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THE SHAPING OF AN EDUCATED HEART

Address

by

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Commencement Exercises

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single
L1071
BARKIN

that macmillan book

Dr. Lewis Thomas -- author of Lives of a Cell, and
~~a trustee of the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer~~
~~Center~~ -- said recently ~~at a meeting of the American~~
~~Association for the Advancement of Science~~ that these
are not the best of times for the human mind.

All sorts of things seem to be
turning out wrong, and the
century seems to be slipping
through our fingers here at
the end, with almost all
promises unfilled.

I cannot begin to guess at all he said
the causes of our cultural
sadness, not even the most
important ones, but I can
think of one thing that is
wrong with us and eats away
at us: we do not know enough
about ourselves.

We are ignorant about how we
work, about where we fit in,
and most of all about the
enormous, imponderable system
of life in which we are embedded
as working parts... It is a new
experience for all of us. It's
unfamiliar ground.

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Just think, two centuries ago
we could explain everything
about everything, out of pure
reason, and now most of that
elaborate and harmonious
structure has come apart before
our eyes.

We are dumb.

While Dr. Thomas' ~~comment~~ may overstate the case a
bit, I am convinced his conclusions cannot be ignored.

The simple truth is that with all of our education,
we are not fully satisfied. With all of our erudition

--there still remains in the pit
of our stomach a kind of prickly
ball that tells us something is
not right.

WELL - WHAT'S GONE WRONG? WHAT'S THE MISSING LINK IN EDUCATION?

~~We all know if we are fully honest that Josiah~~
~~Reveree was right when he observed that~~
MANY YEARS AGO JOSIAH ROYCE OBSERVED THAT

we have become
more knowing
more clever
and more skeptical
but seemingly--
we do not become
more profound or
more reverent.

THAT STATEMENT IS THE NUB OF EVERYTHING I WANT TO
SAY TODAY -
I HAD TO BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE NOT TRULY EDUCATED
UNTIL YOU HAVE BECOME
MORE PROFOUND & MORE REVERENT

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AND TO ACHIEVE THIS END

~~I BELIEVE~~

WE FIRST MUST MORE FULLY UNDERSTAND

THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF LIFE

OF THE SOCIETYSHIP EARTH

SEVERAL YEARS AGO -

STAGGERING THROUGH MY
3rd CLASS MAIL

STANFORD DAILY -

Required Course

WESTERN CIV - SAME VALUE

get a
complete
text on
this for
math
speech

TRYING TO IMPOSE
A UNIFORM STANDARD
ON NON UNIFORM PEOPLE

TRAGEDY - FAILED TO UNDERSTAND THE CONNECTEDNESS
OF LIFE

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Some years ago, William Arrowsmith declared that the modern university is "unconsciously helping to create a new and special modern chaos in which the environment as a whole is nobody's business and bears nobody's design--a conglomerate whose total disorder is exposed by the ruthless unrelatedness of the parts."

THE HARD FACT IS THAT ON MOST CAMPUSES
~~There is some truth to this charge.~~ WE ARE FREQUENTLY
 o For, with all of our academic LAUGHT UP
 subtleties and our countless IN THE THICK
 categories of knowledge, we OF THIN THINGS

WE frequently study all questions
 except those that matter
 most.

o And while we ~~can~~ transmit
 "fragments of information,"
 we frequently ignore another
~~obligation~~ ^{fail} the need to search
 out and highlight the
 "interlocking" threads of human
 knowledge.

^{MOST}
~~The fact is that~~ students come to college at a time
 in their lives when the biggest questions/press in ~~on~~
~~them~~, and yet rarely in the academic programs are these
 transcendent issues met head on.

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And this leads, for some at least, to acute frustration and disappointment.

- o Somerset Maugham in the "Writer's Notebook" writes poignantly of the mountaineer who struggled to reach the top of the highest peak only to discover that instead of seeing the sunrise he found only fog, at which point the writer suggests "he wandered down again."

Many students come to college seeking a broader vision, but finding only fog.

o o o

It was Tolstoy who, as a young man, identified the issues that seemed relentlessly to press in, and the list is relevant yet today. Tolstoy troubled himself with such questions as

- o "Why live at all?"
- o "What is the cause of my existence and of everyone else's?"

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- o "What is the meaning of the cleavage into good and evil which I feel within myself, and why does this cleavage exist?"
- o "What should be the plan of my life?"
- o "What is death; how can I transcend it?"

Where in the college programs can such universal questions be ~~asked~~ ^{expressed}? How can students develop the art of wise decision making which, as Walter Lippmann says, "cuts across all specialities."

o o o

This sort of wisdom transcends the disciplines, for again in Lippmann's words,

- o "it can be possessed by anyone who has an imaginative feeling for what really matters to human beings,
- o whether they travel in jet planes or walk on foot,
- o whether they are craftsmen in little workshops or hired hands in an automatic factory run by a computer."

*3 mile island
how proud
we are*

*AT A TIME OF INCREASED URGENCY TO UNDERSTAND
OURSELVES WE STILL WEAR BLINDERS -
FAILING TO SEE OUR INTER CONNECTEDNESS
NOT ONLY IN A SPIRITUAL SENSE -
BUT IN A PHYSICAL SENSE AS WELL*

*CHILDREN'S
TELEVISION
WORKSHOP*

*more
light*

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It we are to be
understand & prevent

The point is clear enough. We must, ~~I repeat, find~~
~~ways which will enable us to see the wholeness in life.~~

The learning of our time must engender respect, not just for the physical ecology of this planet, but for the delicate balance of our social ecology as well

And
 o Unity not the fragmentation of knowledge, must be central to our search.

II

Second, TRUE EDUCATION ALSO MEANS THAT
~~Second, a college education must be a truly~~
~~humanizing experience, a process that stresses the~~
WE DEVELOP THE
~~dignity of life and deepens the conviction) that~~
 people are important.

- o This statement is so simple, it borders on the sentimental.
- o Yet in our busy world of increased emphasis on technology, of pressures and problems on every side of almost hourly crises, one of our most difficult tasks still remains--that of dealing humanely with one another.

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o o o

Surrounded, sometimes even mastered, by our inventions, it becomes all too easy to put people into categories. We tend to speak of "engineers," "professors," "bus drivers," the "middle-class," the "silent majority," and on and on we go.

And as we pigeonhole, we distort, losing sight of the fact that we are talking about people--

- o individuals who laugh, who love,
who have unique talents and deep aspirations,
- o who grow old and lonely,
- o who have fears and doubts in the dark of night.

o o o

Even on campus we "classify" ourselves and colleagues, and here too we become "economists and deans and mathematicians and radicals and administrators and chancellors and students and the office staff."

We live out Eleanor Rigby--popularized in the Beatles' tune.

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o Eleanor, as you'll recall,
waited at the window
"wearing the mask she keeps
in a jar by the door."

o We, too, wear our masks, acting
out our roles as two-dimensional
people, wearing a "face" we keep
in a jar by the door.

o o o

The point is this. ~~If we are truly concerned about~~
our Earth home. ~~WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT PEOPLE~~

~~o we must demonstrate that we are~~ ARE AT THE
~~depending upon one another,~~ CENTER OF IT
ALL
PEOPLE WHO ARE struggling together, living and
dying on a single globe,
o ~~and we must reach out to one~~ COMPASSION NOT DESTRUCTION
another to support our common MUST BECOME
cause. A WAY OF LIFE

For to talk of saving our Earth while we destroy
ourselves is sad mockery indeed. Make no mistake: if
we dehumanize ourselves in the process, we spiritually
denude our earth.

RAISIN IN THE SUN -
DON'T LOVE HIM - TAUGHT YOU
ALWAY NOTHING LEFT TO LOVE
SOMETHING LEFT TO LOVE

The sickness of our environment is, at least in part, a mirror of the sickness in ourselves--a reflection of the pervasive notion that life is cheap.

- o Indeed it is here--at this very point--that our rebirth must begin.
- o Respect for life--all of life--must be a bedrock principle if we are to rebuild the physical and social and spiritual environment in which we

~~live.~~

That great American philosopher Yogi Berra said--

Do a lot of observing by just watching

Do a (lot of living)-- by loving our earth and our fellow men.

~~This then is the objective to which liberal learning must be dedicated.~~

III

I now turn to my third suggestion, one that follows logically from the last. ~~Somehow we must begin to weave~~ **PEOPLE WHO ARE PROFOUNDLY AND REVERENT ALSO - HAVE DEVELOPED** ~~into the fabric of education~~ the capacity to make judgments, to form convictions, and to act boldly upon ^{the} values ~~involved~~.

- o It is not enough merely to see the world wholly and sensitively--
- o It is not enough simply to respect our fellow man.

**WE ALSO MUST HAVE DEEP CONVICTIONS
TO CONSISTENTLY GUIDE OUR LIVES -**

~~RAM~~

o Rather we must continue to develop and refine the capacity to achieve "what is good and what is best" -- to confront seriously the problem of "values."

o o o

Whenever a discussion turns to values, a strange embarrassment seems to overtake us all.

o Somehow we have deluded ourselves into believing that we can be responsible people without ever taking sides, without expressing firm convictions about fundamental issues.

~~On our campuses we frequently seem ready and willing to talk about any and all subjects, except those that matter most.~~

In his penetrating book, Faith and Learning, Alexander Miller commented rightly on this curious timidity when he wrote:

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"A decent tentativeness is a wholesome expression of scholarly humility.

We seem to have a sort of dogmatic tentativeness which suggests that (in matters of moral judgment, at least) it is intellectually indecent to make up your minds."

BUT I BELIEVE WE ARE BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND THAT EDUCATION

~~It is true--I suspect--that on our own campuses we are too often caught up in the thick of thin things, but there is a hopeful side to all of this.~~

- o We now realize that, as George Steiner has reminded us, a man who is intellectually advanced can at the same time be morally bankrupt.

- o We now know that such a man can

- (1) listen to Bach and Schubert at sundown, he can read Goethe in the evening, and the next day go
- (2) to his daily work at the concentration camp to gas his fellowmen.

DIURNAL
FARM
VALVES
WILL
NOT DO
THE JOB.

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o "What grows up inside literate civilization," Steiner asks, "that seems to prepare it for the release of barbarism?"

Steiner's comment not only highlights our dilemma but also dramatizes the disillusionment that has taken root in our midst.

We are beginning to understand that education does not inevitably humanize.

We are losing faith in the childish notion that all education, regardless of its quality or thrust or purpose, will lead to virtue.

~~THE SIMPLE TRUTH IS THIS:~~

~~Increasingly then, it becomes clear that if we in education/are to exercise a moral force in society,~~
then ~~we must insist~~ that the ~~process~~ of education ^{must} take place in a moral context.

This is not to suggest a "program of indoctrination" that suffocates the spirit; neither does it mean theory courses that become only speculative and remote.

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- o What is called for is a framework of inquiry in which the process of wrestling with big issues and complex values is made fully legitimate--
- o a place where the climate does not push for conclusions, but rather makes honorable the quest.

o o o

When all is said and done, we must call for colleges committed to the development within each student of the capacity to judge rightly in matters of life and conduct

THIS COMMITMENT IS NOT MERELY SENTIMENT

~~o In no way do these imperatives~~

IT DOES NOT

replace the need for rigorous study in the disciplines,

~~o but neither must this need~~

RAATHER IT DOES RECOGNIZE THAT EDUCATION

~~destroy the human yearning for~~

AT NO BEST MUST

~~an education that leads to a~~

reverence for life and a high

regard for the dignity of man.

IV

this lead me to say

And ~~now~~ a word about this ~~great~~ Institution ~~before~~

~~I close~~

*A COLLEGE IS TO BE JUDGED
NOT BY THE GREATNESS of its campus w
its football team
BUT BY THE GREATNESS of its vision*

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o ~~Beloit College is uniquely qualified~~
to help lead the way to the reassembling
of our most basic values.

o This college has for years explored the
highest reaches of the human mind
without forgetting that intertwined
with intellect there is a body, a heart,
a soul.

WILMINGTON

~~Beloit~~ has long sought to give us the happiest of
fusions--the "educated heart."

This easy label, the educated heart, means to me--a
reverence for natural and human life and a respect for
excellence.

- o The educated heart means the
development of an appreciation
of beauty,
- o a tolerance of others, a reaching
for mastery without arrogance,
- o a courtesy toward opposing view,
- o a dedication to fairness and social
justice,

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- o an adherence to integrity and precision
in thought and speech,
- o an openness to change,
- o and a love for graceful expression and
audacious intellect.

These may be lofty ideals but they are still, I am convinced, within man's grasp.

o o o

And for those of you graduating here today--those who have had the privilege of studying at ^{fine college} ~~this distinguished institution~~--I urgently hope that you will be pioneers in seeing to it that our civilization never becomes a society of big machines run by little men.

And if you feel a bit uneasy today--about your faith, your Nation, or who you really are--know that you do not stand alone. But know also that for every doubt there is an affirmation that can be made.

o o o

For the ironies of Charles Dickens' time in the 19th century are with us even now.

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- o In that earlier day, Dickens said,
 "it was the worst of times, the
 best of times, the spring of hope,
 the winter of despair."

AND ITS UP TO YOU TO MAKE EACH DAY A TIME OF
 HOPE

I'm sure you know that the best things about any
 college are not what is said but rather what is lived
 out by its graduates.

- ~~CALLIVE~~
 o Your assignment from this moment
 on is to live the ~~Beloit~~ ^{Williamson} ideal
 which calls for a life of
 intellect, a life of integrity,
 and a life of loving service to
 your fellow man and to your
 God.

I wish you well.

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