

Dear Dr. Aristotle (Part 4)

Dr. Socrates P. Aristotle
Provost
Stellar University

Dear Dr. Aristotle,

As you know up until 1833 our our Ph.D. programs, in natural science, were labeled as a philosophy degree in "natural philosophy". It appears to me that we spent our efforts on teaching these students how to think theoretically and conceptually.

We seem to have changed our focus in all technical education from its theoretical form to a more deeply learned application form. This is a trend that seems to be prevalent in our sister institutions.

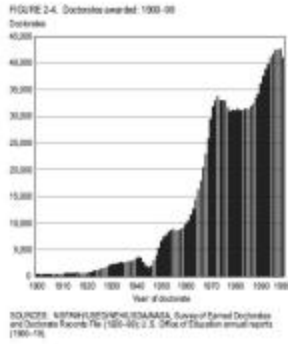
My team has observed that after "Sputnik" the number of doctorates per year has quadrupled in all disciplines and that since 1980 we awarded almost 50% of the doctorates given since 1900 (1.36 million) and $\frac{3}{4}$ were awarded after 1970 (1.04 million)

TABLE 2-3. Number and distribution of doctoral awards, by decade:
1900-99

Decade	Number	% distribution
All decades	1,364,069	100.0
1900-09	3,654	0.3
1910-19	5,542	0.4
1920-29	11,935	0.9
1930-39	25,674	1.9
1940-49	30,629	2.2
1950-59	82,689	6.1
1960-69	162,071	11.9
1970-79	320,936	23.5
1980-89	319,501	23.4
1990-99	403,861	29.6

NOTES: The Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) was collected by calendar year in 1920-1957 and by academic year from 1958 on. Because the second half of calendar year 1957 is part of the 1958 SED, detail does not add to total. The sum of doctorates awarded in 1900-99 is actual and is the number percentages are based on. Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCES: NSF/NIH/USED/NEH/USDA/NASA, Survey of Earned Doctorates and Doctorate Records File (1920-99); U.S. Office of Education annual and biennial reports(1900-19).



Despite these statistics, it appears that the nation's competitive position has worsened and the education system is in disarray. This confuses me when we have graduated 263,000 Ph.D. educators, more than any other discipline, at the same time the Public Schools are in accelerated decline.

As the head of your academic standards committee I'm concerned that we might be addressing the wrong issues in our curriculum. Can you give us some guidance?

Do you think we should concentrate on great thinking and less on the mechanics?

Regards,

Guilhelmi Ockham Ph.D.

Professor of Philosophy