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*Some - could I have your - edited. Attention this plan - Mark*

ADDRESS BY DR. ERNEST L. BOYER

PRESIDENT'S SYMPOSIUM  
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
MARCH 4, 1980

I'm delighted to participate in this remarkable event at Oklahoma State University, <sup>and</sup> I commend the President for having substituted his own inaugural for what in fact is an ongoing intellectual dialogue within the community of this distinguished institution. (1)

I also am delighted to be in Oklahoma because it is so far from Washington. I discovered during my tenure as a bureaucrat that my mental health correlated directly to <sup>my</sup> the distance from the nation's capital, and that correlation still persists. I <sup>am</sup> was often asked what I <sup>had</sup> learned during my <sup>service</sup> tenure in the United States Office of Education and without hesitation I can say I learned <sup>best</sup> increasingly the lesson of humility.

~~The condition swept over me~~ <sup>after</sup> one day when I had been in the office for several months, I thought I had clearly won the hearts and minds of my fellow bureaucrats. <sup>of</sup> they stopped calling me Frank Koepfel, <sup>or by the names of departed</sup> and other long-deceased Commissioners of Education. They seemed to nod and smile as I walked in the building and acknowledged me with warmth. <sup>But</sup> All of that came crashing down one day when I went into the men's room and <sup>I</sup> was about ready to activate one of those contraptions on the wall that creates the illusion of drying your hands with a burst of hot air, <sup>and</sup> just as I was ready to <sup>start</sup> move the machine I saw ~~that there was~~ some graffiti on the wall. One of my fellow employees had scrawled with a felt pen,

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the following ~~message~~: Press here for a message from the Commissioner.

~~It sort of took me back to my days on the college campus. In fact, after your crack last night about my taking off my shoes during dinner, Mr. President, the same sort of impression went through my mind last night.~~

I also was often reminded in Washington of Robert Benchley, who ~~as you know~~ <sup>is</sup> one of America's great humorists, ~~but that~~ <sup>spent</sup> ~~was preceded by a rather uneventful and~~ <sup>before he became</sup> somewhat disastrous term at Harvard College. Robert Benchley, <sup>he</sup> even in those days, was more interested in humor than in academic pursuits, and one day he confronted that priority head on ~~when he was~~ <sup>in</sup> a final exam in Political Science. The professor asked the class just one question, which he wrote on the board. Each member was to discuss conflict between the United States and Great Britain over offshore fishing rights, ~~and it was a two-part question - discuss it~~ first, from the British point of view, and ~~then~~ <sup>then</sup> second, from the point of view of the United States. Well, Benchley hadn't cracked a book, ~~and~~ he had rarely come to class, <sup>in his seat and tugged</sup> he twisted with his pencil, ~~and~~ finally, a great wave of inspiration hit him, ~~and he~~ <sup>put</sup> ~~took~~ pencil to paper and wrote the following reply: ~~He said,~~ "I have no understanding regarding the conflict over offshore fishing rights from the British point of view. I know even less about this conflict from the view point of the United States. Therefore, I should like to discuss the problem from the view point of the fish." Very often, that was precisely my perception of the nation's capital.

I also must comment on my feelings about this institution, ~~having been here~~ now ~~for less than 24 hours.~~ ~~I hope you don't~~ <sup>is not just</sup> find it a matter of mere sentiment when I say I have found it

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~~a~~ warm and cordial ~~place~~, and I find that enormously reassuring.

The truth is, these days, <sup>that</sup> our institutions have fallen ~~in such~~ <sup>into</sup> low repute. We have become so untrusting of our institutions and even of each other, that to encounter a place where there is still congeniality and a sense of caring strikes me as a precious treasure ~~that should~~ <sup>to</sup> be nurtured, ~~and~~ I have sensed it <sup>here,</sup> and I have thoroughly enjoyed my brief tenure on your campus.

Ernie:  
you may want to start here

I have been asked, ~~as the moderator has well indicated,~~ to talk about quality in higher education, and, in response, I should like to focus on just one ~~so-called essential~~ <sup>of quality that</sup> component, <sup>which</sup> I believe will be enormously important during <sup>what</sup> ~~the decade that~~ Mrs. Thatcher called the dangerous decade of the 1980s.

Specifically, I'd like to look at that ~~so-called~~ and sometimes well-worn conflict between liberal and career education, a conflict which, I believe, <sup>if left unresolved</sup> will sap the vitality of <sup>higher education</sup> ~~the institution~~ at its very core.

~~Now~~ there has been, in recent years, a dramatic shift in the majors selected by our students, and I <sup>am</sup> convinced for a whole variety of reasons <sup>that</sup> this pattern will persist. During the past six months I have been on campuses from coast to coast, and ~~the story is pretty much the same.~~ In the quiet of the cocktail hour, I have been told both by College Presidents and by Deans that, last spring, two-thirds of the graduates <sup>from their</sup> ~~at that~~ institution were in majors that were, in some respects, careers <sup>programs</sup> -- that is, Business, Accounting, Journalism, Health Professions and the like, <sup>and</sup> one-third of the students graduated in disciplines that might be characterized as more traditionally liberal arts. As a matter of fact, three nights ago, I sat at dinner with the

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Dean of a small and rather distinguished liberal arts institution, and I asked him what was the primary major on his campus this year, ~~and~~ he said, "Business is so out in front I can't even tell you what is number two." Now that <sup>was at</sup> ~~from~~ an institution that, if one were to read the college catalog, would seem preciously and purely liberal arts.

~~Now~~ this shift would not be so dramatic in and of itself if it were not also true that at most of the institutions <sup>I have</sup> ~~there~~ described, the faculty distribution of resources was in fact just reversed. One-third of the faculty and resources available, roughly speaking, were in career-related fields and two-thirds were in the arts and sciences. ~~I have to say that~~ in my opinion, this has been one of the best kept secrets in higher education. We very carefully have kept it concealed from legislative committees and sometimes on campus <sup>we have</sup> ~~we've~~ kept it concealed from our own trustees, and it breaks out only occasionally during faculty debates.

~~But~~ I ~~happened~~ believe ~~that~~ the time has come to recognize this mismatch between the distribution of our resources and the preferences of our students and ~~I believe it is time~~ to ask some very central questions. What are, in fact, the purposes of liberal education if we can still define them? Just what is the meaning of vocation, as it has been serendipitously reshaped? And is it possible for those of us on campus to discover ways for these two purposes to be more fully joined? It is to these questions that I should <sup>respond</sup> ~~comment~~ in the context of the quality of higher education.

For years, at many higher education institutions, we have suggested to our students that education and work were in fact two very different worlds, <sup>we have</sup> ~~and we've~~ conveyed the feeling to our

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students that it ~~was~~ <sup>an</sup> ~~now~~ <sup>that</sup> demeaning ~~is~~ education led directly to a job. It was ~~quite~~ <sup>we have</sup> right, ~~we~~ <sup>we</sup> said to students, ~~to~~ they would launder ~~themselves~~ first in graduate school study and then become employed, ~~by~~ <sup>direct</sup> employment, or at least ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> preoccupation with ~~employment~~, was a little bit off limits at most arts and science ~~and~~ undergraduate institutions, ~~and~~ very often, college ~~teachers~~ and professionals have strongly imposed their ideas ~~on~~ <sup>about</sup> students ~~as to~~ what was worthy and what was unworthy ~~work~~.

Have you ever ~~heard~~ ~~of~~ ~~dichotomies~~ ~~that~~ ~~suggest~~ that it is all right to be a ~~teacher~~, but <sup>that it is</sup> ~~it is~~ less all right to be a nurse? <sup>That it is</sup> ~~It is~~ all right ~~to~~ be an engineer, but to be a computer programmer is less ~~right~~. <sup>not</sup> To prepare to teach in college is just fine but to want to ~~teach~~ in elementary school, which, frankly, I believe is a much ~~more~~ job, is less acceptable. To read what is written in ~~the~~ ~~press~~ is just great <sup>for</sup> ~~as~~ a literature major perhaps, but to write ~~in~~ the present it not quite legitimate in journalism in some ~~of~~ ~~the~~ and science colleges.

~~Now it seems~~ ~~the~~ time has come to stop this process of making arbitrary ~~vocational~~ decisions for our students. ~~It is~~ <sup>is</sup> time to recognize ~~that~~ ~~we~~ for all of us is absolutely crucial. <sup>is</sup> It's time to understand ~~that~~ we define our values, all of us, in part through the ~~vocations~~ we select; ~~and~~ <sup>also</sup> we give precise definition and vivid meaning to ~~our~~ ~~lives~~ by <sup>our</sup> ~~the~~ ~~vocations~~ ~~that~~ ~~we~~ ~~have~~.

I believe it ~~is~~ ~~time~~ to recognize that formal education has always been a unique ~~form~~ of inspiration and vocation. After all, our very first ~~institutions~~—certainly Harvard College—were founded to prepare young men ~~for~~ ~~instance~~ for vocations, and this

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purpose, I think, has been linked to a long tradition.

While <sup>I was</sup> on sabbatical several years ago, I spent time at Cambridge University and during that experience I engrossed myself in the novel written by C. P. Snow called "The Masters" and as you may recall, that's kind of a spine-chilling description of ~~the~~ faculty politics at Cambridge when ~~they were selecting a~~ <sup>was being selected</sup> Master for one of the Cambridge colleges. If you can believe that story, it makes <sup>the</sup> faculty politics on most of our institutions seem ~~quite~~ like child's play.

But as an epilogue, Snow described ~~at the very end~~ how Cambridge first began, ~~he described~~ how, in the 12th century, there was a ~~religious~~ collection of clerics along the Cam River, a little bit of an insultingly small stream through Central England, ~~and then~~ slowly but surely ~~some~~ <sup>began to</sup> young men gathered on the fringes of this monastic colony, ~~and they spent time~~ living <sup>ed</sup> in huts, ~~and~~ sleeping <sup>ed</sup> on straw, and ~~grabbing~~ <sup>ed</sup> for food wherever it could be found. They in short, lived in desperate, desperate poverty, ~~but~~ bear in mind there was no television, there was no radio, there were no books or manuscripts. The only sources of learning were those self-defined oracles who presumably knew more than the other folks.

~~And then~~ Snow ends by asking, "Why did they do it, why did these young men live in such abject poverty?" And he concluded with <sup>a</sup> ~~the~~ blockbusting, simple, declarative sentence, "They wanted jobs." They wanted jobs in the ministry; they wanted jobs in the government; they wanted jobs to survive. Well, <sup>one</sup> ~~that~~ evening, in a much too playful mood during sherry, I said to one of the more distinguished Professors at <sup>Cambridge</sup> ~~the institution~~, "I was just reading

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C. P. Snow this afternoon and he said that Cambridge began as a vocational institution," ~~and the~~ <sup>my</sup> comment was less than enthusiastically received.

On the other hand, doesn't ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> candor require that we acknowledge, first, that work is the means by which our intelligence and our emotion and our compassion and the essence of our being is translated vividly and externally in <sup>to</sup> life and therefore, in some respects, <sup>choosing a career</sup> ~~it~~ is the most value-laden decision that we ever make? And doesn't ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> candor also require that we acknowledge that the business of education is centrally related to ~~the~~ preparing of us for worthy work? And ~~don't~~ <sup>do</sup> we ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> also have to acknowledge that ~~there is~~ in fact, an unhappy dichotomy that we carry around in our heads <sup>between education for learning and education for work that</sup> which is ~~in fact~~ belied every day by the lives we live? ~~For~~ <sup>insist upon</sup> those of us who ~~try to make~~ these false distinctions ~~also~~ work very very hard to get our jobs, ~~and~~ to secure our ~~own~~ tenure, and to be recognized with some distinction in the ~~world~~ <sup>our</sup> we call vocation.

There is, however, ~~the~~ <sup>an</sup> other side to this, ~~and I wish now to~~ ~~ask the second question.~~ Where in all of this do we confront the ~~matter of~~ liberal education? <sup>Although</sup> While everyone wants a job, I think those of us in education, at least <sup>at</sup> this kind of institution, believe that life requires something more. And if we ~~do~~ want quality, we must find ways to relate both general education and the liberal arts majors most <sup>re</sup> directly to the legitimate vocational interests of our students. ~~I believe, frankly,~~ to achieve this end we should spend less time arguing over departmental structures and over course content and we ~~should spend~~ more time attempting to clarify the attitudes and the understandings <sup>that</sup> ~~which~~ a liberal education traditionally has sought to represent.

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~~Here may I add one other acknowledgement that we should  
confront. I say it cautiously, but I think candor requires it.~~

Q We should also acknowledge that many of our so-called arts and  
science programs have themselves become so professional that they  
no longer serve adequately the ends of liberal education. To  
some extent, the students' choice <sup>of</sup> ~~toward~~ careerism and away from  
the ~~so-called~~ liberal arts is precisely rooted in their sense that  
<sup>liberal learning</sup> ~~this~~ is not confronting the questions that cause them greatest  
anxiousness.

Many years ago, Josiah Royce, the American philosopher,  
observed that we have become in our culture more knowing, ~~and~~  
more clever, and more skeptical, but seemingly, he said, we do not  
become more profound or more (an old-fashioned word) reverent.

~~Well, it seems to me that~~ that statement goes to the heart of  
everything I wish to say today. In my view, liberal education  
is not a convenient way to slice up traditional academic fields.  
Nor is it a way to keep obsolete faculty on the job. Rather,  
liberal learning, which goes beyond vocation, reflects those  
themes of life <sup>that</sup> which are universal and enduring, and <sup>that</sup> which will, if  
properly conveyed, help all students gain some perspective and,  
perhaps, give greater meaning to their work.

~~Now~~ my concern about ~~this thing called~~ the breadth of college  
education was deepened several years ago when, as a last resort to  
avoid more pressing problems, I turned to a stack of mail on my  
desk called the third-class throw-away, discard pile. On the very  
top of that, <sup>pile</sup> the morning I looked that direction, there was the  
Stanford University student newspaper. ~~I was struck because~~ the  
headlines said boldly, "Stanford to Introduce a Required Course",

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or words to that effect. I read on to discover that during the late 1960s, ~~now without precedent~~, Stanford had abolished all required courses, but in a mood of belated regret, a committee had been formed and, after several years in inquiry, was now recommending to faculty that all students at that institution take at least one required course, ~~and~~ three options were provided. Again, I thought, in a stroke of bold imagination, one of those was a course in Western Civilization.

But that was not the end of my morning reverie. I also observed that on the front page <sup>of the Stanford Daily</sup> there was a student editorial, quite appropriately bordered in black. ~~The student thundered against this invasion of their autonomy.~~ The editorial said, and now I quote, "This new faculty report proposes to remove from students the right to choose for themselves." "This is not to deny that courses" --he says nothing about institutional rights, "this is not to deny that courses in Western Civilization are valuable"-- a remarkable concession, I thought--"but to require students to take a course carries a strong illiberal connotation." ~~And then~~ the punch line came at the very end, [the benediction, and I almost saw the smugness as he wrote it. "This requirement imposes a uniform standard on non-uniform people."

~~Well,~~ I must tell you that I was frankly startled by that statement. To require a student to do something is illiberal. It struck me as a staggering comment on our time that this student, after what must have been <sup>15</sup> ~~fifteen~~ or <sup>16</sup> ~~sixteen~~ years of formal education, had learned nothing about the relationship with others; <sup>had</sup> rejected, apparently, the idea of the interdependent nature of our planet earth; <sup>had</sup> and failed to understand that the common search for a common heritage is not to be confused with something he ~~rather~~

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~~slogannarily~~, called uniformity.

The harsh fact is that in education, ~~I believe~~ we are frequently caught up in the thick of thin things. We expect students to follow their own interests, but institutionally we have no transcendent purposes of our own. While we transmit fragments of information, we fail to search out and highlight the interlocking threads of human knowledge.

Great Phrase!

Now I happen to believe ~~that~~ students come to college with some fundamental questions, and yet rarely in the typical course of study are ~~these transcendent issues~~ <sup>their questions</sup> met head on. Somerset Maugham in the "Writer's Notebook," you may recall, writes poignantly about the pioneer who lived at the foot of the mountain for many years, and his greatest life ambition was to reach the top. And so, one day, after enormous effort and ~~the~~ expenditure of energy, he ~~did~~ struggle <sup>d until</sup> and he reached the peak. Then, in <sup>the</sup> a kind of curious irony, ~~and~~ <sup>denial the pioneers</sup> Maugham can ~~do it~~, he ~~arrived there only to~~ discover <sup>at</sup> that instead of seeing the sun rise, he found only fog. ~~And then~~ <sup>could</sup> the poignant punch line: "whereupon he wandered down again."

Well, I raise quite honestly the question <sup>of</sup> whether we have found ways for education to be as enlightening and as broadening and as integrating as ~~in fact~~ it ought to be. ~~It was~~ Tolstoy ~~who~~ as a young man, troubled himself with such questions as, why live at all? What is the cause of my existence and everyone else's? Why should the plan of my life be what it is? And what is death and how do I transcend it?

Now, I'm ~~embarrassed~~ almost embarrassed ~~to~~ raise these questions that border on the theological in <sup>an academic</sup> a setting ~~of the~~ ~~academics~~. These are heavy questions. Yet, in a more modest

tone I ask, how can students develop the art of wise decision making, which, as Walter Lippman suggests, cuts across all the specialties?

~~Well~~, my point is this: If we are to be more profound and more reverent, intellectually perhaps, to use Royce's old-fashioned term, we must see the wholeness of life. Unity, not the fragmentation of knowledge, should be central to our search. ~~I believe to the point of vocation and liberal learning,~~ I suspect, that if <sup>the</sup> ~~this~~ relationship <sup>between</sup> is not established at least embryonically, then regardless of the <sup>in</sup> ~~job~~ <sup>s</sup>, our students will live out their lives in quiet desperation.

Still probing for the essence, not the structure, of liberal education, I have another suggestion ~~to propose~~. I believe that to be effective workers, our students also must understand that people are important, ~~and~~ they must develop a profound respect for the diversity of talents and traditions in our midst. Now, ~~this~~ <sup>the</sup> statement that people are important is so simple it almost borders on the sentimental. Yet, in our busy world of increased emphasis on technology, the pressures and problems on every side of almost hourly crises, one of our most difficult tasks still remains ~~that~~ of dealing humanely with each other.

Surrounded, sometimes even mastered, by our inventions, it becomes all too easy <sup>for them</sup> in our work to put people into categories. We speak of engineers, of professors, of bus drivers, ~~of chancellors~~, of the middle class, of the silent majority, ~~and even~~ on campus we classify our colleagues as economists and deans and mathematicians and radicals and administrators and chancellors and ~~then~~ that nameless and faceless, often beleaguered, group we call the office staff.

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Several years ago my children, when ~~they~~ were still at home, ~~they~~ <sup>ed</sup> were playing endlessly a record that was nothing but white noise to me, at a very loud decibel level, ~~and~~ I asked if they would at least contribute to civility and turn the volume down during dinner hour, <sup>but</sup> My daughter said, well, it's something you'd like, Dad. <sup>k</sup> And ~~I said I can't imagine it, but she did get the jacket of the record~~ and as it turns out, it was a Beatles record, Eleanor Rigby. I had never heard of Eleanor Rigby, but as I read the lyrics I must say I was impressed, <sup>because</sup> it told of a woman who was waiting at the window wearing the mask she keeps in a jar by the door. I thought, well, it's true. We wear our masks; we act out our two-dimensional roles; we wear our faces in our offices as we take them in the morning from the jar by the door.

But my problem is this: As we find it convenient to pigeon-hole each other, we in fact distort, ~~and~~ we lose sight of the fact <sup>that</sup> we're talking about fellow human beings who are capable of laughing and loving, <sup>and</sup> who have unique talents and aspirations, who grow old and lonely, and who have fears in the dark of night.

Now, you may ask what ~~does~~ <sup>is</sup> all of this have to do with the issue of vocation, and, I submit, very much indeed. Just two weeks ago, I met with the top executives of one of the nation's largest corporations, ~~and~~ during that entire session I was struck by the fact that these business leaders spent most of their time talking not about profits, <sup>and</sup> not about technology, <sup>and</sup> not about inflation. They spent most of the time talking about people, and how they could somehow get the <sup>ir</sup> organization to connect on a very human scale.

To be vocationally prepared, it seems to me, is to be more understanding of the nature of other individuals. This has to do, a lot, with liberal education. That great American philosopher,

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Yogi Berra, said on one occasion that you can do a lot of observing by just watching. I'm suggesting that you can do a lot of vocational preparation by understanding the importance of human interaction. Indeed, I suspect that in the end--and this is perhaps an important caveat, ~~at least to me in the end~~, the blending of ~~the~~ so-called vocationalism and liberalism on the campus is achieved not only by the curriculum we offer, but also, and perhaps more importantly, by the attitudes we convey.

I was reflecting a year or two ago about my own formal education, ~~and I was able to discover~~ four teachers ~~who~~, in my judgment, dramatically reshaped my life. ~~As I thought of those four teachers~~, one was my first grade teacher, <sup>a</sup> marvelous woman, Mrs. Rice (I really wanted to flunk first grade so I could be with her another year, and she almost obliged <sup>as it turns out</sup> ~~as it turns out~~ <sup>the others were</sup> a teacher in high school and two teachers in college, ~~and I ask~~ <sup>what</sup> ~~is it that~~ these four individuals have <sup>id</sup> in common. ~~And I have to suggest~~ ~~that it~~ was not their knowledge of the <sup>it</sup> subject, <sup>s</sup> although they were well informed <sup>o</sup> it was the candor and openness and self-revelation of their process of communication to me and to my colleagues. They not only taught the subject, <sup>s</sup> they also taught themselves, ~~that is~~, they caused me to understand that to be an educated person, you did have feelings, you sometimes had doubts, you occasionally had hopes, and at bottom, you had values and you ~~had~~ developed some conviction. That is, they became living, breathing, understandable human beings.

One final point in my search for what I think are the principles rather than the mechanics of liberal education, ~~I have one final element to suggest.~~ It seems to me, that to be prepared adequately

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for work, whether ~~that~~ <sup>the</sup> job is teaching or ~~medicine~~ <sup>doctoring</sup>, or ~~law~~ <sup>Practicing</sup> or running a business, we must develop the capacity to make judgments, to form convictions, and to act boldly upon ~~these~~ <sup>our</sup> values. It is not enough merely to see the world wholly and sensitively. It is not enough simply to respect our fellow men. All of us, regardless of vocation, must have, ~~I believe~~, intellectual and moral anchor points <sup>that</sup> which consistently guide our lives.

~~Now I'm~~ <sup>I am</sup> the first to recognize that whenever ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> discussion turns to values, especially in the academic world, a strange kind of embarrassment seems to overtake us, ~~and we've~~ <sup>we have</sup> come to accept the view that a value-laden education is off limits. Somehow we have deluded ourselves into believing that we can be responsible people without ever taking sides and without expressing firm convictions about fundamental issues. ~~I submit that~~ <sup>nothing</sup> could be more contrary to the liberal arts tradition. In his penetrating book entitled "Faith and Learning", Alexander Miller observed that a decent tentativeness is a wholesome expression of scholarly humility, but sometimes we have a sort of dogmatic tentativeness <sup>that</sup> which suggests that it is intellectually indecent to make up ~~your~~ <sup>one's</sup> mind.

I believe that we are beginning to understand that education divorced from values is an illusion. We now realize, as George Steiner, that marvelous British philosopher, said, that a man who is intellectually advanced can at the same time be morally bankrupt. We now know that such a man, again from Steiner, can listen to Bach and Schubert at sundown, he can read Goethe in the evening and the next day ~~he~~ can go to his daily work at the concentration camp and gas his fellow men. Steiner concludes by asking rhetorically, "What grows up inside literate civilization

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that seems to prepare it for the release of barbarism?"

Well, Steiner's comment not only highlights our dilemma, but also dramatizes the disillusionment that has taken root. 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, will lead to virtue.

Well, what does all of this have to do with quality in the 1980s? I happen to believe that our greatest challenge may not be budgets or enrollments. It just may be <sup>how</sup> ~~that it is~~ something to do with purpose and <sup>the need to</sup> ~~that we must~~, I think, acknowledge the centrality and dignity of vocation. We must also look beyond the course titles in the arts and science programs and begin to identify, as best we can, some underlying principles <sup>that</sup> which seem universally essential for all of us who work.

Let me be quite specific and say that ~~there may be~~ some experiments already <sup>are</sup> on the books. <sup>one</sup> A venture that was aborted in New York intrigued me nonetheless. The University Center at Binghamton joined with Broom Community College, a technical institution, and put together an integrated program in which the graduates there could have a baccalaureate in history or literature or whatever from the University of Binghamton plus a two-year <sup>S. Occupational</sup> ~~field~~ of study, ~~whether~~ in dental technology or <sup>some</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>other field</sup> ~~like~~. <sup>I have</sup> ~~I've~~ been to other campuses where they are looking for new majors that combine certain studies in literature with the applied fields of journalism, ~~going all along~~. I have seen some efforts in which new courses were being formulated to fit neatly into professional fields of study. ~~After all,~~ <sup>z</sup> courses that deal with ethics, and history, and literature, and values, absolutely must

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be clamped closely to those who are going into business, medicine, law and journalism, because ~~of~~ the crises in these disciplines is not the substance, ~~is~~ <sup>but in</sup> the application <sup>of what is learned.</sup>

That brings us precisely back to the central question. I have a feeling <sup>that</sup> if we would be more flexible in the substance and more gentle and even (forgive me) pragmatic in the label, we could relate much of the essence of liberal learning to the vocational interests of our students. ~~Is it impossible to suggest that we~~ might even have a very dignified course entitled The History of Work and Vocation ~~throughout history?~~ It <sup>is</sup> my hunch that looking to all of civilizations through that prism, we'd begin to learn a lot about a culture--who works, what work is valued, what work is diminished, do they have slaves, why do they have slaves, do women and men work in the same fashion? <sup>hook my</sup> Through the prism of work and vocation, we <sup>could come to</sup> understand a lot about ourselves. This then, to me, is the central challenge of the 1980s. Can we bring together in our curriculum what inevitably we must bring together in our lives, where we intertwine <sup>our</sup> ~~the~~ vocational interests and the inspirations and urges of the heart?

Dr. Lewis Thomas, ~~who is one of my favorite authors~~, the Head of the Sloane Cancer Center in New York, <sup>and</sup> author of that marvelous book entitled "Lives of a Cell", said recently at a meeting of the National Association for the Advancement of Science that these are not the best of times for the human mind. ~~He said~~ 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 unfulfilled.

I cannot begin to guess, he said, at all of the causes of our cultural sadness, not even the most important ones, but I can think

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of one thing, one thing that is wrong with us and eats away at us. We do not know enough about ourselves. We do not know our past, or where we're going. And above all, we fail to understand the marvelous and miraculous pattern of life in which we are all embedded as working parts. Just think, he said, 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.)

~~And then~~ he closes with the most insulting three-word sentence I've ever read. He says, "We are dumb." I used to use that word when I was a boy--I haven't heard it very often since. <sup>Dr Thomas</sup> ~~He's dumb.~~

~~Well,~~ that may overstate the case a bit. I like to think <sup>he</sup> ~~it~~ does, but it <sup>does</sup> convey <sup>the</sup> feeling I endorse.

Education in the end is important business and it should help our students not only find productive work, which is the revelation of who we are, but also help to live a worthwhile life as well. These two <sup>Purshel</sup> represent the essence of excellence in education. Thank you very much.