The DVM and Professionalism: Editorial

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As I approach my final year of Veterinary Medicine, I frequently ask myself, “for what reason?” Is the basis for my D.V.M. personal gain and position? Is it to attain a prestigious position in the world of “professionalism?” There are visions of a luxurious life—fine cars, spacious property and homes, active social lives and many important friends. Are these my primary goals?

For many students in the veterinary college, their D.V.M. will only be a means to an end—this I sadly refer to is one concerned only with those superficial rewards already mentioned.

A challenge lies ahead of us and the consequences of not meeting it in its proper perspective may be grave. We will, upon graduation, assume residence in some community and be placed in a position of high regard. Our opinions will frequently be sought on a great variety of subjects and the new D.V.M. must be prepared and willing to accept this responsibility. He must be prepared to “speak up” on many issues whether they be the price of hogs or concerning matters of religion, education, sex, racism, patriotism or any number of other economic, social and moral dilemmas. Since the D.V.M. is in such a position of respect, his ideas will not only be sought out, but in many instances put to use.

I would only hope that you as veterinarians would accept this challenge by facing the world with an open mind and an inexhaustible heart. Perhaps what we do as individuals may seem insignificant at times, but possibly together as a profession we can leave an impression upon mankind.

If one looks around (many never do) in today’s world, he can find with little difficulty, hate, bigotry, hunger, disease, greed and a thousand other maladies seriously and relentlessly afflicting the world. What the world’s people need now is love and understanding, and most certainly professional men and women who truly care. I would hope that all of us could leave this institution someday ready to meet the world not as though it owes us something for our struggles, but as though we are the ones in debt to the world. I believe that a true professional would have as his purpose the betterment of the world—to improve all aspects of life for all people.

Ask yourself if you are ready to become a professional. If you are, and are successful in meeting this challenge, then you not only do a great service for yourself, but also the veterinary profession, your community, your nation and all people of the world.