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Dr. Salk Lends His Name To New School in Madison



MADISON TOWNSHIP — Eighteen years ago the creation of the Salk vaccine erased one of the many fears of modern man — fear of death from a terrible and crippling disease.

Yesterday, the man who freed the world from the fear of polio, Dr. Jonas E. Salk, spoke at a dedication ceremony at the middle school named in his honor. He told the 1,400 students gathered on the front lawn:

"Here you have invented something far more important than a vaccine against polio.

"The world outside this little community — this enclave — is still full of violence, suffering, and distress," he said. "But you have addressed yourselves to create a beautiful effect."

The doctor said he believes "the marriage of truth and beauty rests in the very center of what's important in this universe.

"If you can accept this thesis, what is needed is what you have here — not a building alone, but a concept. Then you see a replica of what the human mind is like, and what man should be in the future."

Dr. Salk called the school here "quite magnificent." But he added that the seventh and eighth grade students — the first generation to benefit from his vaccine — are reaping the additional benefit of being able to expand their "creative potential" through the innovative programs offered here.

The Salk Middle School was one of the first in the nation to experiment with the most innovative educational philosophies and teaching techniques.

The more he learned about the school, Dr. Salk said, the more he was "astonished." Besides an innovative curriculum, the school is one of the few in the area that boasts of its own planetary program.

"I am very pleased and proud for the first time to have my name connected with anything," Dr. Salk said.

Citing the school's philosophies and educational approaches, he said, "I am happy that this (change in educational attitudes) has come out in my lifetime, so I could feel there are others who share my feelings, and share my need to move in this direction."

Dr. Salk added his latest book, "The Survival of the Wisest," to the memorabilia placed in the school cornerstone. Other objects to be preserved included copies of the school newspaper, "Salk Vaccine," Life Magazine, school records and forms, and a class ring.



His first book, "Man Unfolding," was published in September, while "The Survival of the Wisest" was released last month.

Both books, he said, carry a message similar to the one embodied in the school here:

"That man is endowed with 'natural wisdom . . . which we should try to understand and encourage.' This wisdom, he said, is the same process that enables the body to heal itself, both physically and spiritually. The same wisdom, he said, 'corresponds to the wisdom in nature.'"

"The unfolding of man's natural wisdom is a process that begins at the moment of birth if not sooner," he said, adding that he hoped the philosophies and programs at the school here, which accept this concept, spread and "infect" other communities "with the same ideas and ideals."

Dr. Salk explained that through the lifting of the fear of polio, he has discovered something more important: that man's creative potential can be expanded greatly once he is out from under the yoke of fear itself.

The founder of the Salk Institute 10 years ago in La Jolla, Calif., Dr. Salk, said he is concentrating his research in the fights against cancer and muscular dystrophy.

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Speaking to reporters at a reception following the ceremonies, Dr. Salk said he did not "discover" the vaccine to prevent polio virus infections. "I created it," he said. "There was something logical about it."

He said he will be surprised "when we perceive the changes taking place now of such great magnitude."

Seventh grader Vicki-Ann Gorglione, whose paper "What Jonas Salk School Means to Me" won first prize in a school-wide contest.

She said she hoped the students here would look to Dr. Salk's achievements, "and maybe one of us will make a contribution to benefit the entire human race."