



“The ideas of Harvey A.K. Whitney originated in the application of knowledge, experience, ability, and dedication.”

===== **WALTER M. FRAZIER** =====

(1958)

At the time he received this award, Walter M. Frazier was the Director of Pharmacy Service at Springfield City Hospital, Springfield, Ohio.

The Authority of Ideas

To be the recipient of an honor such as the Harvey A. K. Whitney Award causes one to reflect on his indebtedness to those who have been responsible for this recognition. This award provides the opportunity for me to transmit the honor to my colleagues, to those who have generously given me ideas to use and who have inspired me to use them, and who have given me the insight to understand the true meaning of pharmacy and the vast possibilities for a full and pleasant professional life in the practice of hospital pharmacy.

I recently read a little book entitled *Memoirs of Childhood and Youth* by Albert Schweitzer. He says: “The ideas which determine our character are implanted in mysterious fashion.” Dr. Schweitzer is deeply impressed by the fact that so many people gave him something without knowing it. Continuing, he says:

Such people, with whom I have, perhaps, never exchanged a word, yes and others, about whom I have merely heard things by report, have had a decisive influence upon me. Similarly, not one of us knows what effect his life produces and what he gives to others; that is hidden from us and must remain so, though we are often allowed to see some little fraction of it so that we may not lose courage.

The word “ideas,” like other words in our language, often fails to express adequately the meaning which the speaker wishes to convey. To some people, an idea may be a thought, an apprehension, a notion, or perhaps a design. To the theologian or the philosopher, ideas may mean images, ideals, or beliefs. To a professional person or a member of a progressive organization, ideas may mean ideals or opinions or knowledge, or plans in stages of development or implementation.

Norman Cousins talks about the history of ideas in a new book titled *In God We Trust*. He says an idea does not have to find its mark in the minds of large numbers of people in order to create an incentive for change. He observes:

Ideas have a life of their own. They can be nourished and brought into active growth by a small number of sensitive, vital minds which somehow respond to the needs of the total organism, however diffused the parts of the organism may be. These minds sense both the need for change and the truth of the ideas that define the nature of change. When the ideas are articulated and advocated, the popular response is not merely the product of logic reaping its gains, but of a dormant awareness coming to life.

These thoughts cannot but recall the life of Harvey A. K. Whitney. Surely his influence has been decisive. He has influenced our profession in ways far beyond measure, its practitioners in numbers far beyond his knowledge. Mr. Whitney’s ideas had a life of their own and they truly created an incentive for change.

The ideas of Harvey A. K. Whitney originated in the application of knowledge, experience, ability, and dedication. These ingredients formed the destiny of his career. His ideas have become ideals in the sense of attainable standards of practice. His systems and practical methods are still patterns of procedure in the operation of pharmacy departments in hospitals.

Mr. Whitney was also influenced by his contemporaries. He traveled in good professional circles. He was recognized as a superior practitioner in the American Pharmaceutical Association, a man whose ideas and opinions were sought by leaders in the various branches of pharmacy. He had unusual ability to recognize good opinions and competence in others. His friendship with Dean Edward Spease was important because both men were pioneers and their ideas fused into mutual assistance and the encouragement of others.

There was a small group of people who represented hospital pharmacy, who knew Mr. Whitney and Dean Spease and understood the ideas and plans which were developing. Mr. Donald A. Clarke, Mr. J. Solon Mordell, Mr. Thomas Reamer, Miss Hazel Landeen, Mrs. Evelyn Gray Scott, Miss Geraldine Stockert, Mr. Russell Stimson, Dean Louis Zopf, and a few others wanted to participate in these plans; they, too, had ideas. Persistence enabled Mr. Whitney to convince other leaders in the American Pharmaceutical Association that hospital pharmacy practice constituted a special activity which deserved a place in the Association.

In an organization of any kind, experience has much to do with ideas. Good ideas and designs become, through good planning, the ideal and accepted standards for

action and performance. The authority of ideas is established in convincing manner by James D. Mooney in his great book *The Principles of Organization*.

In his discussion of the advisory phase of staff service, Mr. Mooney points out that leaders in every large organization need information and even staff counsel. Beyond that, he states:

Staff function exercises an authority of its own, an authority no less real than line authority, even though it includes no right of command. The line represents the authority of man; the staff represents the authority of ideas. The true value of a staff official has only one measure, his ability to generate ideas that are of value to line authority, and his efficiency in imparting these ideas to the whole organization. Through this authority in sound and workable ideas, the staff official may frequently advance to important line command. Likewise, advancement in line leadership may often depend on the leader's capacity to generate workable ideas, quite as much as anything inherent in his own right of command.

During the early years of Harvey Whitney's activity, there was no authority of man in hospital pharmacy. The profession was unorganized. The hospital pharmacist was, indeed, the forgotten man of pharmacy. But Harvey Whitney did possess the authority of ideas. With this authority, he was able to mold an obscure and unrecognized group of professional practitioners into a well-organized professional society. Berman, the historian, has called this: "One of the most dramatic and significant developments in the whole range of American pharmaceutical history. . . ."

The energy and enthusiasm of Mr. Whitney brought about the implementation of ideas which resulted in the founding of the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists. This was only the beginning, however, and he continued to work to build a national organization. He personally visited individuals and small groups to recruit members. It was his idea that every ASHP member should first be a member of the American Pharmaceutical Association. Each step of the new organization was on solid ground and although progress was slow, it was steady and it was inspired.

Creation of a national publication for hospital pharmacists is another area in which Mr. Whitney exercised the authority of ideas. Mr. Whitney bent his energy to the task of unifying all members by joining with Mr. Leo Mossman of the Ohio Society of Hospital Pharmacists to launch *The Bulletin of the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists*. *The Bulletin* became the greatest source of encouragement and information to the individual member, and it nourished the roots of the growing organization.

Ideas in the sense of ideals or goals give the impression of something of the future or something never attainable for the present. The following passages were written by the psychologist John Dewey in his book *Human Nature and Conduct*:

Every ideal is preceded by an actuality. Ideas, thoughts of ends, are not spontaneously generated. Reason, pure of all influence from prior habit is a fiction. Aims begin as a wish to change. The transformation depends upon the working out of means through study of existing circumstances and this knowledge, joined to a wish creates a purpose . . . The trouble with what sometimes

passes for ideals, is that they do not get beyond the stage of fancy, of something agreeable and desirable based upon an emotional wish . . . Idealism must indeed come first, the imagination of some better state generated by desire. But unless ideals are to be dreams, and idealism a synonym for romanticism and phantasy-building, there must be a most realistic study of actual conditions. . . .

Mr. Whitney was an idealist but not an idle dreamer. His imagination was keen, but he was also realistic. His ideals and imagination generated in him a desire for a better state for hospital pharmacy service. Studying the actual conditions which existed in his profession, he perceived the great need for specialized education and training for hospital pharmacists. He took action.

The first internship program for hospital pharmacists was established by Harvey Whitney. His success as a teacher and preceptor is well known. He realized that the future of hospital pharmacy depends on adequate preparation of the men and women who would accept the responsibility for improving the pharmaceutical services required in hospitals. The ideas he developed in the practical application of specialized training grew and were later adopted by other practitioners and educators who became aware of the need for this training and the significance of his work. He was alert to all opportunities for providing new services, and he gladly accepted any new assignments in which the pharmacy department could provide additional or improved service for the hospital. This too was observed and followed by his contemporaries.

Mr. Whitney's authority of ideas for specialized education for hospital pharmacists was not strong enough to overcome the authority of man which was held in his local college of pharmacy. Still the influence of his ideas went beyond his local situation and greatly influenced Dean Edward Spease who, in 1937, instituted graduate work in hospital pharmacy at Western Reserve University. It was to be yet another decade before another college of pharmacy would offer a similar program. The authority of ideas is not bounded by time, the authority of man is fleeting. In time, it is always the authority of ideas which reigns supreme.

Ideas and ideals have a special significance in a profession. Herman Finer, author of *Administration and the Nursing Services*, speaks of the *ethos* of a profession. These are his words:

Every occupation and more particularly every profession has its ethos, that is the fountain of its ethics, or in other words, the values that pervade its practical conduct and attitude to its clientele. Ethos means the animating spirit of any undertaking, whether carried on by one person, or by collective effort. It is the dominating spirit infusing, graduating and adapting all efforts, more or less consciously and sensitizing the practitioners to their tasks. It is composed of (1) a sense of purpose and obligation, (2) an apprehension of a mission, (3) a clear idea of the significance of such purpose and mission in relation to one's own selfish claim for reward and recognition, and (4) a certain moral tension or excitement in their conduct.

The animating spirit of Mr. Whitney was professional service. He had a keen sense of purpose and of his obligation to achieve it. He knew his mission, and he had a clear

idea of the true significance of hospital pharmacy. He lived his profession with enthusiastic excitement.

Mr. Whitney was quite aware that thoughts without action are vapor. He knew that to make his ideals of professional service meaningful, he must make them a part of his everyday living.

Thus, in his own department, Mr. Whitney developed the many services offered to the point where his pharmacy actually provided what we strive for today in total pharmacy service. He was appreciated and respected by his medical staff as a true colleague in all allied health services. His ability, ingenuity, and initiative enabled him to adapt the facilities and capabilities of his department to unprecedented service for the patient, the physician, and the other departments of the hospital. His professional achievements continue to be an inspiration to hospital pharmacists. Even those who never knew him are influenced by his ideals, and his dedication now lives in the performance of his colleagues and his protégés.

A few months ago, hospital pharmacy lost an inspirational leader. As it must to all men, death came to Harvey A. K. Whitney. But through his contributions, hospital pharmacy has begun a new life. During his fruitful lifetime, organizational difficulties one by one were met with a determination characteristic of the Whitney influence. His ideas have become the realities we now enjoy. Harvey A. K. Whitney contributed immeasurably to the heritage of every member of the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists. His inspiration has extended the services of the pharmaceutical profession. The authority of ideas still prevails.

Harvey A. K. Whitney Award Lectures (1950–2005)

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