The Improbable Dr. Quigley an article by Austin Hyde

AUSTIN HYDE

A close friend of Dr. Carroll Quigley defines the fact in the legend about one of the most outstanding of the Georgetown faculty.


Images of people who are at all controversial are in most cases dreams based on few or no facts at all. Our minds delight in dwelling on the fantastic. It really does not matter how we feel about the individual, whether it is admiration or dislike, the dreaming tendency is there nevertheless. To a great extent, such is the situation of Dr. Carroll Quigley. Being the extremely intense person that he is, particularly in his approach to life, many stories and wishful dreams have developed around his person. This, then, is an attempt to set the record straight.

Dr. Quigley was born in Boston in 1910. He attended the Boston Latin School from 1924 to 1929. His scholastic record there was one of an honor student who was dedicated to his work. For example, in his Senior year he took seven courses. This meant that he had no study periods, had to cut his military drill, and do his homework during his lunch time. The extra course was a science; thus he was at once taking physics and chemistry. His best subject had been mathematics, in which on several occasions he received a score of one hundred on the monthly reports sent home. During his senior year he was Associate Editor of the Register, the high school paper which is the oldest in the country. For three of his articles Carroll Quigley was awarded highest individual honors in the country by a committee of the Quill and Scroll headed by George Gallup (of the U.S. opinion polls) which had examined the writings of over fifty thousand high school journalists.

As a result of this contest and his extremely high scores on the English Achievement Examination, he received credit for most of the required English courses that he was to take later at Harvard. This proved to be very important, as it enabled him to spend more time on the courses of his direct interest.

Bio-Chemistry was to be his major. In his freshman year he took, among other things, experimental physics and calculus. In the latter he turned in a perfect final examination, for which he received an "A+". But there was a problem, since he also was required to take something in the social sciences. He chose a history course called "Europe Since the Fall of Rome" (receiving a "C" as a final grade) which was given by a professor who opened for him a new horizon in history. In his sophomore year he changed his major to history and then somehow managed to spend more time on political science (a total of thirty hours) than in any other field. When asked why he did this, he said that he was interested in the development of ideas.

In his junior year he took three courses, one a graduate course in History of Political Theory with Professor Charles Howard McIlwain. This he took by special permission, the only junior to have done so. In his senior year there were only two courses, but as an Honor Student he was obliged to write a thesis; his concerned "The Influence of the Romantic Movement on Political Theory." In 1933 he was graduated by Harvard University magna cum laude and as the top history student of his class. As a result of his fine record he was awarded the Dillaway Fellowship.
He got his master's degree in one year and at the end of the second year of graduate work he stood for his oral examination for a Ph.D. His areas of study were, to say the least, varied. Included among them were Russian History, Constitutional History of England, and the History of France (1461 to 1815). The Chairman of the examining board, Professor McIlwain, a trustee of Princeton, was most impressed with the examination, especially with Mr. Quigley's ability to answer his opening question with a long quotation in Latin from the writings of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln in the 13th Century. As a result of his proficiency, Dr. Quigley was given a job at Princeton, where he taught for two years.

At the end of the two years Harvard granted Carroll Quigley a travelling fellowship to go to Europe to write as a doctoral dissertation a study of the Napoleonic public administration of the Kingdom of Italy (1805 to 1814). He took with him his nineteen year old bride, Lillian Fox Quigley. In Paris they lived for five months with a French viscount and his wife, their daughter and son-in-law, the count of Brabant. Because of these connections most of their associations in France were with monarchists and nobles, a strange experience during the first "Popular Front Government." In January, 1938, they went to Milan where they stayed several months while he examined the manuscripts in the rich archives. The finished thesis, bound in three large volumes (by an Italian who embossed the author's name in gold on the cover as "Qiugley"), was delivered to Harvard by messenger. The Ph.D. was awarded in absentia in June 1938. The diploma, which Dr. Quigley picked up that September, has yet to be unrolled!

While returning from Europe on the Île de France, he received a telegram from Harvard University offering him a job. He accepted the offer and thus tutored honor students in Ancient and Medieval History. While at Harvard he took advantage of its vast and extremely rich collection on Italian history (among the best in the country) to continue his study on the subject.

In 1941, the late Father Walsh invited Dr. Quigley to come to Georgetown to lecture on history. Dr. Quigley accepted because he felt he needed experience in lecturing, as all of his work thus far had been in the preceptorial work at Princeton (directing round tables of seven students) and tutoring honor students at Harvard, with but an occasional lecture.

He certainly has obtained all the experience he wanted at Georgetown!

"Development of Civilization" was his first course, and he is now delivering it for the twenty-first year. It was first worked out in 1934 as the first version of his recently published book, *The Evolution of Civilizations*. The second version of the book was produced in 1942 in a suite of rooms at Princeton (this was to be his last summer off from teaching in eighteen years). The third and last revision of the book was written in the space of about five weeks in the fall of 1958.

In the spring of 1943 the School of Foreign Service dedicated itself in full to the war effort. In one week under the personal direction of Fr. Walsh the Foreign Area and Language Program was established as a part of the Army Specialized Training Program. In the fall of 1943, Professor Quigley had close to 700 students in one class, held in Gaston Hall. In this course Dr. Quigley lectured five hours a week continually for nine months on the "History of Europe in the Twentieth Century" - without finishing what he wanted to say on the subject. Most of the students for this course were college graduates and fifty-five had Ph.D.'s.

Early in the war the School recognized that its graduates had difficulty getting commissions in the Navy because of their poor background in mathematics. So Dr. Quigley gave an elective course in college algebra to Foreign Service students, most of whom have had little inclination in that direction.

At the end of the war, when the School of Foreign Service enrollment felt the tidal wave of veterans, the student body was over 2,200. In the fall of 1947 Dr. Quigley had 1,307 students, including two sections of
about 400 each (at present in his four courses he has a total of 400).

In this period he taught courses on the Fascist state, Public Administration, Government Regulation of Industry, and United States History (which he taught from 1942, when almost everyone in the department was called for duty in the army, until February of 1946, when Dr. Jules Davids joined the faculty of Georgetown).

Dr. Quigley is a consultant in American History for the Smithsonian Institution. His chief work there has been to draw a detailed plan for layout of the new Museum of History and Technology now under construction. He has been consultant on numerous occasions to the Industrial College of the Armed Forces at Fort McNair, his work being particularly connected with questions of curriculum reform. For the last twelve years Dr. Quigley has annually lectured to the Industrial College (usually on the History of Czarist Russia).

In addition, he was consultant to the Select House Committee on Astronautics and Space Exploration, which set up the present space agency. It was in connection with this work that Professor Quigley made his first flight in an airplane - Washington to San Francisco - to inspect the Ames Laboratory at Moffett Field.

Professor Quigley’s versatility may be judged from the fact that during the last week of October 1961, he had planned to lecture to a government agency on Russian History, lecture at another local University on African History, testify before the Senate Anti-Trust and Monopoly Committee on American business practices, and spend five days in Boston as an invited delegate to the UNESCO Conference on Africa.

Dr. Quigley, in a unique way, bears out Henry Adams’ observation that, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." There are no means available to measure the intellectual impact and the far-reaching effects of his influence on the minds of his students. For this reason it is impossible to give Dr. Quigley recognition commensurate with his value to thousands of Georgetown students since his arrival here from Harvard in the Fall of 1941.

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Please email the editors (editors@carrollquigley.net) with corrections, questions, or if you have other works by Professor Quigley you would like to see posted.