

The University Revisioned: An Alternative to Corporate Mis-education

Jeff Lustig

On being asked to introduce a prospective student to the Sophist Protagoras, Socrates agreed and then in his characteristic manner asked why. “What is he,” Socrates inquired of the student, “and what will he make of you?”¹ The same question may be posed today about our society’s chief site of higher learning. What is the modern university, and what will it make of its students?

And not just its students. What will it make of its faculty who spend the major portion of their professional lives in colleges and universities? And of the larger society that finances those institutions and entrusts its young to them to cultivate their minds and their character as citizens? What is the university and what will it make of us all?

The answer is no longer as clear as it once was. American colleges and universities have acquired many new functions in recent years and been buffeted by a variety of forces. Disinvestment in higher education has gutted programs, forced retrenchments, and raised tuition.² Simultaneously, a tidal wave of new students has descended on overcrowded classrooms and those students’ diversity in age, ethnicity and background has imposed new challenges on the institution.

Inside the ivied walls a regimen of downsizing, outsourcing and cost-cutting produces a tier of overworked and underpaid

I want to thank John Schaar, Hanna Pitkin, Henry Steck and colleagues in the Government Department, CSU Sacramento, for their close reading of and helpful comments on earlier versions of this article.

instructors, depriving students of long-term faculty relationships and eroding the protections of academic freedom. Faculty entrepreneurship is eroding collegiality. Instructional technology is depersonalizing the college experience. Some charge that multiculturalism and postmodernism have politicized the university and compromised its public legitimacy.³

From one direction, books like *What Business Wants from Higher Education* declare graduates unfit for the knowledge-based economy and call on colleges and universities to “reskill” recycled workers because “the shelf life” of a college degree is declining,⁴ and some forums go so far as to call for ending tenure. From the opposite direction, observers decry a vocational drift already so advanced that liberal education has been reduced to “an ornament . . . a legitimating mechanism for a host of more prosaic [job-training] functions.”⁵

Within the swirl of change, charge and countercharge a master trend, is clear, and needs to be acknowledged, lest we miss the forest for the individual trees. That is the corporatization of the university, a process linking the more serious of these changes. Corporatization, as I will use the term, refers not only to the subordination of academic programs to outside business interest, but also to the more troubling intrusion of corporate forms of governance and market criteria of performance into the institution as a whole. It accounts for a growing propensity to view the academic forest in terms of board-feet of timber.

Carried to its conclusion this process would work profound changes in higher education and the intellectual life of the nation. It would deny students the substance of a liberal education and close-off the distinctively American path to advancement, leaving them well-trained but uneducated, a captive audience in a new sector of mass marketing. It would deprofessionalize faculty, “unbundle” their tasks and routinize the remaining detail labor. And it would deprive the society of a vital public sphere, changing what the university *could* make of us by changing the type of contributions and intellectual activity made possible by our campuses.

College and university campuses were traditionally places where students encountered not only separate disciplines and forms of truth (scientific, philosophical, artistic) but a habit of mind that negotiated between and went beyond those disciplines, a larger reasoning that drew together different areas of knowledge and enabled students to make sense of their world. This is a

qualitative not quantitative reason, acquired in personal interaction and debate, the product of collaborative activity and a civic culture—a public reason. The qualitative judgement often learned and exercised by faculty through communicative interaction on hiring and policy committees is a part of it.

This is the “habit of mind,” as John Henry Cardinal Newman described it, that enables one to discern “the great outlines” of structures, “the principles on which [they] rest, the scale of [their] parts” and that enables a mind to locate itself in them—to “ever know where it stands” (“not...know[ing] the relative disposition of things,” he added, being “the state of slaves or children.”⁶) If, as the quip has it, higher education is what’s left after you’ve forgotten all the facts, then acquiring this habit is its substance.

Current changes in the university would alter all this. The enclosure of the knowledge commons that is currently occurring (in David Noble’s historically resonant phrase)⁷ would privatize a major public resource and keep its elements permanently dis-integrated. Business interests’ efforts to rationalize pieces of campus operations to make them more serviceable to outside interests would change the institution’s fundamental thoughtways, rendering them more narrow, partial and instrumental.⁸ Instead of creating a whole that was more than the sum of its parts, the process would provide one that was distinctly less. Instead of being the seed-bed for public reason the university would become a redoubt of administrative rationality. Instead of teaching students (and faculty) to know where they stand, it would prepare them only to fit into a world they don’t comprehend.

I want in what follows to show how this corporatization affects the substance, structure and function of the university, trace its epistemological and political implications and explain the dangers it poses for faculty, students and the larger society. This requires that I challenge the narrative usually told about the American university, the story that justifies and underwrites its current course of development. It also requires that I address the image of faculty identity implicitly framed by that story, for it is a case of mistaken identity and rooted in serious confusion about academic neutrality. In the last section I will outline the alternative to the corporate university hinted in the dissenting statements and commentaries of faculty and students over the last decade as they have groped their way toward a forgotten branch of the liberal arts tradition. It has important implications for what is taught, who is taught and how the university is organized beyond the classroom.

THE MID-CENTURY AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

The Rise of the Multiversity

The current story begins at mid-twentieth century, the Golden Age of the American university. By the terms of the social compact enacted during the 1950s and 1960s, the public gained access to higher education at minimal tuition, the federal government acquired a capacity for basic research and development, and universities secured regular support and protections for academic freedom. The lessons of the Manhattan Project and Big Science had not been lost on decision makers. Bolstered by the mechanism of contract overhead and the National Defence Education Act (1958), the federal-grant university came of age and quickly eclipsed its land-grant predecessor. By 1960 it enjoyed one hundred times the funding it had received twenty years before.⁹

Enrollment in postsecondary schools tripled from 1945 to the late 1950s due partly to the G.I. Bill, and then almost doubled again, to 8 million students by the late 1960s. More faculty were hired in that decade than ever before.¹⁰ The growth in size was accompanied by an expansion in scope and functions, until Clark Kerr announced that what has been a unitary institution had become a “multiversity”. In his acclaimed *Uses of the University* (1963), he presented the new organon as a compound of three structures “partially at war with itself”: the old liberal-arts academy eulogized by Cardinal Newman, the research and professional-training institute analyzed by Abraham Flexner, and the knowledge production facility championed by Kerr himself.¹¹

Kerr, who became a chief theorist of this hybrid institution, established a main theme of the new story when he identified its central function as “knowledge production and distribution” for what he already saw would become a knowledge-based society. The university “and segments of industry are becoming more alike,” he announced. Indeed, it was itself becoming a “knowledge industry.” And (having lost the shared purpose necessary for a community) that meant it would inevitably come to resemble a bureaucracy, with a new administrative class at its helm. Expressing a confidence in the technocratic ascendance that hearkened back to James Burnham’s *Managerial Revolution*, Kerr believed that expert knowledge wielded by the new mandarins would direct both private power and federal largesse toward unprecedented benefits for “post-industrial society”.¹²

But Kerr's, we remember, was not the only view of things. His account was greeted within a year by the free speech battle in Berkeley that attacked "the knowledge factory," and by a lucid counter-vision drawn by Paul Goodman in *Compulsory Mis-education and the Community of Scholars*. Goodman saw the university straightforwardly as in decline from its original status in the middle ages as a free corporation composed of self-governing faculty bodies and dedicated to "educate the free young (*liberi*) to be free citizens and independent professionals." Over the centuries universities had always defined themselves as "schools for independent professionals, communities of scholars, and centers of free inquiry." And they deserved special respect today to the extent that they were "the only important face-to-face self-governing communities still active in our society."¹³

Colleges' and universities' core purpose in Goodman's eyes, with echoes of Dewey, was to help students become aware of "their own best powers" in such a way as to also play a "useful role in society," and to equip them to continue educating themselves after graduation. He was willing to accept the idea that college prepared people for work, he wrote, if we understood by that term its older sense of the "fulfillment of one's possibilities, work as the vocation that gives justification." For the schools to become "service stations" for dominant social interests was to betray this mission. The research contracts Kerr welcomed Goodman therefore labeled "outsider's work," the purposes and methods of which would corrupt the real job of the university.¹⁴ Though he agreed that the new administrators might be useful "caretakers and functionaries" for higher education, Goodman saw them as unfit to serve as its captains, because "the *ultima ratio* of administration is that a school is a teaching machine" not "a community of teaching and learning."¹⁵

It speaks to Kerr's candor that he admitted many of these charges and went further than his critics. He pointed out that the rise of the knowledge industry would promote the authority of administrators and academic entrepreneurs at the cost of that of teachers. He predicted that many faculty would "shift their identification and loyalty" to new funding sources and become "tenants rather than owners" of the institution. He foresaw that power would therefore move "outside the original community" and gravitate to the administration and "leadership groups in the society" (denying, however, that the latter entailed "control in any deleterious sense" because he failed to conceive of the costs of secret

nuclear research or complicity in the Vietnam War). He and those for whom he spoke considered this all, however, to be secondary. According to the narrative then taking shape, the American university had always been a utilitarian affair, and its modern incarnation stayed true to its origins. It was immensely “productive,” whatever the complaints. It was useful. It fulfilled the “national purpose” and was “for everybody’s sake.”¹⁶

This new story also implied for faculty members a role as demanding as it was prestigious. It depicted professors as deserving of rights and status but at the same time as tethered to the fates of their institutions. While granting them authority in the classroom and laboratories, then, it silently enjoined them not to rock the boat or do anything that would jeopardize the status of their institution. This called for a delicate balancing act, but one for which instruction by the presumed epistemology of the natural sciences seemed apt. By this teaching, the trick was to strike a posture of objectivity or neutrality before one’s material, reporting on one’s subject matter and turning one’s eyes away from the larger questions and picture. The professional ideal became the positivist one of objective recording of material without straying into “subjective” interpretation, by explicitly promoting certain values, for example, or making public comments about the operations of the university itself. Academic freedom became hostage to this form of academic neutrality.

One thing further needs to be noted about this new narrative. It presented the reorganization of higher education as a response to changes already occurring elsewhere and to a course of economic advance already charted. It was a tale told then in the passive voice. Academics were “called on” to change with the times; “imperatives” were imposed that had to be accepted; the university “was becoming” more like industry.¹⁷ Things were in the saddle, apparently, and rode men. Policy choices were masked and camouflaged as inevitabilities rather than openly identified and defended. It was not a question of good or bad, wise or foolish, but only whether one was aboard the locomotive of history or still grumbling back at the station.

The story was neat, reassuring and persuasive. But its triumphal teleology also rewrote the actual history of the institution in two important ways. First, it exaggerated the degree to which the American university had been an exclusively utilitarian enterprise and overlooked its early political functions. And second, it elided

recognition of the character of business influence over the university during its formative years. Recent scholarship has cast these matters in a different light.

Chapters in American Academe

Chapter 1

The history of the American university is often presented as beginning for all intents and purposes with what are seen as the narrowly utilitarian and market-oriented goals of the Morrill Act of 1862, the organic act for land-grant colleges and later Extension Services.¹⁸ This act authorized construction of institutions for instruction in fields “related to agriculture and the mechanic arts.”

Agitation for passage of this act certainly entailed a good deal of derision of the Eastern elites and need to learn the classics and “dead languages”. (What would such studies “do about hog cholera?” on Midwestern Solon demanded to know.) But the plain words of the act do not support the usual allegations of its narrowness. Senator Justin Morrill took care in drafting it to specify that the agricultural and mechanical instruction should take place “without excluding other scientific and classical studies,” and “in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.”¹⁹ Morrill’s model was the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, drafted by Thomas Jefferson, founder of the nation’s first public university, a directive mandating that future states of the territory establish and “maintain forever . . . semina[ries] of learning” because “religion, morality and knowledge [are] necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind.”²⁰

Good government and the happiness of mankind are not particularly narrow, utilitarian goals. (Nor were the more doctrinaire purposes of the many denominational colleges that dotted the Eastern and Southern landscapes at the time.) The fact is that the utilitarian orientation in America existed within a larger Whig-Republican perspective that perceived higher education as a crucial step in the formation of a self-governing people.²¹ The outlook valued practical instruction as part of a broader training undertaken “for the dignity of the commonwealth . . . to furnish the [republican] citizen the means to discharging the duties imposed on him.” This view was widespread in the nineteenth century, leading in post-Gold Rush California, for example, to defense of “a sound and liberal learning”

in what would later become U.C., because such learning would stabilize social conditions, nurture a "common humanity," and "teach the security and honor of republican principles."²²

Such arguments did not address job training and prospective economic prosperity. The practical, local-service orientation of the land-grant colleges constituted a particular approach to liberal education and not a repudiation of it. The Morrill Act actually provided the basis for the subsequent expectation in America, nearly alone among nations, that a general, liberal education should precede advanced, specialized instruction, and that everyone was entitled to it.²³ By the end of the century the socialist Edward Bellamy produced a variant of the civic republican view which represented access to higher education as rooted not simply in private right, but in the right of all to live in a civilized society and enjoy the benefit of educated neighbors.²⁴

The real point about American higher education in the nineteenth century is that it was understood to be a public good and the university a public endowment, dedicated to developing public-oriented minds, and properly supported by public monies. That view survived through the Progressive Era and lingered on into the New Deal. The late thirties, for example, found California's State Department of Education seeking to defend the function of the state colleges as that of "interpreting democracy to the people." It is to this outlook that C. Wright Mills referred when he wrote that

the prime task of public education, as it came widely to be understood in this country, was politics: to make the citizen more knowledgeable and thus better able to think and judge of public affairs.

And it was this outlook that lay behind his conviction that a public education was one that gave "individuals and publics . . . confidence in their own capacities to reason."²⁵

Chapter 2

This view of higher education underwent a decisive shift at the end of the nineteenth century and in the Progressive Era, the founding period of the modern institution. Following the example of Johns Hopkins, universities launched graduate schools and research institutes. Modern disciplines emerged as organized fields.²⁶ The elective system gained converts. With the Wisconsin Idea the university became "an experiment station in politics, in social and industrial legislation, in the democratization of science and higher

education."²⁷ Registering the shift from civic republican to corporate liberal bearings, however, that Idea saw the university fulfilling its public mission through the contributions of its experts and professionals rather than its effects on the broad mass of citizens.

Less noted during the same period, boards of governors, those curious American growths on the body collegial unknown to Oxford, Padua or Paris, began to shift in their internal make-up from clergymen to businessmen. The "pecuniary surveillance" of these boards was what particularly galled Thorstein Veblen, along with the new-model presidents who served them, both given to "bootless meddling with academic matters . . . [they were] in no special degree qualified to judge."²⁸ The boards gave business direct oversight of the emerging university and produced claims to private property rights, Clyde Barrow notes, in the society's "material means of mental production" (the schools, their land and buildings), launching an enduring dispute in the process about who "owns" a university.²⁹

Private industry exerted its influence not only through these boards, but through well-advertised philanthropies and strategic endowment of chairs, as well as through the new higher education foundations associated with major financial groups. (The Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching CFAT, was linked to Carnegie interests, the American Council on Education, ACE, to Rockefeller, and so forth.) These sought the administrative rationalization of university operations and centralization of authority on the same lines recently imposed in their corporate domains. In a few cases they shaped the content of emerging disciplines as well.³⁰

Already in 1905 CFAT's president wrote an article asking, "Shall the University Become a Business Corporation?" A year later Frederick Winslow Taylor's associate Morris Cooke completed a report answering, in effect, yes. "The application of [organizing] principles to one industry is little different from the application to any other," he stated. His study for the first time treated professors as mental workers and charged the university, Barrow writes, "with the responsibility to train people for jobs, rather than for character, citizenship or leadership."³¹ Though the full rationalization of the university was not possible at the time, the foundations did succeed in establishing standardized measures of student and faculty loads, certifying disciplinary boundaries and establishing the bureaucratic routines in which American higher education would be subsequently encased. Some of that ordering was undoubtedly welcome in a world

replete with barber's colleges and Theosophile "universities". But it also introduced what Goodman would later call the "spirit-breaking regimentation" of undergraduate education.³² And it launched a long-term political campaign to expropriate faculty powers waged behind the façade of neutral, scientific management.³³

But something else was also distinctive of this era, unacknowledged by the mid-century narrative. The Progressive Era witnessed the birth of a counter-movement to the business offensive, dedicated to the articulation and defense of academic freedom. That movement, initiated by members of the new American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in defense of scholars who had been punished for their controversial teachings (e.g., Darwinism or populist economics), revealed higher education professors' growing identification of themselves as members of a professional body.³⁴

The idea of academic freedom has its roots in German *lehrfreiheit* and *lernfreiheit* (the freedoms of teaching and learning); but it was a distinctly American product, partially overlapping First Amendment principles. The AAUP defined it as being comprised of the freedom of inquiry and research, the freedom in the classroom to teach without censorship, and the freedom to speak and act in the world beyond the campus.³⁵ Keenly aware of the new threats to higher education, proponents of academic freedom insisted from AAUP's very first statement in 1915 that the idea of a

university as an ordinary business venture, and of academic teaching as a purely private employment, manifests . . . a radical failure to apprehend the nature of the social function discharged by the professional scholar.³⁶

Though over the years many faculty members have thought of academic freedom as consisting of protections for individual scholars and teachers from outside interference, its heart lies rather in its claim to the collective right to self-governance.³⁷ This is no traditional assertion of guild privilege (though it entails demands that academics alone be permitted to license new practitioners and to sit in evaluation of each other). The academic enterprise carries special responsibilities and obligations. A central purpose of faculty self-governance, Thomas Haskell explains, is not to limit competition, (as with a guild) but to intensify it. As Arthur Lovejoy put it at the time, "*The price of participation in . . . [the university] is perpetual exposure to criticism,*" perpetual subjection,—in a striking image—to the "friendly violence . . . and correcting action of . . . complementary minds."³⁸

The appeal to academic freedom received little support, however, at the time. Tenure was rare and few colleges possessed academic senates. Professors accordingly accommodated themselves to the new conditions in exchange for quite limited procedural guarantees, the nature of that accommodation establishing enduring fissures in American faculty identity. Professionals, who by European tradition and institutional mission should have been governors of their own community, accepted the authority of trustees and the resulting ambiguity about the ownership of the enterprise. Teachers and scholars who required professional autonomy for the discharge of their duties reconciled themselves to administrative rationality by restricting their freedom, and to trustee power, after a few salutary punishments for free-thinkers, by abandoning controversial topics as uninteresting and unprofessional. Presumed bearers of a democratic promise, they accepted corporate restriction on higher learning on the meritocratic claim that youth of talent had equal access to their gifts, matters of class, race and gender being conveniently ignored.³⁹ The faultlines though pervasive and persistent would remain unacknowledged.

The Gelded Age, and Misuses of the University

“A university is what a college becomes when the faculty loses interest in students.” —John Ciardi.⁴⁰

Viewed against these shifts in story line the Golden Age loses some of its glitter. Talking nothing away from the multiversity’s ability to attract large amounts of funding and students, its growth in size and authority was accompanied by a marked narrowing of purpose. Three different conceptions had by now emerged in America of what the university might make of us—the political (making citizens for “the dignity of the commonwealth”), the personal (developing people’s best potentials), and the economic (training productive workers). Of these, the production-for-service model concentrated almost exclusively on the third.

The problem with this was not with the service. Jefferson’s provision for “good government” aimed at service. So did Cardinal Newman desire to “rais[e] the intellectual tone of society, [and] cultivat[e] the public mind” (his disdain for utilitarianism notwithstanding).⁴¹ The problem was with the narrowness of that service, and with the fact that the mid-century compact made no provision for

members of the academic community themselves to deliberate and decide upon what they would serve. It annexed university energies to the "national interest" as defined by dominant interests, and expected faculty to hitch their talents and efforts to ends they could not question, ends that could well turn out to be at odds with their responsibilities as scholars. Its vaunted neutrality was a false neutrality.

What the model would make of students and faculty, (and was an intellectual type first identified by Randolph Bourne during the First World War) was someone who was technically skilled but had not understanding of "the political or interpretive" aspects of official policies. It was a professional who would enthusiastically make him or herself instruments of "the ends as announced from above."⁴²

It was a type that would become familiar in the twentieth century, of which the most cautionary example, perhaps, was offered by the Vietnam-era economist who helped coordinate Michigan State University's project with the CIA propping up and arming Vietnamese President Diem's repressive dictatorship, but later attributed his and his colleagues' "appalling" participation in the project to their lack of any larger "historical perspective." "We had been conditioned...not to ask the normative question," he explained. "We have only the capacity...to serve the policy," not to "question and judge" it.⁴³

Nor were the service and research functions of the new model adequately squared with its teaching and its social functions. This was a fateful oversight at the very moment when the question of mass higher education occupied the center of public attention. What should be regimens originally designed for elites look like once it was made available to the broad public? The new model's silence on the matter provided its tacit answer. For even the goal of "advancing" knowledge (broader than "producing" it on demand) does not necessarily entail the development of students' potentials and cultivation of intellectual abilities seen by Goodman and the students themselves as being at the heart of higher education.⁴⁴

It was not surprising, then, that it was the students who led the resistance to Kerr's model. Free speech was a fitting casualty of the effort to supplant education for public reason by administrative rationality, a maker of breach them opening up between the old liberalism of democratic citizenship and the new one of organizational systems, and between the idea of the university as a public sphere and the model of it as tool for economic prosperity. The

reason students would no longer “take part . . . in the operations of the machine” and had to throw their “bodies on the gears,” 1964 protest leader Mario Savio announced explicitly, was because they were “sick at heart” at being treated as “raw material” by the “knowledge factory.” They did not “mean to end up being bought by some clients of the University, be they the government, be they industry, be they organized labor, be they anyone!”—concluding because he thought the point had been lost: *We’re human beings!*⁴⁵

Academic faculty did not raise the same concerns. Most now participated in faculty senates, though a “dual authority structure” had emerged by which decentralized, collegial faculty control of scholarship, teaching and learning coexisted with centralized, hierarchical administrative authority over support functions ranging from the library to facilities management to financial aid.⁴⁶ Though the senates made up part of what was called shared governance, one student of the arrangement has concluded that it usually turned out to be “split governance” with different parties assigned different sectors of decision-making. Faculty accordingly, in his eyes, enjoyed “autonomy without control.”⁴⁷

Their quietism can also be understood in retrospect, however, as a product of those unresolved tensions in the professional ideal of neutrality. About what exactly, according to that ideal, was one supposed to be neutral? Surely not the principles of effective teaching or the fate of higher education itself. And was the price of professionalism that one was supposed to become only a passive spectator of public life? Did value neutrality mean that one was not supposed to study topics about which he or she was passionately interested? That good scholarship was produced by indifference? These questions were rarely raised, let alone answered. Under the cloak of neutrality, most faculty abstained from participation in the larger politics of their institutions and of higher education nationally.

During the subsequent period business roundtables, foundations, national commissions, educational administrators and rump parliaments of term-limited legislators all regularly offered advice about higher education, recommending such things as management by objectives, distance learning, reinvention and the sacrifice of “seat time” to “demonstrated outcomes.” Those people in the society most experienced in teaching, most familiar with the minds and needs of college students, sometimes most informed about the world, remained silent as a group, focused on their own profession

or department, hamstrung by prevailing confusions over academic freedom. "Being neuter yourselves, you regard history as neuter too," Nietzsche admonished his own contemporaries.⁴⁸ A century later the American professoriat reversed the process, moving from institutional ethos to personal role.

But Kerr's picture of the multiversity was the snapshot of a moving target. Its different components continued to shift until the knowledge-industry component prevailed, and the liberal-arts college and independent research institute were reduced to justifying themselves before its bar of productivity. That industry turned out, furthermore, to have a different character from what the prophets of managerial revolution had imagined. Whatever the mid-century hopes, America's "post-industrial" economy remained stubbornly capitalist. For universities to "become more like industry" therefore meant that they became more subject to the exigencies of cost-cutting and profit-making, more subordinate to the force of commodification and capital accumulation. The administrator did not replace the private profiteer, but became reduced to one facet of his new, corporate persona instead.

And here the story's peculiar grammar proved decisive. It offered no basis for resisting the course of affairs and no alternative to acquiescence. For all its tone of mastery, its underlying message was drift. That too was apparent in Kerr's account, or rather in a running subtext in his famous book of clever asides about courtesans, gainful liaisons, violations and the "young lady from Kent/who . . . knew what it meant [when] she went."⁴⁹ It was clear from these remarks that Kerr, at least, was clear about the illegitimacy of what he proposed, and about its basic passivity. It was not the young lady from Kent who did the inviting. One could apparently either attempt unsuccessfully to refuse others' advances, or give in and at least get a good dinner out of the deal. By alluding to the world's oldest wage-workers, Kerr tried to reconcile his contemporaries to the fate of becoming wage-thinkers. The drift was made explicit in his final advice that, "The process cannot be stopped. The results cannot be foreseen. It remains to adapt."⁵⁰

THIS WAY TO THE KNOWLEDGE FACTORY

Higher education is changing profoundly, retreating from the ideals of liberal arts and the leading-edge research it always has cherished. Instead,

it its behaving more like the \$250 billion business it has become. —*Business Week* December 22, 1997.

Ironically, the process to which he advised adaptation left not only Cardinal Newman and Paul Goodman but Kerr himself and his milieu behind. That turned out to be the process of corporatization, as noted, and while its signs and symptoms are many, its underlying character is manifest in three developments. They affect the substance, the structure, and ultimately the function of higher education.⁵¹

First, business partnerships and the increasing assumption of business values in higher education administration have affected the distribution of disciplines and programs on American campuses and allocation of resources between them. The precipitous decline in government funding forced colleges and universities that had grown dependent of contracts into the arms of profit-oriented corporations—for example, to provide technology infrastructure (with the students' purchasing power and future buying habits as collateral.)⁵² While the character of the resulting influence varies across different types of institutions, there has been a marked growth in support for business and engineering schools and programs with immediate vocational pay-off, and decline of instruction in the humanities, arts and social sciences.

Business interests also seek to influence the substance of the curriculum, the authors of *What Business Wants* urging a shift to the teaching of "portable skills" and "flexibility" as appropriate to a life of shifting, temporary careers. Once the university's function is reduced to job-training, it may also be noted, tracking among institutions by skill-level will not be far behind. There is no need to provide those condemned to a life of shifting and low-skill jobs a liberal education; in fact, it is positively dysfunctional as Durkheim pointed out long ago. (Those "accustomed to vast horizons, total views, broad generalities... cannot be confined... within the strict limits of a special task."⁵³

Along with these pressures on the substance of teaching, the passage of the Bayh-Dole Act in 1980, permitting universities to patent and earn royalties off of campus-based discoveries (previously considered part of the public domain), attracted private business to put pressure on the substance of research. A five-year contract, later signed by a U.C. Berkeley department with biotechnology company Novartis, symbolized the dangers of such alliances, the department agreeing to put its research agenda

(and parts of its graduate education) under outside business control, restrict public knowledge about the research (though it was part of a public university), place company representatives on the department's research committee, and give the corporation first rights to license any discoveries made. The corrosive character of such ties has also been revealed by the new campus entrepreneurs, who turn out to look different in the flesh from what Kerr expected. A review in the 1990s of 800 research papers found that a third had been done by scientists with "a significant financial interest in their reports" because of grants, stock holdings and the like.⁵⁴ Far from power being put in the leading string of knowledge, the situation has worked in the opposite direction.

The externalization of governance resulting from such arrangements is being further institutionalized in two-dozen states which have given business a central role in their Master Plan revision commissions. A 2001 report from the (ACE-sponsored) Business-Higher Education Forum anticipates the obvious conclusion of such tendencies. It openly calls on university administrators to promote collaboration by "motivating their faculties to...creat[e] a customer-friendly environment for would-be corporate partners," and to "adopt hiring, tenure and promotion policies that reward researchers for collaborating with industries."⁵⁵

Second, beyond its affect on programs and values, the corporate milieu works profound changes in the institutions's structure and organization. It renews the push toward institutional rationalization first introduced during Progressivism. Though passing fads taken over from industry like management information systems (MIS) in the 1970s, and Total Quality Management or Zero-Based Budgeting were notably unsuccessful in their promised results, they had the long-term affect, Robert Birnbaum observes, of "changing the way people think about the university."⁵⁶ They accustomed decision-makers to see this most heterogeneous and complex of institutions as optimally a coherent, integrated system, oriented toward the single goal of profit. One side of the dual authority structure has accordingly been able to expand its reach, progressively centralizing authority on campuses, increasing the powers of administration and subjecting the work of faculty to management controls.⁵⁷

Campus budget offices have become focal sites of the new university, adopting short-term profitability measures for deciding on resource allocation. And "If costs yield nonquantifiable goods of

the kind common in research and education, it [is] hard for finance to certify them as valuable investments" Christopher Newfield adds.⁵⁸ The institutional effects of casting the university as an industry in capital's current stage of flexible accumulation turn out, finally, to be different from what mid-century thinkers like Adolph Berle and John Kenneth Galbraith and Kerr himself, expected. Instead of stable institutions, current priorities put a premium on liquidity, flexibility and rapid response, achieved by downsizing, outsourcing and devaluing of "bricks and mortar" in favor of long-distance technologies, creating a constant regimen of destabilization. But for this new dispensation to the successful the power of faculty has to be neutralized and their professional status broken. It is not surprising that a number of new reports have appeared depicting higher education faculty not as co-governors of the institution but as simply that of one advisory stakeholder among others.⁵⁹

Beyond the shifts in substance and structure and implicit in them, finally, is the pressure to transform the university's economic *function*. Press and Washburn point to this when they observe, "Most striking about today's academic-industrial complex" is not the inflow of private capital, but the fact that "universities themselves are beginning to look and behave like for-profit corporations."⁶⁰ State politicians and mid-century pragmatists, like Kerr, saw the campus serving the economy indirectly by educating its workforce and future innovators. The new view looks at the college and university, by contrast, as a direct source of profit-making, a primary site of capital accumulation. It becomes a store for consumers, a laboratory for patentable inventions or for serving the pharmaceutical and life-sciences industries, and a source of new products as teaching and learning materials are commodified and on-line courses and university itself (as brand-name) are marketed.

It is these shifts which are altering the basic character and thoughtways of the American campus. The kinds of reasoning created by a civic culture and by faculty as they learn to judge between the apples and oranges of different courses and programs are products of communicative interaction.⁶¹ They are forms of public reason natural in a civic culture and distinguished both from the private rationality of market activity and the technical rationality used in manipulating objects.

But corporate organization, devoted to the unitary goal of efficient profit-making needs to routinize communication, even

thought, and to attempt to apply technical reason to social organization. It achieves commensurability between the diverse parts of an organization not by the exercise of practiced judgment but the application of external, quantitative measures to realities that have been first “rationalized” and broken into measurable units. The separate parts can then be manipulated, privatized, and run by managers who are themselves ignorant of the kind of work being done. The recent assessments fad is essentially a step in the imposition of this new kind of commensurability. The triumph of technical reason would cripple the university as a democratic public sphere and training ground for public life.

It is indicative of the distance this process has already gone that the civic republican view of higher education as a public good is rarely discussed these days. College campuses are seen by current leaders as resources for separate individuals seeking private ends—future jobs and private careers for students to be financed out of private savings, and private research contracts for serious faculty.⁶² With lucrative patents in the offing, the knowledge commons as a place for openness and the free flow of ideas, the public resource of a rich and fecund gift economy, ceases to exist. Discoveries are hoarded rather than shared, and the dream of a society constantly irrigated by the free flow of knowledge and of lives enriched by having educated fellow-citizens is dashed.⁶³ Civic discourse is replaced by corporate discourse. Students become consumers, university presidents CEOs, campus programs profit centers, and a recent chancellor of the nation’s largest university system addresses the teaching of students in a chapter titled “Influence over Product.”⁶⁴

“WE WANT A UNIVERSITY”

This situation confronts faculty with serious choices, not the least of which reason is because it destroys the terms of their early twentieth-century accommodation. The prestige and academic freedom accorded them is under attack not only from without but from within. Their options are few. It is possible, of course, to shut one’s eyes, keep up appearances and put in for early retirement. Or one can climb aboard and at least go for the good meal. Or one can renew the long struggle—not to regain a golden age that that never existed, but to create genuine institutions of higher learning.

Where do we find the model for such institutions? Not, unfortunately, with the status quo ante; that's what brought us where we are today. The outlines of an alternative are discernible, rather, in the protest statements, laments and commentaries made about the corporate university in recent years. These envision an institution defined by three commitments: to liberal learning, to the university as a community, and to the protection and extension of academic freedom. Let us turn to these now.

Liberal Education

The Berkeley students who rebelled against the "knowledge factory" back in 1964 later published an account of their struggle under the title, "We Want a University." What they and other students nationally wanted was an institution defined by a central commitment to teaching and learning as well as one which permitted the exercise of democratic citizenship. The conservative Cardinal Newman was in full support of the former aspiration. "If its object were scientific and philosophical discovery," he wrote with unassailable logic, "I do not see why a University should have students."⁶⁵

The essential job of the university for Newman, invoking a concept that went back to Seneca, was the "cultivation" of students' minds and abilities: "[t]o open the mind, to correct it, to refine it, to enable it to know" the ends it serves. The signs of success in that effort beyond the mastery of a particular course of study were not course credits or degrees but a "Philosophic habit of mind" "force, steadiness...and versatility...the command over our own powers." A properly cultivated intellect was one which

takes a connected view of old and new, past and present, far and near...[and possesses] the power of viewing things at once as a whole. ... [This] puts the mind above the influence of chance and necessity. ... It ever know where it stands.⁶⁶

More colloquially, we could say that the goal was to help students to find and develop their own best voice and to locate themselves in their history and society. Concern about the shelf life of a degree and "flexibility" is something else altogether. What is the shelf life of knowing where one stands? Of seeing things as a whole?

Over the centuries a particular type of education has emerged as distinctively suited to provide this kind of cultivation. This is the

liberal arts tradition, first conceived in Greece, codified in Rome then modified during the Middle Ages, consisting of seven subjects representing the fundamental forms of reasoning and inference necessary for intellectual maturity and freedom. Though the exact identity of these subjects has been a constant source of dispute (going back even to Thomas Aquinas), the purpose of their study has not. The fourteenth century humanist Vergerio put it in the same terms Cicero had: "We call those studies *liberal* which are worthy of [i.e., necessary to] a free man."⁶⁷

A commitment to impart the culture of these arts has been at the heart of the institution called a university. Newman spoke of a "a University or Liberal Education" as one and the same thing. And a similar equation is evident in most Americans' regard for a college and university education as something that "opens up new perspectives," "helps you learn to love to think about things and be a good citizen," and "makes you think in ways you never imagined." Americans do hope that college will help them to get jobs; but they also want it to do a good deal more besides. It would be "no less a denial of opportunity," as Pelikan observes, if formerly underrepresented students gained access to the university today, but "in the interest of vocation and professional preparation were deprived of the opportunity to receive of a liberal education. The liberal arts could not be jettisoned from the university without changing fundamentally what the institution is."⁶⁸

But the important point for the present discussion is that liberal arts tradition has in fact been two traditions, and that recent resistance to the corporate university has led to a revival of less familiar but fruitful of the two. In their origins both branches sought to provide a conscious *paidea* or course of studies to broaden the minds of the young and cultivate their character. Both sought to raise them out of unthinking habit and the press of immediate affairs to refine their abilities and enable them to consider the broader ends of their actions. Most Americans are aware of the philosophic branch, descended from Plato and Aristotle, which sought to achieve these goals with reference to objective forms (*eidei*) or ends (*telis*) lying above or behind the world of appearance. Fidelity to that tradition is clear in the familiar statement that the purpose of the university is to seek truth (some add, "for its own sake"). Honor can be safely granted that ideal as well by legislators and college presidents who fail to make material provision for it; why should eternal truths need annual budget appropriations?

The second branch of the tradition, deriving initially from the rhetoricians Isocrates (436–338 B.C.), Cicero, and Quintilian, took its bearings from politics in the largest sense of the term. It looked to the good of the community and to necessary forms of political action in it, drawing its regulative ideas from the patterns apparent in history, comparative politics and, intriguingly, Greek tragedy, rather than from imminent ideas. It sought to train students for “correct speech and right action” in the world, to produce leaders and “the active citizen,” and as a means to that, to teach students about that “which helps or harms the community.”⁶⁹

Though some, starting with Plato, collapsed the distinction between rhetors and sophists, the scholar Werner Jaeger explains (in terms suggestive of Habermas) that Isocrates’ concern for the forms of oratory was rooted in an underlying assumption “that all higher education of the intellect depends on cultivating our ability to understand one another.” Liberal arts instruction was intended then not simply to teach students how to deliver good speeches, but to impart knowledge about

the forces that hold society together. These are summed up in the word *logos*. Higher education means education to the use of speech in this sense—speech full of meaning about the essential affairs of the life of society. . . .⁷⁰

This is the expanded view of oratory that led Cicero to raise it above the other arts and hold that its mastery required the mastery of “all those [other] arts that are proper for a free citizen.” Against such arts he contrasted those of a “base and menial” nature, including both labor and commerce.⁷¹

Though the influence of the rhetors might be thought to have lapsed after antiquity, Jaeger and others identify the humanist tradition as its direct descendent. The rhetors’ insistence that the freedom of the city and “obligations of citizenship” were preconditions for individual freedom reappeared in the Renaissance humanist belief in the social nature of freedom.⁷²

This second branch of the liberal arts tradition once bore a rich foliage in America before it was pruned back during McCarthyism and the ideal of academic neutrality became attractive. It is the tradition that lies behind the Jeffersonian and civic republican approach to higher education. Its goal of training active citizens for the good of the community explains why Americans have never felt it inconsistent (as the philosophic branch does) to combine

public service and liberal education. The influence of this lineage is apparent in the work of education theorists like Dewey, Goodman, Benjamin Barber and Martha Nussbaum. It offers a view of the liberal arts particularly appropriate to an era which no longer sees the job of the college as enforcing religious or political dogma, but rather as helping students critically appraise their traditions and open their eyes to other cultures.⁷³ It is this idea of the liberal arts which grounds the university's potential for helping form and inform a democratic society.

The fact that new courses of study need to be included in the liberal arts does not change this. Educators have argued about the *septem artes liberales* from the beginning. The aloof Cardinal Newman easily added science, history and geography to the list. His goal of enabling people to know where they stand and "take a connected view" of things would today justify the inclusion of materials from outside the Western canon, along with cultivation of an appreciation of the interplay of history and biography that C. Wright Mills called the sociological imagination. And the way away from the elite orientation of much traditional liberal education was pointed long ago by Epictetus, who wrote that, "Rulers may say that only free men should be educated, but we believe that only educated men are free."⁷⁴

Community

A University is . . . an Alma Mater, knowing her children one by one, not a foundry, or a mint, or a treadmill.⁷⁵

The second aspect of the alternative vision of the university is its revitalization of itself as a community. Karl Jaspers stressed that the essence of the idea of a *universitas* since medieval times has been precisely this status as "a community of teachers and students."⁷⁶ The face-to-face relations of decentralized collegia have been recognized as being essential to higher learning—conceived, again, not only as the mastery of subject matters but as the cultivation of habits of mind and abilities to participate in a civic culture.

The shared purposes distinctive of a community are necessary for the trust and respect on which the free exchange of ideas and the subjection of theories to others' criticism depends. The sentiments of a community (rather than of a mill or foundry) are necessary to show students the care that they need, not for "socialization,"

but for the cultivation of their abilities. Community is necessary to support and maintain that special organization of shared effort and mutual contribution by which people avail themselves of others' discoveries, for the gift economy of the knowledge commons. And face-to-face community is a precondition and product of faculty self-governance. None of these objectives can be provided by an institution which prizes impersonality, permits the proprietization of knowledge, and achieves order through bureaucratic rules.

Community is also necessary more fundamentally to fulfill what might be considered the deep curriculum of the liberal arts. Louis Menand correctly identifies independence of mind as one of the objectives of a liberal education.⁷⁷ But in which class does one learn that? How is it imparted? In which field is it taught? Clearly not in any field, but in the ways that the subject-matters of many fields are conveyed and treated. Independence of mind is elicited, if at all, through face-to-face conversation, communicative interaction about things that matter, having to defend one's views against Lovejoy's "friendly violence" with all the evidence at one's command and change them when warranted, learning, in short, that there are things worth being independent for. Mills held that a liberal education

includes a sort of therapy in the ancient sense of clarifying one's knowledge of one's self. It includes the imparting of all those skills of controversy with one's self which we call thinking; and with other, which we call debate.⁷⁸

Only a social body capable of having that debate as a matter of course can elicit those skills and the courage to be independent.

Critics of American higher education since Goodman and the 1960s activists have all placed a high value on community. And the conservative Newman did as well. So essential was the informal interaction and colloquy for giving "birth to a living teaching" and "self education" he wrote, that if he were forced to choose between a

so-called University which gave its degrees to any person who passed an examination in a wide range of subjects [i.e., demonstrated outcomes], and a university which had no professors or examinations at all, but merely brought a number of young men together for three or four years. . . . ; if I were asked which of these two methods was the better discipline of the intellect. . . . which provided better public mean. . . . I have no hesitation in giving that preference to that University which did nothing.⁷⁹

Though institutions the size of some of our massive state universities could never be recast as unified communities, there is no

reason they could not become a communities of communities, commonwealths of smaller and lively publics.

Academic Freedom

The third leg of a revitalized university would be a renewed commitment to academic freedom. Historically, colleges and universities always had to defend themselves against the encroachments of churches and monarchs and states. Today faculty have to defend themselves against private corporations and often against the university itself.⁸⁰ This has led to a view of academic freedom as a matter of defense, and as a set of protections for the rights of individual professors. But this is not the only way of understanding its originating purpose and rationale.

Academic freedom also denotes a collective condition. The early AAUP statement saw it deriving from “the social function discharged by the professional scholar.”⁸¹ And though few professors pause in their daily routines to think about it, their individual freedoms are products, artifacts, of collegial arrangements—of senates, unions, colleges, and previous groups and associations that fought to shore up faculty rights over the years.

Critically important as the negative protections are, the essence of academic freedom is this positive provision for collective self-governance and a share in institutional governance—for professorial authority, that is, over curricular and pedagogical policies and standards. Stanley Aronowitz explains it as “the right of the faculty as a collectively to retain sovereignty over the educational process.”⁸² Academic freedom entails not only immunities, then, but also capacities—not only a freedom *from* power but a freedom, and obligation, to be part *of* power.

We noted that the original rationale for this power was social. Historically it has been defended at different times as a necessary precondition for teaching, for research, and (mistakenly) for expression of First Amendment rights.⁸³ But it has also been recognized more fundamentally as a precondition for fulfilling the larger, political mandate of the university itself.

This civic mission has been explained as that of reporting “the results of investigation . . . to the general public without fear or favor” (the AAUP, 1915), as “raising the intellectual tone of society, cultivating the public mind, [and] purifying the national taste (Newman), and providing independent expert knowledge, more

recently. But Immanuel Kant discerned the mandate most clearly, as speaking reason to society. The basic compact university scholars had entered into as he saw it was an "agreement with the citizens to free the mind." And in order to do that

the university must contain a faculty that is independent of the government's command with regard to its teaching; one that . . . is free to evaluate everything, and concerns itself with the interests of the sciences, that is, with truth: one in which reason is authorized to speak out publicly.⁸⁴

The university from this perspective is an instrument society establishes for reflection on both its past and its possible futures, a lens by which it gains a perspective on itself. It is in and also partly not of the society. And the purpose of academic freedom is not only to protect political dissenters and disciplinary innovators—essential as those protections are—but also to preserve autonomous judgment and thoughtful detachment as a critical resource for the society. To thwart or impair the autonomy necessary for that function therefore harms the society by working a profound reversal in the logic of the institution. Instead of providing a way for social institutions to understand themselves and appraise their activities, the university becomes a tool for indoctrinating students in present practices and enforcing intellectual conformity. Instead of offering a means for students to find their own powers and understand their world, it turns to channeling them into predetermined slots. Instead of creating citizens it trains mere subjects.

To strengthen both the negative and positive aspects of academic freedom it will be necessary for faculty to reassert their autonomy. This does not mean their detachment. Universities should serve their societies, and performing basic and applied research in the biosciences and public health, energy, food productivity and transportation is not contradictory to the purposes of higher education, especially when so many in America and the world remain poor, ill and hungry.⁸⁵

What needs to be reasserted is faculty's moral autonomy, their right to deliberate and help decide the ends and social purposes their university serves—to make sure that its conforms to the constructive and liberating purposes of higher education, and that it is undertaken for public purposes and not simply private profit or institutional aggrandizement. This cannot be left to funding agencies, business partners or campus presidents. But such assertion promises to be a flashpoint of conflict. The authors of *What Business*

Wants among others have already stated that, "The autonomous culture of higher education may . . . work against developing the [marketable] skills" they seek, and recommends "flexibility" and "teamwork" instead.⁸⁶

That advice recalls Clark Kerr's earlier call for adaptability. It is important to note, however, that the educator had by the time the new book was published pulled back from his previous conclusions. In the third, 1995, postscript to his book, Kerr acknowledged that there is "more to a university" than what sells in the market.

Some such non-market needs are training for good citizenship, advancing cultural interest and capabilities of graduates, providing critiques of society (we hope from a scholarly perspective), and supporting scholarship that has no early, if ever, monetary returns.

Where he had once denied that the externalization of governance posed any danger, Kerr now also emphasized autonomy from external forces as one of the essential conditions of a healthy university.⁸⁷

CONCLUSION: RETHINKING THE PROFESSION

Education is a moral and political and always presupposes a . . . preparation for particular forms of social life, a particular rendering of what community is, and what the future might hold.⁸⁸

The alternative idea of a university devoted to the publicly-grounded form of liberal arts, to the campus as a community and to the centrality of academic freedom presupposes a different vision of society from the corporate model, and a different vision of faculty identity. Current American faculty resemble the Austrian bourgeoisie of 1848 as Peter Gay describes them in *Schnitzler's Century*. While petitioning for a share in decision-making, they too often left

the pervasive impression of a largely inert collection of loyal servants fortunate enough to profit from the course of events rather than imposing themselves on them.⁸⁹

Bearers of a conflicted role that leaves the big decisions to others and construes faculty rights as individuals endowments, their efforts at neutrality have manifested themselves in a similar loyalty and inertness.

But what exactly, then, is this quality? No one expects professors to remain neutral in a conflict between truth and falsehood, or between originality and plagiarism. A judge who remained impartial between valid testimony and perjury would be impeached. What is called neutrality is actually a position struck within a complex web of principles and standards which are all deeply value-laden. Scholars and professors spend years mastering those principles and learning what to be neutral about, as do judges and laboratory scientists.

It is not because of a lack of values or impartiality between them that a faculty member is expected to treat all students equally and or eschew indoctrination, or a scholar is required to revise past conclusions in light of new evidence. Nor is it because of the search for Truth, conceived as the search for objective forms lying above or beneath appearances. (To the extent that such motives inspire faculty at all today, it is probably of a Peircean rather than a Platonic character, seeing truth as the hoped-for convergence of opinion "by all who investigate," and goal for the future rather than an imminence in the present.)⁹⁰

The idea of neutrality suggests a backing-away, a retreat or quashing (of bias or passion). But refusing to favor some students over others and being willing to look at uncomfortable new facts are not the products of a backing-away or of disinterest. They are the signs of an active embrace of certain intellectual values and principles. And the maintenance and fulfillment of those principles requires a specific kind of politics within the university and a specific kind between the university and the society. If the liberal arts provides the education worthy of a free man and woman, then the branch of it I have emphasized recognizes that that freedom has a political scaffolding and is not a matter simply of the ideas.

It is of the utmost importance today that faculty emphasize these principles and the politics they presuppose, and be prepared to actively defined and promote them.⁹¹ Toni Morrison offers an example of this when she asserts that, "Values are implicit in "everything I say, write and do. And so it should be." The university needs to

take seriously and rigorously its role as guardian of wider civic freedoms, as interrogator of . . . complex ethical problems, as servant and preserver of deeper democratic practice.⁹²

Without a conscious, public commitment to these values and politics the teacher and scholar as an autonomous professional will not survive.

This article has summarized the reasons why. The insulation from outside influence once provided by state legislatures—and, for private colleges, by independent trustees—is being eroded by budget crises and disinvestment. New administrators tend to view the university as a “social atavism” and hope to remake it “in the image of the corporation,” being contemptuous of its traditions, including tenure, shared governance, autonomy and independence of mind.⁹³ They see the value of the university as equivalent to the “value-added” of their products for prospective clients. (And those troubled about the politicization of the university might more profitably look to schools of Educational Administration than to beleaguered Ethnic Studies programs).

Faculty who wish to provide a rich higher education for their students, to defend their own rights and build colleges and universities capable of speaking reason to society (and to retain its ability to give “individuals and publics . . . confidence in their own capacities to reason”⁹⁴ will have to take a firmer public stand defending these principles than they have in recent decades. There is no one else to do it.

But in order to become activist professionals they also have to reconceive faculty identity. “The faculty must [undergo] . . . a self-determined transformation,” explains professor and former faculty-union organizer James Sullivan.

A profession without power and autonomy is no profession at all . . . Only if a majority of faculty nationwide . . . succeed in re-creating their culture from within will there be a realistic chance for establishing a true profession.⁹⁵

But they will only be able to recreate their culture from within if they establish their own autonomous narrative and story, a point-of-view independent from the administrators’ about the character and purposes of the institution. And they will only be able to recreate their culture if they become citizens beyond their narrow disciplines and department in the larger life of their college and university, understand that public action is not inconsistent with but necessary to their identity as professionals, and understand too that their calling is fundamentally collective in its character. Some faculty are already becoming more active in these ways. This is evident in increased faculty organization, unionization, lecturer mobilization and direct involvement with state legislatures. But the effort to transform faculty culture will have to become more widespread if universities are to become capable of making of their

students free people, of their faculty genuine professionals, and of themselves "not merely schools for the public, but schools of publicness; institutions where we learn what it means to be a public."⁹⁶

The corporate road map for higher education is not concerned with such things. But as H. G. Wells put it long ago,

It is not by setting up polling booths, but by setting up schools and making literature and knowledge and news universally accessible that the way is opened from servitude and confusion to that willingly co-operative state which is the modern ideal.⁹⁷

In recalling that it is for the good of the commonwealth faculty may find a way to revive their fellow-citizens' commitment to higher education, shake off their own traditional docility and resume the long-term struggle for a genuine university.

NOTES

1. Plato, *Protagoras*, G.Vlastos, ed., Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1956, 6–7.
2. E. Farrell, "Public College Tuition Rise is Highest in Three Decades," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Oct. 31, 2003. Since the mid-1960s federal spending on research and development fell from 2.15 percent of the GDP to only .8 percent in 2001. Barry Bluestone, "Forget Bush and Gore: Our Economy Needs Another Khrushchev," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Jan. 5, 2001, B11. Between 1980 and 2002 the share of state funds devoted to higher education fell from 44% to 32%. Jeffrey Selinger, "The Disappearing State of Public Higher Education," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Feb. 18, 2003, A22.
3. Louis Menand makes this charge in "The Limits of Academic Freedom" in *The Future of Academic Freedom*, ed., Menand, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1996, 4, 17–18; as does Thomas Haskell, "Justifying the Rights of Academic Freedom in the Era of Power/Knowledge," 73–83, *ibid.*
4. D. Oblinger, and A-L. Verville, *What Business Wants from Higher Education*, American Council on Education [ACE] and Oryx Press; Phoenix: Oryx Press, 1998. The book recommends a curriculum of formal, "portable skills," "not based on mastering a specific . . . body of knowledge," including "teamwork, communications, and flexibility", 8, 18, 26, 90.
5. Aronowitz, S., *The Knowledge Factory, Dismantling the Corporate University and Creating True Higher Education*, Boston: Beacon Press, 2000, 62, 97. Tenure rights have already been limited in two states, Texas and Florida. R. Wilson and S., Walsh, "Tears in the Fabric of Tenure," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Jan. 10, 2003, A8.
6. John Henry Cardinal Newman, *The Idea of a University*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1927. (Orig. 1852). 138, 113, and 51, 101. Newman referred to the habit as "an acquired faculty of judgment, of clear-sightedness, of sagacity, of wisdom, of philosophical reach. . . ." 152. This form of reason is not instrumental

- but, as Martha Nussbaum explains, “constructs the personality in a very deep way, shaping its motivations as well as its logic.” *Cultivating Humanity, A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*, Cambridge: Harvard University, 1997, 29, 46.
7. David Noble, California Faculty Association, “Future of the University” hearing, Los Angeles, May 9, 2000. The analogy is to the brutal enclosure movement in England between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. David Bollier extends this analysis with a chapter on the knowledge commons in *Silent Theft, The Private Plunder of our Common Wealth*, New York: Routledge, 2003.
 8. Instrumental rationality “fosters a narrow sense of responsibility, agency and public values. . .” Henry Giroux, “Neoliberalism, Corporate Culture, and the Promise of Higher Education,” *Harvard Educational Review*, 72(4) Winter 2002, 454.
 9. Kerr, C., *The Uses of the University*, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963, 53–55.
 10. Aronowitz, 2, 27; Menand, L., “The Marketplace of Ideas,” New York: American Council of Learned Societies, Occasional Papers, No. 49, 2001. 2. Between the wars the percentage of high school graduates who went to college rose from 9 percent to 15 percent. L. Jackson Newell, “College and University Governance,” in R. Campbell, et. al., *A History of Thought and Practice in Educational Administration*, New York: Teachers College, 1987, 154.
 11. Kerr, 3–9.
 12. Kerr, 28, 87–90.
 13. Paul Goodman, *Compulsory Mis-education and the Community of Scholars*, New York: Vintage Books, 1964, 122, 124, 167.
 14. Goodman, 109, 139–140. The “service station” reference was originally Abraham Flexner’s, from *Universities: American, English, German* (1930), cited in Hofstadter, R. and W. Smith, *American Higher Education, A Documentary History*, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1961, 907.
 15. Goodman, 172, 232, 197.
 16. Kerr, *Uses*, 8, 41–42, 57–59, 45, 88, 114, 124.
 17. *Ibid.*, 86–87, 105.
 18. Bruce Kimball, for example, makes this claim in *Orators and Philosophers, A History of the Idea of Liberal Education*, New York: The College Board, 1995, 156.
 19. “The Morrill Act,” in Hofstadter and Smith, 568–587.
 20. “The Northwest Ordinance,” Hofstadter and Smith, Jefferson’s University of Virginia dispensed with administrative machinery, the taking of attendance and grading; and it included a system of electives. Goodman, 220–221.
 21. Jefferson wrote Madison in 1787: “The only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty is to educate and inform the whole mass of the people.” Benjamin Barber, *An Aristocracy of Everyone: The Politics of Education and Future of America*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1992, 224. John Adams and others agreed.
 22. Douglass, John A., *The California Idea and American Higher Education*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000. 44, 95, and 22–39 *passim*. Similar ideas were expressed by U.C. President LeConte and Stanford President Jordan, 63, 98–99.
 23. The Morrill Act required that the institutions adopt two relatively new practices “beyond teaching: scientific research and public service.” Douglass, 3. It is also possibly due to this act that, as Nussbaum notes, the idea of liberal education’s purpose is “the cultivation of the whole human being. . . has been taken up most fully in the United States.” 9, 129.
 24. Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, New York: Signet Classic, 1960, 150–151.

25. C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite*. New York: Oxford University, 1957, 317; and *The Sociological Imagination*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1959, 187, and 185–189. California’s Department of Education tried in 1939 to wrest a liberal arts role for itself by drawing distinctions from the U.C. system. Douglass, 159; 139, 155–56. President Michele Myers of Sarah Lawrence College emphasized this political role more recently when she wrote that education, more than “learning job skills,” is the “bedrock of democracy ... [Its] purpose is to make people free—to give them the grounding ... to participate as intelligent members of a free society.” “It’s a College, Not a Brand Name ...” *Sacramento Bee*, April 4, 2001.
26. See Haskell’s illuminating discussion of the disciplines as new “communities of the competent.” 44 and *passim*.
27. Frederic Howe in David P. Thelen, *The New Citizenship: Origins of Progressivism in Wisconsin*, Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1972. Though utilitarian, one scholar concludes that “the training students received” as a result of LaFollette’s and Von Hise’s Idea “pointed them less toward professionalism than toward cooperation” with the community in solving social problems. The “excursion method” taught them a “truly scientific humbleness...”, 123. See also Lincoln Steffens, “Sending a State to College,” *The American Magazine*, Feb. 1909 (349–364).
28. Thorstein Veblen, *The Higher Learning in America*, 1918, in Lerner, ed., *The Portable Veblen*, New York: Viking Portable, 1948. 508, 510—11. See also Flexner, 920.
29. Clyde Barrow, *Universities and the Capitalist State: Corporate Liberalism and the Reconstruction of American Higher Education, 1894–1928*, Madison, University of Wisconsin, 1990, Ch. 2. On the changing make-up of the boards see also Richard Hofstadter and Metzger, Walter P., *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States*, New York: Columbia University, 1955, 352.
30. Barrow, Ch. 2. On the shaping of political science, see Peter Seybold, “The Ford Foundation and the Triumph of Behavioralism in American Political Science,” in Arnove, R. I., *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism*, New York: Macmillan, 1980. 269; and David Horowitz, “Billion Dollar Brains: How Wealth Puts Knowledge in it Pocket,” *Ramparts Magazine*, 7 (May, 1969): 36—44.
31. Barrow, 66, 64–75 *passim*, 119; and Aronowitz, 15.
32. Goodman, 126, 123. See also Flexner, 907, 915.
33. On the hidden politics of scientific management, see J. Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism, The Origins of Modern American Political Theory, 1890–1920*, Berkeley, CA: U.C. Press, 1982, ch. 6.
34. Haskell, 47. Concerning early academic freedom defenses of professors (including the conservative William Graham Sumner) see Hofstadter and Metzger, Ch. 9 ff., and 335—338; and Barrow, Ch. 7.
35. AAUP, “1915 Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure,” AAUP offprint, 2. Menand suggests academic freedom might also be a product of American Pragmatism, but this is doubtful given that its counsel of adjustment gave little grounding for a principled struggle against long odds. Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club*, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2001. 411–417, 313–314. Certainly Dewey’s detachment during the critical Pullman strike and abstract 1902 essay on academic freedom give little cause hope about this genealogy. (“Academic Freedom,” *Educational Review*, XXIII, New Jersey 1902; reprinted in *The American Concept of Academic Freedom*

- Information*, Walter P. Metzger, ed., New York: Arno Press, 1977.) It was Arthur Lovejoy, a traditional philosopher and Dewey's co-founder of the AAUP who resigned his position at Stanford in solidarity with an unjustly fired colleague.
36. AAUP, "Declaration of Principles. . . ." 3.
 37. Haskell, 46, 54.
 38. Haskell, 66 (italics in orig.). Jefferson stated in reference to the University of Virginia, that "We are not afraid to follow truth where it may lead, nor to tolerate any error so long as freedom is left to combat it." Hofstadter and Metzger, 239. Haskell notes that any claim to authority on the part of faculty members is "as delegates of a community of inquiry" who have submitted to this mutual criticism, 55.
 39. This analysis follows Barrow's insightful formulations, 8–10.
 40. Carlin Romano, *The Nation*, June 12, 2000, 53.
 41. Newman, 177.
 42. Bourne, "Twilight of the Idols." *War and the Intellectuals, Collected Essays of Randolph Bourne*, ed. C. Resek, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964, 60. There were exceptions to this, however; University of California professors, for example, refused in 1949–50 to sign the loyalty oath though they were fired for it by the Board of Regents (most subsequently regaining their positions through court order).
 43. The professor was economist Stanley Sheinbaum as explained in his "University on the Make," *Ramparts Magazine*, 6, Apr. 1966.
 44. Also see Nussbaum, 9. Jaroslav Pelikan proposes that the university rests on "four legs:" the advancement of knowledge through research, transmission of knowledge through teaching, preservation of knowledge in libraries and scholarly collections, with universities as "the custodians of the common memory," and diffusion of knowledge through publishing. *The Idea of the University: A Reexamination*, New Haven: Yale University, 1992, 16–17, 112. But neither "advancement" nor "transmission" necessarily entail education in the sense of educating, cultivating, students' minds and potentials.
 45. D. Goines, *The Free Speech Movement, Coming of Age in the Sixties*, Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 1993, 361.
 46. Newell, 155, 158, citing John Corson, *The Governance of Colleges and Universities*, 1960.
 47. Newfield, Christopher, "Recapturing Academic Business," 48 *Social Text* 15, Summer, 1997, 59–61.
 48. Nietzsche, F., *The Use and Abuse of History*, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1949, 33.
 49. Kerr, 69, and 2, 5, 94, and 122.
 50. Kerr, 124. The counsel was not, however, of total promiscuity, the requisite service being due only "leadership groups in society"—i.e. agribusiness not farmworkers, the Department of Defense not the anti-war movement.
 51. Cary Nelson and Stephen Watt note fifteen overlapping usages of the phrase, "corporate university." *Academic Keywords, A Devil's Dictionary for Higher Education*, New York: Routledge, 1999, 89.
 52. David F. Noble reported in 1997 that UCLA, U.C. Berkeley, and the University of Colorado had all struck deals along these lines. Essay included in Noble, *Digital Diploma Mills, The Automation of American Higher Education*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2002.

53. Emil Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, New York: Glencoe Free Press, 1964, 372.
54. Eyal and Washburn, 42. The U.C. deal was between UCB's Plant Biology department and the multinational life-sciences company Novartis, and lapsed after five years. Press and Washburn, 39–42, G. Blumenstyk, "A Vilified Corporate Partnership Produces Little Change," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 22, 2001, pp. A24-A27. By 1988 Harvard already had sixty-nine such corporate relationships, Stanford forty, and MIT thirty-five. Aronowitz, 44.
55. "The views and needs of business are at the heart of nearly all of [these] long-range higher-education plans." Schmidt, P, "States Set a Course for Higher-Education Systems: Master Plans Aim to Insure Cohesive Response to . . . Changes," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 20, 2000. A7-A8, J. Basinger, "College Presidents Urged to Nurture Relationships with Businesses," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 22, 2001, A27.
56. R. Birnbaum, *Management Fads in Higher Education*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000, 27, 140, 154. Birnbaum adds the brilliant insight into this rationality: "Systems of this kind are considered rational as long as they are internally consistent, even if their elements are not consistent with external reality, and even if they do not lead to the desired outcomes." (emph. in original), 28.
57. Gary Rhoades, *Managed Professionals: Unionized Faculty and Restructuring Academic Labor*, New York: State University of New York Press, 1998.
58. Newfield, 44, 48.
59. The Association of Governing Boards "Statement on Institutional Governance," Nov. 8, 1998, and American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) statement from the same period reassert governing boards' plenary power over American universities and the idea that shared governance is a concession from them. Leatherman, C., "Shared Governance Under Siege: Is It Time to Revive or Get Rid of It?," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Dec. 20, 1998. On the attempt to degrade faculty status, Cary Nelson, "The War Against the Faculty," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 16, 1999.
60. Press and Washburn, 46.
61. Haskell notes the similarity between the epistemology of the university and Charles Peirce's "fallible realism", 68–70. And Nussbaum recognizes the "narrative imagination. . . in the liberal arts" to be part of a "curriculum for citizenship," 97 and Ch. 3 *passim*.
62. "Lawmakers increasingly view higher education as a private good that should be supported more by students and donors, rather than as a public good that deserves state support." Selingo, "Disappearing State of Higher Education," (n. 2 *supra*); and Selingo, "What Americans Think About Higher Education," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 3, 2003., A13. "The commoditization of the research enterprise has transformed research knowledge into intellectual capital and intellectual property." Birnbaum, 91.
63. Virginia Postrel, "When Knowledge was Spread Around, So Was Prosperity," (review of Joel Mokyr, *The Gifts of Athena*.) *New York Times*, Dec. 5, 2002, C2., Bollier provides an excellent analysis and overview of the commons and gift economy. Jonas Salk, Albert Sabine and Benjamin Franklin among others all refused to patent their inventions, the latter stating that he had "benefited from others' inventions and was glad to return the favor." "Hot Type" column noting

- Edmund Morgan's book on Benjamin Franklin, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Sept. 13, 2002, A18.
64. Barry Munitz, a protégé ironically of Kerr's, who rather than welcoming debate like Kerr urged "leverage and constraint mechanisms [on campuses] . . . to effect change and improve client orientation in response to consumer and patron expectations." "Managing Transformation in an Age of Social Triage," in *Re-inventing the University, Managing and Financing Institutions of Higher Education*, S. Johnson and L. Rush, eds., New York: Wiley and Sons, 1995, Ch. 3.
 65. Newman, ix. Goodman noted that, "the teacher teaches a child and not a subject matter", 177.
 66. Newman, xv-xvi, 134-138, 101, 113. Seneca wrote that, "the only kind of education that really deserves the name *liberalis* . . . is one that makes its pupils free, able to take charge of their own thought and to conduct a critical examination of their society's norms and traditions." Nussbaum, 30. Two U.C. faculty members noted at the time of the Free Speech Movement that the protestors were also defending "the principles of a liberal education which their elders had mislaid somewhere among the many other functions of the multiversity." John Schaar and Sheldon Wolin, *The Berkeley Rebellion and Beyond*, New York: Vintage Books, 1970, p. 22.
 67. The classic seven arts were grammar, logic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. Kimball, 2, 59, 175. Aquinas already felt these were insufficient. Kimball, 66. Colonial America also knew seven arts: classical languages, literature, rhetoric, geometry, mathematics, and natural and moral philosophy. Newell, 152.
 68. Newman, 102, 105-06. Pelikan, 149. The other phrases are from public testimony at the California Faculty Association's "Future of the University" hearings, San Jose and Los Angeles, California, Spring, 2000. Sara Hebel, "Poll Shows Value Americans Place on a College Education," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 12, 2000. According to a *Chronicle* survey, 85 percent of the public believes that preparing students to be responsible citizens is very important or important. Jeff Selingo, "What Americans Think . . .", May 2, 2003. Also see Sara Hebel, "Public Colleges Emphasize Research but the Public Wants a Focus on Students," *Ibid.* A14.
 69. "The history of liberal education is the story of a debate between orators and philosophers." Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers*, 2. Werner Jaeger developed this thesis earlier, *Paidea*, Vol. III. New York, Oxford University, 1944. The latter quotes are from Jaeger 64, 102. Isocrates resembled Thucydides in seeing politics as subject to the laws of tragedy. Jaeger, 101, 108, 129. Isocrates and his followers charged Plato with developing a "mental gymnastics" that could not "advise anything about what should be done at the present," and encouraging a "withdrawal from the active political life," that they saw alone as giving a person's life worth. Jaeger, 71, 148; Kimball, 34, 37, 238; Mirhady, D. and Y. L. Too, *Isocrates I*, Austin, TX: University of Texas, 2000. 15; "Against the Sophists," 63; and "Antidosis," 221, 213, 233, 253.
 70. Jaeger, 143-144. The word *logos* was critical for both branches of the tradition because it simultaneously denoted higher order and speech.
 71. Cicero, *De Oratore*, Kimball, 36. Seneca, Cicero's contemporary also excluded any study "which results in money-making" from liberal studies. Guterman, N., ed., *The Anchor Book of Latin Quotations*, New York: Anchor Doubleday, 1966, 251.

72. Jaeger, 46–47. See also Murhady and Too, 204. Kimball also saw Isocrates as “the father of liberal education” and humanistic culture. On the humanists’ communal idea of freedom, Kimball, 115, 122.
73. The university should be “our delivery not only from the undue influence of other times, but from the undue influence of our own” Lord Acton, in Pelikan, 131. See also Nussbaum, 100.
74. Kimball, 214.
75. Newman, 145.
76. Jaspers, K., *The Idea of the University*, Boston, Beacon Hill Press, 1959, 62.
77. Menand, L., “Re-imagining Liberal Education,” in Robert Orrill, ed., *Education and Democracy: Re-Imagining Liberal Learning in America*, New York: The College Board, 1997, 2.
78. Mills, *Power Elite*, 318.
79. Newman, 145, 147–48.
80. Rabban, D., “Academic Freedom: Individual or Institutional?” *Academe*, Nov.–Dec. 2001, 16–20.
81. AAUP, 1915 “Declaration.”
82. Aronowitz, 65. And he notes accordingly, “The decline of academic life represents, in part, the degree to which the faculty has surrendered autonomy.” 164. See also Haskell, 46, 54.
83. These attempted defenses began as early as the 1830s (e.g., Hofstadter and Metzger, 268). On academic freedom as distinguished from First Amendment rights, see Haskell, Hofstadter and Metzger, and Donna R. Euben, “Academic Freedom of Individual Professors and Higher Education Institutions, AAUP, Mar., 2002.
84. Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, trans. Mary J. Gregor, New York: Abaris Books, 1979 (orig., 1798), 27–29. Newman, 177.
85. Alexander Astin writes that “we are inclined to forget that the autonomy that we seek . . . may be the most powerful tool we have for reshaping liberal education in the interests of promoting democracy and citizenship.” “Liberal Education and Democracy: The Case for Pragmatism,” in Orrill, 222. Pelikan argues that even Cardinal Newman was not opposed to goals like these, believing rather that narrow “utilitarianism is a threat to utility,” —i.e., the university’s larger contributions. Pelikan, *The Idea of the University: A Reexamination* 34, and Chs. 4, 8.
86. Oblinger and Verville, 18, 82.
87. Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University*, 4th ed., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 1995, 182, 192–193.
88. Giroux, 441.
89. P. Gay, *Schnitzler’s Century, The Making of the Middle-Class Culture, 1815–1914*, New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 2002, 21–22.
90. Peirce also saw the search for truth as being undertaken by communities of inquiry rather than by isolated individuals, and truths therefore established by collective reason and inter-subjective standards of proof. Peirce, C.S., “How to Make Our Ideas Clear,” in P. Weiner, *Values in a Universe of Chance*, Garden City: Doubleday Anchor, 1958, 133; Lustig, 161, 167, 263. Barber writes similarly that “What distinguishes truth . . . is not conformity to society’s historical traditions or the standards of independent reason or the dictates of some learned canon, but conformity to communicative processes . . . that occur only in free communities. . . .” 223.

91. The Renaissance humanists' appeal to Greek and Roman tradition, the roots of the recent idea of "neutrality," was a straightforward part of their larger politics. Nussbaum, 103.
92. Toni Morrison, "How Can Values Be Taught in This University," *Michigan Quarterly Review*, Spring, 2001, 278.
93. Roger W. Bowen, "The New Battle Between Political and Academic Cultures," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 22, 2001, B14.
94. Mills, *Sociological Imagination*, 187.
95. Testimony at "Future of the University" hearing, California Faculty Association, California State University Sacramento, Nov. 16, 2000.
96. Barber, 14. A quarter of the nation's faculty had joined unions by late 2001, and some of the unions were attempting to become, more than wages-and-hours organizations, "agents of a new educational imagination." Aronowitz, 101. Academic citizenship is a theme of Richard Moser's, AAUP National Field Representative. Personal correspondence.
97. Wells, H.G., *The Outline of History*, 1920, 706–707.

Copyright of Review of Education, Pedagogy & Cultural Studies is the property of Taylor & Francis Ltd and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.