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CONVERSATIONS UNLIMITED - Monday, March 17, 1986

INTRO UP AND UNDER

Hi, everybody. Ronald Reagan and his secretary of education, William J. Bennett, are at it again -- helping Americans develop an attitude about education. It's been nearly 30 years since the Soviet Union's Sputnik spiraled into space and set off an explosion of American educational reform. We're still at it. The U.S. Department of Education early this month introduced its newest booklet on "What Works" in primary grades and high schools.

I'm here today to ask the question: What works in higher education? With me, ready with an answer, is Dr. Robert Merriam, a biologist in the Department of Neurobiology and Behavior at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He has attracted attention lately with an essay, called "Academic Research vs. the Liberal Arts." Dr. Merriam, would you agree it is fair to say that you are concerned that many universities are putting more emphasis on research than on a balanced undergraduate education?

INTERVIEW DR. MERRIAM:

- Brief list of his "complaints":
  - \* Large classes, little contact between students and professors, use of graduate students
  - \* Emphasis on attracting funds to support research
- Review history of education:
  - Prior to 17th Century
  - Milton's dream of one campus
  - The importance of Halle and the turn to research
  - The spread to America by 1825 (why so long?)
  - The next 125 years (Wilson at Princeton)
  - Post-World War II changes
- Where we are today (in summary)
- What can we do (in summary)

← ARTS →

~~14:00~~ 13:20

14:00

We'll take a short break, then return to talk with Dr. Robert Merriam some more about education on the college campus today.

BRIDGE MUSIC UP AND UNDER

Hi. I'm Al Oickle. I'm at the State University of New York at Stony Brook with Dr. Robert Merriam. The subject is education; specifically, education in college. Let's talk a bit, Dr. Merriam, about what it is that makes a person "educated." What is it, anyway?

INTERVIEW DR. MERRIAM:

- Vocationalism in education comes from other sources than the college campus
  - \* Parents
  - \* Secondary schools
  - \* Students
- Age of idealism and the age of realism
- Impact of research emphasis on teaching as a career
- Solutions:
  - \* Research as an ancillary product of education
  - \* Twin campuses
  - \* Teachers as master learners in communities (FLC)
  - \* Improve on 8-4-4 grade system
- Expand on what's next

~~29:00~~

OUTRO

28:20

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