor of Midland Schools, the Educational Press Association--in co-operation with the Philippine Public School Teachers Association, the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession, and Unesco--held its first international workshop. Sixty-five editors from eighteen countries and territories participated in the eleven-day meeting of editors held in Manila, following the assembly the previous week of the WCOTP. The group included representatives from Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, Estonia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Malta, Philippines, Scotland, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, USA, and Vietnam. Co-chairmen of the workshop were G. Kerry Smith, executive secretary of the Association for Higher Education and chairman of the Edpress International Committee, and Ricardo Castro, executive secretary of PPSTA.

The Edpress News Letter later reported that: "In the opening session editors were asked to list the problems on which they wanted help. They responded enthusiastically, and right there the EPA people realized that

there was a 'one-world' bond of common interest in the editing of educational publications. Finance, readability, content, layout, design, editing--these and other problems had a familiar ring for the sponsoring officers. And the workshop moved at once toward a thorough discussion and pooling of advice on these topics".

The following year, at the Frankfurt meeting of WCOTP, Edpress and Unesco co-operated with the World Confederation in an editors' planning conference. At that meeting of WCOTP, official action was taken by the assembly to create a Committee on Educational Journalims. Subsequently the WCOTP Executive Committee named the six-member committee. For Edpress members this action marked the climax of ten years of EPA effort to build international fellowship of the world's educational editors.

EPA Services

These principal services are offered to the 320 Edpress member publications:

(1) A yearbook containing a classified list of educational periodicals. This yearbook, revised and brought uptodate every other year, is given to members and sold to others. The 1957 edition, international in scope, listing some 3500 publications, was prepared by Unesco and the EPA as a co-operative project. The first edition, issued in 1926, listed 269 publications.

(2) The Edpress News Letter, exclusive to educational Press Association members, issued twice monthly August through May. The News Letter

regularly carries two types of material: (a) news and background information on current happenings either in the field of education or affecting education and (b) technical helps and guidance for editors.

(3) National meetings in connection with conventions of the National Education Association and the American Association of School Administrators. The NEA conventions come each summer; the AASA, every winter. The EPA always holds a luncheon programme and sometimes a work clinic. Official business is conducted at the sessions held at the time of the AASA convention.

(4) National workshops at which editors seek to improve their publications.

(5) The privilege of printing in the magazine the Edpress emblem, which lends professional prestige to a publication.

(6) The privilege of carrying an EPA press card, which admits the bearer to virtually any meeting or press conference--educational, civic, political.

(7) Encouragement to local and regional groups of educational editors. The Washington, D.C., chapter, most active of these local groups, is an informal organization in which fifty to seventy-five editors cooperate for their mutual improvement. They hold regular luncheon meetings for exploration of professional and technical questions and conduct clinics at which problems of editorial planning, content, editing, and layout are tackled.

Officers and Staff

Officers, elected biennially, include a president, first vice-president, and five regional vice-presidents representing the northeast, northwest, southeast, and southwest sections of the United States, and a Canadian region; and a secretary-treasurer.

Most of the activities of the association are carried on by these officers and by committees appointed by the president. Offices of the secretary-treasurer serve as headquarters of the association. Since the present secretary-treasurer is with the National Education Association, the address of the EPA is now the NEA Center, 1201 Sixteenth Street Northwest, Washington 6, D.C.

An editorial assistant in the office of the Secretary-treasurer, appointed by the president as assistant secretary-treasurer, does the clerical work of the organization--keeping membership records, handling the bookkeeping and other financial matters, doing promotion, compiling the yearbook, and the like. Neither this officer nor any of the elected officers receives any compensation. The only person on the payroll is the editor of the Edpress News Letter, who receives a nominal sum for preparation of each issue.

EPA Membership

Membership in the Educational Press Association is by publication rather than by individual or by organization. Regular membership (\$15 for national and regional publications, \$10 for local educational association periodicals) is open to any publication in the field of education in the United States and Canada which has policies in harmony with the purposes of the EPA.

Associate membership (\$15) is open to publications in the United States and Canada which are not primarily intended to serve the educational profession but which have a continuing interest in schools and the teaching profession. Associate membership (\$5) is open to publications outside the United States and Canada which fulfill the provisions for membership. Sponsor memberships are available to any publication, organization, or individual wishing to contribute \$50 or more per year to the association. Secondary Memberships (\$3) entitle the member to receive an extra copy of each Edpress News Letter.

Membership applications are passed upon by the Executive Committee. To be eligible for membership, a publication must have been published for two consecutive years.

Code of Ethics

In the belief that the educational press shares with other publications the rights and the responsibilities inherent in freedom of the press, the

EPA in 1929 adopted the following canons of ethics:

AN EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL

- I. must be truly educational. Good faith with readers is essential. An effective way to maintain that faith is to keep the stated and the real purposes of a journal identical. No educational journal can afford to serve as a mouthpiece for a disguised or hidden cause.
- II. maintains the kind of intellectual integrity that enables it to present discussions of all sides of controversial issues affecting education. Insofar as its space, purpose, and policy permit this to be done, the journal will be enabled to bring to its readers increased understanding of educational problems and considerations of their solutions.
- III. practices the high plane of journalism that accepts no advertising diametrically opposed to generally accepted educational principles and what such principles stand for when interpreted into every day living. Fidelity to education is paramount.
- IV. promptly and appropriately corrects an error which it has published. Particularly is this done if the error in any way adversely affects an individual, an organization, or a cause. Statements of correction appear in a position easily caught by readers.
- V. makes every possible effort to keep its pages free from the plague of plagiarism. It refrains from publishing material that is the property of another source indicated.
- VI. presents forthright reports free from intermingled opinions. Such reports build confidence in a journal. Articles of opinion should be signed or otherwise identified so that readers will recognize evaluations, interpretations, and opinion as a part of the value of the material. The best journalism practice keeps a clear boundary line between news and editorials and related types of material. An educational journal may well observe this practice.
- VII. follows the "do unto others" rule in its relationships with authors. Each author as well as each manuscript is dealt with on merits of the particular case. When an article is accepted for publication, the author is notified with the understanding that he will not submit the manuscript to another publication unless this is mutually agreed upon.

- VIII. makes its headlines forthright and honest. Although concise and intriguing, they are not misleading or cheap. Contents of the article should always warrant headlines used.
- IX. holds to the ideals of the teacher who is "just, courteous, and professional in all relations...."
- X. constructively endeavors to keep informed widely on educational conditions, trends, and progress, and insofar as possible keeps its informed accordingly.

Co-operation with Education Communications Service

The Educational Press Association has always been handicapped by meager funds and lack of a paid, fulltime headquarters staff. However, the EPA was fortunate in being able to profit indirectly by the work of the Education Communications Service, 1945-56, which had financial support and facilities not available to the Edpress.

The ECS (known as the Rural Editorial Service between 1945 and 1952) received financial help from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the National Association of Secretaries of State Associations, and the University of Chicago. EPA had representation of the ECS Board of Directors. ECS sought to improve education by improving the professional staff of state education association publications.

A fulltime staff provided personalized art service to the state association editors and their Canadian counterparts (most of whose publications were also Edpress members); furnished syndicated articles; made evaluations of individual magazines to help the editors upgrade them; provided contact with expert consultants; kept editors in touch with new

educational developments; and conducted regional, national, and international workshops.

These workshops, though largely financed by ECS, were co-sponsored by the Edpress, and EPA members often attended them. In other ways also, such as sharing research findings and exchanging ideas the Education Communication Service and the Educational Press Association worked together harmoniously.

In Conclusion

The appraisal of the Educational Press Association made by its former secretary-treasurer, Lyle W. Ashby, in the EPA's fiftieth anniversary volume, America's Educational Press, still applies, more than a decade later:

"The Educational Press Association has never had the funds to carry on its work in truly self-supporting style. Only the services of a long succession of officers who were interested in the cause and the opportunities of educational journalism have kept it active. The work of the Association however, has been eminently worthwhile. Although there have been many discouraging times, one who studies the history of these fifty years must feel that the unselfish effort of those who have worked in this organization has been amply justified.