

Notes for Speeches

Odds and Ends

The perceived momentum of an institution over time may be more important than any other factor, even established reputation, in creating a bugger against public disapproval when periodic disruptions occur.

Presidents generally lose the support of faculty first, before other groups (trustees, administrators, the public).

Economic Points

In the late 1970s, Washington provided 25% of state and local budgets. Now it is less than 17%.

Unlike the federal government, which can and does operate at a deficit, all states but one (Vermont) are legally bound to have balanced budgets. So their options are limited to raising taxes or reducing spending.

States must take priority in some areas...infrastructure must be modernized, schools systems must be improved, public services made more effective.

These are the kind of programs that work best adapted to local conditions and local people.

In turn the federal government should take more responsibility for programs like Medicaid and welfare, which can be fairly addressed only on a national scale.

Medicaid:

The federal government sets general guidelines and pays 56% of costs on the average...the states pay the rest.

Costs are zooming with no end in sight.

Medicaid, the health program primarily for the poor and disabled, now accounts for 12% of state spending; 20 years ago it was 3%.

Medicaid outlays have been climbing by 12% to 15% per year...and in 1990 by 18%!

Major driving force is the aging of the population.

Prisons:

Spending on corrections has nearly doubled in past decade.

This cost has been entirely borne by state and local governments.

In most states corrections represents only 3.5%...in Michigan it has grown to 7%.

Even so, it has been growing at 13% per year since 1986, absorbing most of the growth in state revenues.

Education

Education is the biggest item in the budget of every state, typically accounting for one of every three dollars flowing out of state treasuries.

In 1980 federal share was 9.2%...in 1990 it fell to 6.3%.

The state share of total spending has risen from 40% in most states to 50%. (Again, Michigan has gone against the trend.)

Good News

Solar Car Race

Medical Science

Cystic Fibrosis, Neurofibromatosis, Human Genome

Sports

Bo--Tigers

Nederlander--Yankees

Wilpont--Mets

Moreau: Ultra High Powered Laser Center

NSFnet/NREN (UM managed)

Growing at 35% per month!

Now links 500 campuses and labs and over 1 million users

McArthur Prizes to Ortner, Scott, Holt
Discovery that whales used to have feet

Public Education

Lamar Alexander

First we were shocked: our schools, we discovered, were
graduating children prepared for the 1950s.

Next, we looked for answers. This caused great trouble,
because we found no cookie cutter solutions.

Now it is dawning on us that we must figure our most of
the answers for ourselves, community by community,
family by family

Shalala

We cannot institute innovations piecemeal--
in some districts and not in others, in some
states and not in others.

Educational reform requires a definite plan, programs
that are proven workable, cost-efficient strategies
that place research dollars where they can provide
maximum, immediate benefit.

University Presidency

Lamar Alexander

Vaclav Havel's eloquent questions of Czechoslovakia
are just the questions we should be asking ourselves

"What kind of place is this?"

"What are the principles that bind us together?"

"What could we contribute to our community and to the world?"

The tradition roles of higher education

There is no surer way to educate children than for their
parents and grandparents to continue their education.

There is no surer way to boost our economy than for
working Americans to go back to college.

There is no surer way for a democracy to succeed in an
information age than for more of its citizens to know and
be able to evaluate information.

There is no surer path from the back to the front of the line that
going to college, especially now that half the jobs will
require a college education.

There is no surer way for the USA to continue as the world
grant champion in science and technology than to
strengthen that unique American invention,
the research university.

Key is this is our commitment to continue to probe...
and by probing, continue to educate ourselves.

The American University

Shalala

Our great research universities have done an astonishing job
of transferring their knowledge of science and technology
to society at large, and done so, I might add, with a fair
amount of class, compassion, integrity, and humility.

Beyond question, the scientific research done under the
sheltering arms of research universities has improved
human life, prolonged human life, enriched and protected
and comforted human life.

Many of the most progressive social reforms in this century
also have originated in research universities.

We must focus on the things we do best--educating people
and creating new knowledge. We've done a terrific
job of creating knowledge in science, medicine, and engineering.
We've done a terrific job of delivering "miracles" of pure science.
We've done less well at delivering the "miracles" of social science,
though we need these more than ever.

If we are to develop a new paradigm for great research universities,
one that provides for more equity among the disciplines, we

mus recognize the many barriers that exist within our own institutions. Our universities are creatures of tradition. In many ways their governance and reward systems have remained largely unchanged for 100 years, a century during which we have seen profound social change.

Breaking the cycle of poverty and dependency, putting down strong new foundations of educational policy, providing for social justice--the knowledge that will meet these extraordinary challenges will, I believe, come out of our great research universities.

Shalala is worried that public universities are beginning to look too much like the privates. She believes that publics must get back to their roots.

While it is clear that we must reconceptualize our institutions at this point in time, we must also make sure we have our feet firmly planted and understand the historical perspective from whence we came.

Mort Weir

I am pleased to hear Shalala emphasize that our role is to educate and to create knowledge rather than, I assume, to attempt to implement and carry our action programs. Too often when we discuss the university's role in such areas as K-12 education or child nutrition or day care, people seem to believe that we in the university should be involved directly in the operation of such programs themselves.

In science and technology, our ideas seem to be snapped up. But in the realm of children, youth, and families, our ideas are usually ignored by those who either make policy or provide the support for those kinds of social programs.

There is no question that pressures are mounting for universities to extend their interests in their programs to new problems and new clientele. In most such instances, however, professors who answer these calls are also answering a call that takes them out of the undergraduate classroom.

I believe that a major reason that K-12 education is in such difficulty concerning the preparation of students in the basic academic subjects is that American society expects the schools to teach what parents should be teaching but are not.

Can this happen in universities? Probably not, but when I hear about the need for teaching of values or the need for courses that emphasize racial awareness or the need to teach our students to be more sensitive to sex stereotypes or the need for courses in alcohol and drug abuse, I think of the plight of the public schools.

It is essential that we not add to our required curricular base in such a way that our coverage of the basic academic subjects is eroded.

American Society

Dan Koshland

The three laws of sociodynamics

1. "There is no free lunch."
2. "Humans are motivated by what has been done for them lately."
3. "Humans have a basic urge to sweep criticism about themselves under the rug."

Economist: Puritans

America attracts critics in part because it is more self-critical than other nations. It also represents the future.

However a "decadent puritanism" is developing within American society: an odd combination of ducking responsibility and telling everyone else what to do.

The decadence lies in too readily blaming others for problems, rather than accepting responsibility oneself.

Some examples:

America's litigiousness virtually banishing the concept of bad luck.
America's legalism breeds a habit of shifting burdens onto somebody else.

The warped idea that the problem with America's underclass is a lack of self-esteem. Bunk. The characteristic that in the past drove generations of immigrants from the

underclass to prosperity was not self-esteem.
It was self-discipline.
The reason that Japanese schoolchildren--and the children of Asian immigrants in America--learn so much more than their American counterparts is discipline, not self-esteem.

There are few countries on earth in which people are generally less prejudiced about color than America. Yet there are few countries where the issue looms so large; where pressure groups are so quick to take offence at a careless remark, or where words are made to carry such a weight of meaning.

As Americans get ever richer, they seem to grown more risk-averse so that they become paranoid about hazardous waste in their district, obsessed with cholesterol levels, etc...

The solution: If we are all to enjoy the 21st century, America must lighten up a bit!...

George Will: Collective Guilt

The middle class has begun giving up guilt.

Notes the amusing headline in the Chronicle:

“Racial Tensions Continue to Erupt on Campuses Despite Efforts to Promote Cultural Diversity”

“Despite”? Try “because of”...

Campus ensions reflect, in part, that any people are now resisting being conscripted into the role of the guilty. The rhetoric of collective guilt has worn out its welcome.

Kenneth Minogue, a British philosopher, believes that the repudiation of collective guilt marks a historic cultural turning, since collective guilt has long been a familiar idiom of contemporary politics.

Proliferating communities of victimhood assert their own histories and value system to go with their grievances. They have forced a balkanization of the university with black studies, women’s studies, homosexual studies, and so on.

Science

Erich Bloch

The solution of virtually all the problems with which government is concerned: health, education, environment, energy, urban development, international relationships, space, economic competitiveness, and defense and national security, all depend on creating new knowledge---and hence upon the health of America’s research universities”

We are dangerously close to not providing the infrastructure of science for the future. If you don’t have the people and you don’t have the infrastructure, then I don’t know what the big projects are good for. They’re there for people to use.”

Postmodernism

Examples:

Postmodern art is antirealist.

Postmodern literature is suspicious of any quest for rules of literature and opts for experimentation rather than recollection.

Postmodern science is flagged as the "search for instabilities". Shifting paradigms, uncertainty, unpredictability, incommensurability--these are the rules, rather the "antirules" of the scientific game.

Postmodern philosophy is antifoundationalist, suspicious of theory, and preoccupied with an interpretative analysis of our variegated social practices.

Postmodern cultural analysis finds its mission in the tracking of the multifarious ideologies that infiltrate our institutional life.

Postmodern politics is bent toward intervention rather than dialogue.

Jean-Francois Lyotard

"I define postmodern as incredulity toward metanarratives"

You resist the urge to tell big stories or tall tales.

You consolidate your discourse into local rather than grand narratives.

You steer clear of unifying principles.

You are suspicious of unities, celebrate plurality, remain sensitive to differences, and emphasize invention.

What are the effects of pluralism, heterogeneity, multiplicity, and diversity on the contemporary university.

Pluralism seems to mitigate against general education, curricular coherence, the integration of knowledge, and the singularity of educational purposes and goals--all of which we take to be self-evident and intrinsically desirable for a liberal education.

To say that American society has from its very beginning been characterized by heterogeneity and diversity is to announce a truism. As the proverbial melting pot of races and ethnic groups, social and religious practices, and political and economic institutions, the United States has been a veritable laboratory of experimentation with different styles of life and modes of thought.

But this has taken its toll on the university. The partitioning into schools, departments, disciplines make us more a "pluriversity" than a university.

The simplest definition of the function and goal of the university: the university is a place where reason resides.

Yet it is the pluralization of reason that is at issue in postmodern thought. If reason itself is pluralized, diversified, and relativized, any claims for the unifying and integrating function of reason become suspect.

A possible solution:

We should acknowledge some of the truths of postmodernism...

We may be well advised to stop looking for a grand narrative, an overarching or undergirding that grounds all knowledge and all creative endeavor. The monolithic paradigm of a totalizing rationality may have had its day.

The organization of the university has suffered from the domination of pure theory.

The monolithic, foundationalist, modernist concept of rationality and the accompanying power plan on the part of various disciplines to be its divinely chosen custodian should be abandoned.

Yet the displacement of the modern concept of rationality through such an awakening does not entail a displacement of reason in every sense.

Uses of reason:

Reason serves as a catalyst for critique

It is the resource through which different modes of discourse and different forms of life are subject to critical analysis.

The goal of liberal learning is to foster and develop a critical mind.

In academe, no professed theories, no alleged facts, and no established procedures are sacrosanct.

This is why an educated mind is perpetually ready for reexamination and reassessment.

A closed and dogmatic mind remains an impediment to liberal learning.

Postmodernism comes perilously close to a stark relativism in which everything goes, no particular interpretation can be better than any other, and no form of life or mode

of behavior can be judged as more worthy than the rest.
Liberal learning carves out a space for rational, deliberative reflection. Within this space, conflicting interpretations and diverging evaluations are at play. But as deliberating beings, we always stand at the crossroads. We are called upon to choose. And we need to make decisions that are informed by the legacy of values in our tradition, attentive to the possibilities for the future, and cognizant of the requirements of the present.
A choice is rational to the degree that it integrates our past and our future into the interstices of the present.
Schooling in the making of such choices is an intrinsic part of the vocation, the high calling, of the university as the place where reason resides.

Whitehead

Animals wander into new conditions.
They have to adapt themselves or die.
When man ceased to wander,
he will cease to ascend in the scale of being.
Physical wandering is still important, but greater still
is the power of man's spiritual adventures--
adventures of thought, passionate feeling, aesthetic experience.

A diversification among human communities is essential for the provision of the incentive and material for the Odyssey of the human spirit.
Men require of their neighbors something sufficiently akin to be understood, something sufficiently different to provoke attention, and something great enough to command admiration.
Modern science has imposed on humanity the necessity for wandering.
Its progressive thought and its progressive technology make the transition through time, from generation to generation, a true migration into uncharted seas of adventure.
The very benefit of wandering is that it is dangerous and needs skills to avert evils.
We must expect that the future will disclose dangers.
It is the business of the future to be dangerous, and it is among the merits of science that it equips the future for its duties.
The middle class pessimism over the future of the world comes from a confusion between civilization and security.
In the immediate future there will be less security than in the immediate past, less stability.
It must be admitted that there is a degree of instability which is inconsistent with civilization.
But, on the whole, the great ages have been unstable ages.
The great conquerors, from Alexander to Napoleon, influenced profoundly the lives of subsequent generations. But the total effect of this influence shrinks to insignificance, if compared to the entire transformation of human habits and human mentality produced by the long line of men of thought from Thales to the present day, men individually powerless, but ultimately the rulers of the world.

SAC Ideas

If the challenge for a leader is to anticipate cultural change, to sense it before it emerges fully into public consciousness, and then to call upon deep personal aspirations and ideals to meet new challenge, then the time may be right to talk more openly about
the need for discipline
responsibility
the harmful effects of special interest groups
unbalanced by commitment to community
responsibilities to the future and to society
...and even the "t" word--taxes...

Still probably need fire and brimstone to get attention,
but cannot paint a hopeless picture. People need to
feel there is time, that they can make a difference if they act,
and that you have faith that they can and will call upon their
fundamental strengths and values to solve problems.

Note: A leader inspires by conveying faith in his followers.

Etzioni talks about the need to shift our focus from "I" to "we".

And there are indications that the public is leaning that way.

Yuppies are turning 40, worried about their children and starting to save.

It is as though people are waking up after a bad party with a hangover
and need to make resolutions about going on the wagon.

The worst hangover is the S&L scandal.

It hasn't caught fire yet, but it is build out there. (Watergate started slow, too)

(Note that Michigan is 13th among net losers in this biggest corporate bailout
in history>) When it crests it will carry out alot of incumbents and possibly bring
a sharp shift back to more traditional values and social concerns.

Another growing force is popular awareness of income redistribution from the
poor to the rich at the expense of the middle--and from the young to the old.

May be possiblbe to build an improved climate for higher education, but only if we
hear underlying public criticism of higher..

...that we cost too much

(although if folks thought we were doing a good job,
cost wouldn't matter so much--it really is a red herring)

...that we are not doing a good job of teaching
and preparing students for the future

...that we are out of synch with society's values

...that we are not preserving and transmitting cultural heritage
and ideals

US future

Danger is contiuing state of denial and head-in-sand, loss of confidence
and debilitating pessimism.

We have our own unique strengths as a state and a nation:

pluralism, mobility, democratic values, entrepreneurial spirit

But we may have lost our way for awhile

Special Interests and Myopia

Lawyers as an example of special interest and as exacerbating
the conflicts among interests at great cost to society/
professionalization, factions, class division

Eat dessert first

Loss of truse in instituitons

Out of touch with unique values

Poor leadership, voter apathy, and withdrawal

Decade of buyout, bailout, and payoff

S&L--domestic VietNam, with a cost up to \$500 B

Debt

Decaying infrastructure

Growing rich/poor income gap

Growing old/young income gap

Depletion of natural resources

Unwillingness to be realistic about energy

Americans have become risk avoiders, but the buck has to stop somewhere

Nothing insurmountable if we return to our values

Now time has come to wake up, to stop trying to escape from reality

Many reasons for confidence and optimism

Gardner Ackley: "Democracies always do the righ□□□□□□□□"

make some sacrifices, look for bold new vision, and cast off old grievances and old agendas

Need to rebalance the “I/we” equation, renew sense of community, more inclusive but still common values and purposes

Need to take longer term view...
in recent years, business, government, and education have taken a short term view--cannot afford this any longer

Need to have concern for whole as well as parts,
as life and systems become more complex, it is necessary to abstract so we don't miss forest for the trees.

K-12 Education
Problem is not just money. All the money in the world is no substitute for vision, purpose, and highest standards and expectations for students and teachers.
Note the Japanese. They don't measure IQ and try to sort people out, but rather assume that all have sufficient ability to learn what is necessary to function in modern society.
Whether you have children or not, your participation in schools and public education at all levels is critical to your own and this country's future.

Population diversity and immigration
This is a strength. It is energizing.
But discrimination thwarts mobility and poisons system.

Political participation: People must not only demand more of selves, but of leaders. Cannot continue to have office going to highest bidder--or single issue politics--or policy making based on polls.
We are getting what we deserve.
Perhaps we should limit terms of office.
Founding fathers never envisioned politics as a permanent career.
Most of them hurried back to normal life!
(This is an interest approach--to recommend that we stop looking to “professional politicians”, but rather consider people who have a broader range of experiences--and values!)

Role of university is critical in addressing most of problems
...educating leaders
...preserving, interpreting, and transmitting culture and values
...and creating the future!

Ethics and such

Responsibilities of faculty (Zumberge)
Ethical and moral situations frequently arise in the activities of faculty.
Ethical responsibility is a matter of personal, concrete daily decision for each of us.
Generally for faculty, there is neither a statement of ethical principles nor policy nor code nor procedures.
What are the enduring values of our academic community?
How do we communicate them to students?
Part of problem is that the modern university has moved away from truth to a pursuit of knowledge. Increasingly ethics and morality have come to be understood as

subjective and relative.

There is a need to be more explicit and public about values which shape academic community.

Note AAUP "Statement on Professional Ethics" (1966)

Responsibilities as:

...a professor to his subject...to seek and state the truth as the professor sees it

...as a teacher

...as a colleague

...as a member of the university

...as a citizen of the community

Recall Bok's statement:

"A university that pays little attention to moral development may find that many of its students grown bewildered, convinced that ethical dilemmas are simply matters of personal opinion beyond external judgment or careful analysis."

The university no longer functions in loco parentis, but in enrolling students in the university, we effectively define much of the environment in which their moral learning and development are shaped. Students will be shaped by what they encounter and wrestle with in the classroom and in their relationship to faculty.

We do indeed have concrete responsibilities in the ethical education of our students. If we hold dear the enduring values of truth telling, reliability, loyalty, self-discipline, respect for others, tolerance, and nonviolent, reasoned resolution to conflicts, why shouldn't we affirm these values at every opportunity?

Social Values in the University (Farnsworth)

The satisfaction and complacency of the 1940s and 1950s changed rapidly in the 1960s to intense criticism and dissatisfaction.

But, paradoxically, the unquestionably high ideals that were professed by those engaged in protest were expressed in speech and actions that could be construed as both immoral and illegal.

While some believed the protests waned because the protesters were physically exhausted, or had achieved many of their goals, or even had begun to realize that tearing down institutions was dysfunctional in getting constructive change accomplished, there was probably a more important reason.

The impact of the 1960s on society was dubious. Further, the values of religion, marriage, patriotism, family pride, and cultural identification were seriously eroded and frequently ridiculed or disregarded. Perhaps it was the erosion of these central values which eventually led to the collapse of the protests.

The university community is one of the most notable creations of Western civilization, an ideal place for the development of a proper balance between reason and contemplation, and constructive action for the benefit of mankind.

All attempts of society to regulate itself come up against the problem that occurs when the rights of the individual and the rights of others come into conflict.

Some control is clearly necessary. The person who is most in control of himself is the one most likely to be the freest, and from this idea flows the concept that a free people are a discipline people.

Discipline is not "making others behave", but is instead a system of training, a set of accepted customs or rules that make it possible for a person to reach a state of orderliness through self-control.

"Value-agnosticism" in the academic enterprise is self-destructive.

To be value-neutral means to abandon the very promise on which the search for and transmission of knowledge is pursued.

If the university does not teach the moral superiority of education as opposed to ignorance, of reason over impulse, of

discipline over slovenliness, or integrity over cheating--
then its very foundations will crumble.

The fundamental principles (Norman Lamm)

...that the pursuit of knowledge is deserving of sacrifice

...that knowledge ought to open into wisdom

...that whether or not one believes that human beings are
the purpose of creation, they are certainly the purpose of education

...that the effort by man to transcend himself is admirable,
even if he often fails

...that there are verities that are eternal, although they may
be ignored for generations

...that men and women possess spiritual dignity that makes them
worthy of respect, our reverence, and our dedication to
their welfare.

Boyer Report

The breakdown of civility and other disruptive forces have undermined
traditional academic and social values on campus.

The modern university is one in which faculty members lack
powerful incentives to teach, students invest a minimum of time
in their studies, and racial and other tensions undermine a sense
of community in academic life.

(Note: only 23% of students spend 16 or more hours a week
outside of class, down from 33% in 1985)

Talk Ideas

Importance of self-discipline

For every hour of classes, the "B" level of effort is two hour
of studies...that is, 30 hours for 15 hours...

Self-esteem, self-confidence are important...

...but so is self-discipline

Sometimes can learn this from other areas
athletics, art, music

Costs of Education

Perhaps the costs of higher education are increasing because
its value is increasing--in an increasingly knowledge-intensive world

Note higher education costs are not outpacing personal income...

Higher education costs are also lagging cost increases of many
other "essentials", such as housing, cars, health care.

Yet we hear no call to artificially constrain these markets...Why???

Investment

HTS

A global transformation is under way as we enter the 1990s.

The startling political transformation of Eastern Europe
and the Soviet Union seems about to change the entire
context of international economic, political, and military
relations for decades to come.

In America our community now is imperiled no so much by the
export of Soviet power and Marxist ideology as by the
import of drugs, damage to our environment, an increasingly
precarious ability to compete effectively, and a set of social
arrangements in which too many Americans feel disconnected
from the country's future.

In the US economy we have seen startling change characterized by
the stability of average weekly wages, the growing gap
between rich and poor, and our failure to sustain an
adequate level of investment in human and physical capital.

Our current policies, mutual obligations, political arrangements, and
social structure may not provide the critical assets necessary
for our own cultural vitality and for us to exert leadership in
the decades ahead.

Although every age seems to believe itself the victim of unprecedented
difficulties, social pathologies and dangers, there is at least some
contemporary evidence that there might be something to the notion
that we may have "lost our way".

We appear, for example, to be quite paralyzed in our ability to arrest the increasing social disorganization of many of our communities.

The increasing interdependence of world economies and the waning of US economic dominance has changed forever America's role in international economic affairs and the potential nature of our leadership within the international community.

We added about 20 M new jobs during the past decade, but over one quarter of our labor force has become temporary or parttime.

We began the decade as the world's largest creditor and ended the decade as the world's largest debtor.

The decade experiences an unusually long economic expansion, but through it all we failed to maintain our commitment to our future by refusing to make adequate investments in either human or physical capital. We seem to have forgotten that the potential social and economic benefits of new science and technology largely become actualized by incorporating these new ideas into new capital equipment and, to some extent, in the enhanced education and training of our labor force.

We benefited early from substantial tax cuts, but the chronic federal deficit and our low savings rate have made us dependent on foreign capital.

There is some evidence that the 1980s witnessed an almost unprecedented accumulation of wealth among the richest people in the country and a level of increasing economic difficulties and social disorganization for the poorest. Of all the industrialized countries, we now seem to have the largest gap in income between the richest and poorest fifth of the population.]

We have shifted government expenditures away from investment in human resources.

It is too early to assess whether the rapid accumulation of wealth by the richest groups in our society during the 1980s reflects a series of activities that benefits everyone, but I have some serious concerns about this matter in a decade noted both for inadequate rates of saving and investment and for the realization that our K-12 system--to say nothing about our care of younger children--is in need of fundamental reform as it apparently cannot graduate an adequate number of students with international levels of competency.

It is possible that the reduced role of government and organized labor, the wave of corporate reorganizations, tax reductions, debt accumulation, wealth concentrations are preparing a new foundation for another economic leap forward. However I have my doubts.

In a number of areas we have developed a sense of caution and uncertainty when what we need is the mobilizing force of a new set of ideas and commitments that will consolidate our energies and focus our efforts.

There is no reason to fear the globalization of the world economy. It is and continues to be an enormous source of growth to ourselves and our trading partners.

What is necessary is a level of self-mobilization that allows us to participate in the evolving world economy in a manner effective enough to generate high real wages at home and the critical assets and flexibility necessary to exert leadership on a broad front.

If we make the necessary dedication to our future through enhanced rates of investment, we can, providing we also find ways to strengthen our bonds to each other, both have some control over our own destiny and contribute to the overall well-being of our planet.

K-12 Education (Perot)

We are at a critical time now in our country's history.

We are busy spending our children's money in enormous amounts.

Let's look at where we are today:

- i) We rank at the bottom of industrialized nations in terms of academic achievement--but we are spending \$328 B a year on public education--more than another other nation.

- ii) We are now the largest debtor nation in the history of man.
- iii) We are the most violent, crime-ridden nation in the industrialized world.
- iv) We are also the the biggest user of illegal drugs--using 50% of the world's supply of cocaine.
- v) In 1974 we developed 70% of the world's advanced technology. Today our share is down to 35%.
- vi) Our best and brightest are not going into the places where they will most help our country's future. Instead of designing and building new products or services, they go into law or consulting. Or they go to Wall Street, where they do a leveraged buy-out deal, collect a huge fee up front, and produce a debt-laden corporation that lays off tens of thousands of people.
- vii) Back in the 1950s the top problems were talking in class, chewing gum, and running in the halls. That's what the really bad guys did. Today, the top problems are drug abuse, alcohol abuse, pregnancy, suicide, rape, robbery, and assault. How can you learn in this kind of environment.

Why am I spreading all this doom and gloom?

Because in a democratic society the only way to effect revolutionary change is to start talking frankly about what needs to be done.

Nowadays we treat our most serious domestic problems like a crazy aunt that we keep in the basement. Everybody know she's there, but nobody talks about her. But one day she's going to get loose and kill somebody...

Texas Experience

When we started studying the situation, we found, as is usually the case in business, that the problems began at the top.

We had no clearly stated objectives, no philosophy for managing a multibillion dollar business. We had no accountability for academic achievement; we had no standard cost-accounting system.

We found, for example that 65% of our high school principals were coaches.

All the money was going to the wrong places. 40% for administration and extracurricular activities, 30% for soft electives, and only 30% for academic subjects.

Vocational education was another bottomless pit of spending.

We were training people on obsolete equipment for jobs that didn't exist, and we were try to train them even though they couldn't read or write.

Textbooks had been "dumbed down"

The lowest 25% of students, based on SATs, were in the schools of education. You could have a PhD but if you didn't have a teacher's certification--which had fewer requirements than getting a barber's beauticians certificate--you couldn't teach in a public school.

But the bloodiest fight we had--and we waged a campaign across an entire state to win it--was to fairly distribute the money available for our educational system.

It wasn't a pretty fight, but we had to find a way to get the money doewn to the children whose only chance is in the public schools.

Being a melting pot for diverse cultures and heritages has always been one of America's greatest strengths. We don't have time to waste fighting one another on the race issue.

The most important change we made was establishing early-childhood development centers--tiny little schools right in the neighborhood.

It would be wonderful if we had a strong family unit in every home to give each child the sense of confidence needed to get off to a good start. But the fact is that we don't. And the only way to offset that is through the public schools.

Do we want our kids to win on Friday night on the football field, or do we want them to win all through their lives? That's what we have to start asking ourselves.

The next question is: Are we prepared to make the sacrifices in our own lives that will make a winning future possible.

Global Issues (Fiske)

The country is involved in a global brain race.

American schools must measure themselves on a new global standard.

We have three kinds of deficits in this country:

...a trade deficit, a budget deficit, and an education deficit"

The distinction between international and domestic is collapsing.

Notes that Stanford is opening up the Stanford Center in Kyoto.

"A great university today must have the same kind of dispersed presence around the world"...as American industry.

Restructuring of the University

MIT Report

We believe that our productivity as an educational institution is hampered by many of the weaknesses that we have discovered in American Industry.

For example, we are subject to short-term pressures in setting goals and in measuring the success of students, faculty members, and programs.

We do not use as much creative energy as we might in measuring the quality of our product (students).

We do not have adequate resources and mechanisms in place to manage educational change effectively.

We could do more to cultivate closer relationships with our "clients", who hire our students, and our "suppliers", the secondary schools that provide them.

It is interesting to note that most of the people in industry and government who have been making the decisions and following the practices leading to the deterioration of American competitiveness are graduates of our own universities.

Engineering Education

Gell-Mann

In ecology, a debate has been going on for decades whether complex ecosystems like tropical forests are more robust than comparatively simple ones such as the forest of oaks and conifers.

Currently those ecological scientists seem to be winning who claim that, up to a point, the simple ecosystem is more robust. But part of the difficulty here is what is meant by "simple" and "robust".

Chaitin-Kolmogorov defined complexity:

"The minimum length of a message describing a system up to a given level of detail to a distant observer using a given grammar and vocabulary."

In the language of computer science, one can speak of the shortest computer program that will cause a particular type of general-purpose computer to print out the description and then stop.

One way of writing a message is to express a system in terms of the sum of its parts. The key here is organization, which can be defined as the sum of the complexities of the parts and the complexity of the arrangement minus the complexity of the whole.

Suppose we know the fundamental principles of the universe, the theory of the elementary particles and the condition of the early universe. Then we have a complete formula that accounts for all the laws of physics. Would that tell us in principle about the behavior of everything in the universe? No, because the theory is quantum-mechanical, and QM

gives only the formula for probabilities. Much is still up to chance.

Even in the approximation of deterministic classical physics, there is the widespread phenomenon known as “chaos”. In a “chaotic” situation, the outcome is infinitely sensitive to the initial conditions, and thus, even in the deterministic classical approximation, prediction of details becomes practically impossible.

What about beyond physics. We can look for patterns and correlations, but the rest of the information is random and incompressible.

For example, the specific events of human history, including the existence of particular individuals, also depend to a great extent on chance.

Most scientists think that a certain minimum true complexity is needed in order to have life, with its characteristic features of reproduction, variation, and selection.

In fact, in biological evolution there is an interesting interplay of fundamental requirements, pure accidents, and survival of characteristics that are adaptive. The same is true of many other evolution processes.

Today, the whole subject of complex adaptive systems, systems that exhibit random variation and selection resulting in learning or evolution, has become extremely exciting.

The study of adaptive complex systems embraces efforts in computer science and in neurobiology, chemical evolution, learning and thinking in higher animals, and the evolution of human language.

An interesting philosophical question: Is a full reduction to the simplest terms really possible, and as a strategy is it wise to rely on the reduction of one level of science to what seems to be more basic levels?

Probably not...for three reasons:

- i) One of the major activities of science is to build bridges between one level and the next--between biology and chemistry. Usually these bridges take a long time to build, and while we're building them, we still need to know about the subject that lies at the higher level of complexity.
- ii) When we elucidate the patterns that appear at each level of organization, we find that neat and useful laws emerge.
- iii) There are fundamental limitations to the amount of reduction that can be carried out, even in principle, because of the indeterminacies--particularly the indeterminacy of quantum mechanics.

Individual details may not appear significantly in scientific laws at any level, but they give richness to our experience of the world, largely through the other, nonscientific modes of apprehending the universe, such as the artistic and aesthetic modes.

No matter how we try to describe the universe, through scientific research, through artistic creation, or through appreciation of its beauties, it exhibits a wonderful interplay of simplicity and complexity.

Resource Issues

Have the costs of education risen faster than the value of the output?

...globally (total output...graduates, research, service???)

...on a product by product basis

(i.e., could we identify the cost increases associated with UG education, and then compare these with value added) (perhaps NSF, states, etc. are getting

more than they are paying for)

Key point on productivity: We must look at it in a multidimensional form:

- ...teaching (FYES, degrees,...)
- ...research (SR\$, Pub,...)
- ...service

Can we make ourselves less subject to special interest groups as cost drivers?

Perhaps cost constraints can be used as a tool to back off special interest groups.

Can we use revenue constraints as a positive strategic force

- ...to better prioritize our activities
- ...to improve efficiency
- ...to activate more of an entrepreneurial spirit

Need to establish a clear bias toward action:

- ..."Try it, fix it"
- ...rather than "study it until we're sure it will work"
- ...or "discuss it until we have consensus"

Comparisons between UM and UMMC

Note UMMC capital plan:

- Depreciation: \$250 M
- New Tech & Renov: \$250 M
- New Const: \$150 M
- Total for 1990s: \$550 M

On base of \$1 B...=> 5% per year

How does this compare to rest of UM?

This is an interesting comparison, since unlike UM, UMMC has resources to do whatever is necessary.

K-12 Reform

Reforms have stagnated largely because teachers have not been sufficiently involved.

Prescriptions for change are coming top-down...
...the White House, governors, legislatures.
As a result, little has changed in the classrooms.

Here and there, in spotty ways, innovative programs have been launched. But on the scale of an anarchic nonsystem of 15,000 school districts, more remains to despair than to celebrate.

Much of problem lies in how teachers are trained.
Universities must create "Centers of Pedagogy" that would be the equivalent of law and medical schools.

Much of focus has been on testing and regulations.
Tests do not appear to have changed much of what happens in classrooms.

Other changes...in order of prevalence:

- ...stricter attendance rules
- ...minimum grades required for extracurriculars
- ...stricter conduct rules
- ...longer school days
- ...more competency testing
- ...more homework
- ...better teacher pay

But ETS reports

- No gains in average reading proficiency
- Very little improvement in mathematics
- ...and none at the more advanced high school levels that might be expected after several years of high school math
- No progress in writing.

Why have teachers been bypassed in the quest for reforms, despite all the talk about teacher empowerment and school management responsibilities

shared with principals?

Reasons:

- i) teachers have not been trained for the new roles
- ii) Principals resist sharing power
- iii) Many teachers may not want additional responsibility

(Note teacher vote in Rochester against merit pay...)

CIC Statement of UG Education

Introduction

Undergraduate education at major research universities offers important advantages and adds value that cannot be obtained elsewhere.

Different student benefit from different educational settings.

The scope, scale, and diversity of the research university enable it to address and accommodate the educational needs of a very large number of undergraduate students.

The human and physical resources that place it at the forefront of advancing knowledge make the research university uniquely capable of offering the kind of education that will prepare today's undergraduates for the rapidly changing knowledge-intensive world in which they will live.

Impact of research

1. Teaching and research support one another.
Research cultivates the critical skills needed to work from problem to solution, to sort out errors, and to pursue a single line of inquiry to a satisfactory end.
Indeed, the fact that some of our finest scholars and scientists are demonstrably outstanding teachers underscores the compatibility and mutual support of these primary faculty activities.
2. Leaders in research, who are engaged in defining and expanding the scope of human knowledge, provide an atmosphere that is diffused throughout the entire student body.
3. Active scholars are in the best position to incorporate the most recent discoveries and developments in their field into UG courses.
4. UG education at research universities is further enriched by the constant flow of people and ideas from outside the university.
5. Research universities offer their undergraduates a vast range of options for specialized study.
6. The teaching of a large and diverse faculty provides valuable insights and perspectives for students.
7. The quality of UG education on our campuses is further enhanced by the contributions of our graduate students
Some of the very best teaching comes from these apprentice scholars and scientists.
8. UG experience at research universities benefits from the resources maintained primarily to support faculty research and graduate education...libraries, laboratories, computers...
To have firsthand experience with a laser, to perform in a completely equipped theatre, or to hold and read a 300 year old book may not be indispensable to an UG education, but they enrich it beyond measure.

Opportunities of Scale

1. Major university provides its undergraduates the broadest range of curricular and extracurricular offerings.
For example, many of our campuses offer 40 or more different languages. Also benefit from greater flexibility in funding and allocation of other resources.
2. Large faculties bring a multiplicity of viewpoints to their subjects.
Within a single English department, students are likely to find not one specialist in Victorian literature but several; not one but many specialists in the varieties of interpretative theory; not only traditional scholars, but those who bring radically different perspectives to bear on their work.

3. Student bodies tend to be more diverse...ethnically, nationalities, etc.
4. Many international relationships of major research institutions provide valuable experiences and opportunities for undergraduates. In a very real sense, our student bodies, faculties, and curricula are internationalized.
5. Special kinds of experiences--honors programs, supplemental learning opportunities, career counseling programs, overseas study programs...and many others are possible only because of size of student body.
6. Scale plays a major role in the scope and variety of services and cocurricular opportunities available to students. Dorms, Greeks, off-campus housing...

One of the constant features of our universities is the continual process of reviewing and revising what we offer our undergraduate students and how we do it.

More Like Us--James Fallows

Basic thesis:

America should be moving away from the Japanese model.

Many of the practices that make Japan so efficient would simply stifle us.

If we tried a centrally coordinated society, as homogeneous as possible, trying to minimize individual differences to run as a powerful team, we could never be more than a second-rate version of the real thing.

Further, we would give up the values that are the key to our success.

American society is the world's purest expression of the individualist belief--the idea that a society can flourish if each person is freed to pursue happiness as he or she sees fit.

The importance of being abnormal

Americans hear that ours is not only the strongest country, the freest and most fortunate, the most open to new ideas and change, but also that we are the world's most violent society, the most spoiled and pampered, the least sensitive to other cultures and their values.

America is made up of people who came here or were brought here from somewhere else.

The truth is that racism runs through nearly all the world, usually much more strongly than in the US. We usually give it some other name--tribalism or ethnic tension--but the essence is the same.

One of the things that make America most unusual is its assumption that race should not matter, that society can be built of individuals with no particular historic or racial bond to link them.

While other countries have tradition or ethnic solidarity to pull them together, in America we use our belief in possibility and starting over.

the three forces that most significantly affect the sense of possibility and upward mobility in America are:

- i) immigration
- ii) changes in our education system
- iii) a shift in our democratic character toward a more divided, class-bound ethos

Why culture matters...

In the long run, a society's strength depends on the way that ordinary people voluntarily behave. Ordinary people matter because there are so many of them. Voluntary behavior matters because it is simply too hard to supervise everyone all the time.

History has shown that, from the German blitzkrieg to

Asian guerilla struggles, the most adaptable forces and the most effective have been those in which the troops have understood the objective and could be trusted to work toward it on their own.

Successful societies succeed because they have found ways to match individual self-interest to the collective good.

When societies fail, it is because this useful match ceases to exist. People no longer voluntarily do what helps the larger society.

The central conservative truth is that it is culture, not politics that determines the success of a society...The central liberal truth is that politics can change a culture and save it from itself--Moynihan

American culture can be understood in terms of two items:

- i) People are naturally energetic and creative.
- ii) A society should be able to harness the voluntary efforts of ordinary people just by getting out of their way.

Whether it is, in fact, able to do so depends on two things:

- 1) Whether the radius of trust is large enough.
- 2) Whether people feel they can control their own destiny.

Successful societies have managed to extend the radius of trust to encompass most of their people...and to establish tight connections between effort and reward.

The Japanese Talent for Order

Japan has two cultural advantages America can't match:

- i) a concept of racial unity
- ii) a tradition of effort for its own sake

Racial purity is an obsession in Japan. But it may also be its greatest vulnerability.

It has alienated much of the world. Indeed, the United State is the closest approximation to a friend that Japan has.

Compared with America, all Asian cultures are relatively homogeneous, and all take it for granted that societies are stronger when they are pure.

This racial exclusiveness is annoying to Americans, especially since it classifies most of us as impure, but it helps Asian societies--above all, Japan's--to buffer individual desires with a sense of what is good for the whole tribe.

There is a second factor. People in every culture do their best when they think there is a reward, but in Japan much of the reward is in the effort itself.

The starting point of Western economics is that people suffer indignities as producers--companies fail, products don't sell, workers are laid off--in order to enjoy benefits as consumers.

The situation is exactly opposite in Japan:

The welfare of consumers has consistently taken second place to a different goal: preserving every person's place in the productive system. The reward of working hard in Japan is to continue to be able to work.

As a result, Japanese society is willing to pay exorbitant prices for everything they buy--and to suffer a lower true standard of living--to protect its producers.

The reluctance to act on price--to be consumers above all--is what, along with racial unity, predisposes Japan to success in export competition. It is like the behavior any government expects from its soldiers and diplomats. If it has to get into a bidding war with the enemy for the loyalty of its troops, it is doomed. It needs to know that its people will refuse to act on price alone.

By American standards, it is a strange victory indeed that Japan has won through this behavior. It has continually expanded market share, but only at the price of living more austere than its customers do.

While many American economists warn that if the US does not become more productive, its standard of living will suffer, in fact Japan's standard of living already suffers--and is far below America's and Europe's.

The ultimate importance of effort in Japan...

The average Japanese work week is 5-1/2 days.

There is a hardlife ethic that is not only deeply rooted but also very difficult for America to duplicate.

The Japanese don't believe in the invisible hand. They believe--like all good Confucianists--that you cannot get a decent, moral, efficient society simply out of the mechanisms of the market powered by the motivational fuel of self-interest. The morality has to come from the hearts, the wills and motives, of the individuals in it.

In countless ways many Asian cultures, but most of all Japan, show that they value the effort that goes into an activity about as much as the reward that comes out.

An example are the standardized tests to place Japanese in the educational hierarchy. They are pointless in content...but rather are measures of determination and effort, pure and simple, so the pointlessness of their content actually enhances their value as tests of will so critical to Japanese society.

A statement of purpose for Japanese public schools...

"It is desirable that in the lower grades one should learn to bear hardship, and in the middle grades to persist to the end with patience, and in the upper grades to be steadfast and accomplish goals undaunted by obstacles or failure."

Important to throw away the idea that America should imitate Japan. America is not Japan and can never be. From American perspectives, some of Japan's most distinctive traits look praiseworthy and some do not. The emphasis on duty is admirable; the anticonsumer bias seems foolish (what's the point of success if it feels like failure?); and the racial-purity fetish is the ugliest thing about Japan.

The American Talent for Disorder

Reinvented Lives

As a political unit the US has become old and somewhat tired. But American culture can still be young, flexible, and full of possibility.

American society works best when people are in flux.

When they stop feeling that they can control their luck, the basic glue of American society no longer holds.

Static Societies

If America has always meant the constant chance of movement what happens when that chance is denied?

Then our society becomes crueler, since some of us are stuck in place.

A rigid America is also weak and vulnerable, since it has sacrificed its unique strength: the energy of people who think they can always make something new of their lives.

Notes the process of "creative destruction" in which new economic entities rise out of the ashes of old industries.

Believes that traditional American industry had become fossilized--big unions, management, communities

forced people into a narrow niche..."You were not allowed to consider doing anything else"

It was almost a Japanese-style lesson of teamwork, obedience, and confirmity--"The nail that sticks out gets hammered in") inflicted on people who eventually would be expected to adjust in a non-Japanese, individualist culture.

America has always lived with economic shifts; it's highly unlikely that that will change. So we rely on our people to be flexible and mobile. If they can't, they suffer, for the whole society can't adjust to accommodate the few.

The plight of Black Americans

The group that is most permanently and disturbingly left behind as the rest of America adapts is the black underclass.

It is conceivable that black immigrants do better than American blacks because, as foreigners, they may encounter less prejudice--or prejudice of a different kind.

However, the more likely explanation is that roughly similar degrees of prejudice affect both groups in different ways.

Immigrants suffer discrimination as a political force--American's face discrimination built on a message of inferiority.

Racial prejudice boils down to the deeply anti-American message that some people are born to fail.

The aftereffects of Slavery are America's peculiar social burden--but they also illustrate the broader point: the violence that a static culture does to the American ideal of constant mobility.

When people think they can't control their fate, that they can't play by the same rules as everybody else, they fail.

From outside the country it is obvious that America's greatest strength is its willingness to keep opening itself to the ambitions of new people, and that its greatest vulnerability is the barriers that keep other Americans out.

The Class War

American society is not egalitarian, but it is democratic.

There has always been a class structure--the distribution of income between rich and poor has been surprisingly constant throughout the years--but not a powerful class system.

Confucianism Comes to America

The concepts that now are making America a rigid society began to develop over a century ago...the growth of the professions, the use of ability measures such as IQ, and the channeling of American institutions.

The emphasis on formal schooling has introduced an unnatural "Confucian" element into the American culture.

Confucian societies are meant to be static. They honor the scholar, teach children always to defer to parents, and assign people very early in life to the rank they will hold as adults.

Three factors:

- i) expansion of expert professions, which artificially strengthened the connection between advanced schooling and economic success
- ii) the notion that certain people simply could not succeed in school and were therefore destined to lead lower-class lives
- iii) the use of government power to steer people toward the careers and social class that their background seemed to dictate.

Licensed professions

This is a phenomenon of relatively recent origin.

The tools of licensing now have government backing,
even as they restrict access and enhance earning capacity

An example: the MBA...

...in 1960s only 7,000 per year

...in 1990s, 70,000 per year

Another example: choosing public servants through civil service tests

With the rise of educational requirements and licenses, the
formula for success and mobility changed. How someone
prepared for a job became at least as important as how well
he actually did it.

To see how harmful this has been, imagine the condition of the
American computer industry if hardware and software
designers had to be licensed, like accountants.

The rise of the professions enhanced the importance of schools
in determining how Americans rose and fell.

It hurt those who neglected their schooling early and then found
that their options were closed.

It pushed the crucial life decisions to a much earlier point in
a person's life, because success or failure in school
counted so heavily.

The idea of ability

The outgrowth of the "science" of psychometrics--mental
measurement--also contributed to making America more rigid.

The Japanese assumption is that just about everybody has
"enough" ability; what tests really measure is determination.

American IQ and SAT tests convey the opposite message:
"Don't worry about cramming, students--this is a measure
of the real you."

Somehow we have developed the quite incorrect idea that
IQ (or whatever) was something inborn and unchangeable.

Second, we concluded that these innate qualities were very
important in daily life.

The idea that inherited, precisely measurable abilities were
the main limit on what people could hope to do was
destructive. The whole idea of starting over was not valid
if people's innate abilities determined what jobs they
could hold.

The rise of professions had heightened the importance of
school, and the rise of mental testing indicated who was
destined to do well in school and therefore in life.

America was moving toward a Confucian model without
a Confucian society (racially homogeneous, conditioned
to obey authority and be content in lowly ranks) to back
it up.

Government Channeling

Government reinforced this by steering people...

...through draft

...through civil service

...through validation of professions

There are obvious tensions between channeling and the
American idea that any one can grow up to be president.

Channeling is not only at odds with the notion that
Americans should always have a second chance;
it meant that many Americans didn't even have a
first chance.

The radius of trust became smaller, because some
Americans were simply better than others.

And the average American's belief that he could control
his fate naturally decreased.

The worst part about these changes is that they were
completely unnecessary. There is no good reason for

modern America to sort people into categories early in life. Even the most advanced, technological, and internally competitive parts of American life can be open to newcomers making new starts.

What Morons Could Do

The term “meritocracy” was introduced by Michael Young in his short satire, “The Rise of the Meritocracy”.

Taken literally, it means “rule by the meritorious”—and while this should be the goal of the American dream, in reality many people assume that the current system of school tracking, tests, and professional organizations is about as efficient a meritocracy as we’re likely to have.

The starting point for today’s meritocracy, of course, is the idea that intelligence exists and can be measured.

We assume that IQ falls in a bell-shaped curve.

In contrast, in Japan the prevailing idea is that intelligence among Japanese is like health. Most people are thought to have “enough”.

It is also clear that “intelligence” is frequently uncorrelated with how one does in life. Why start channeling people early if most of them really can handle most jobs? Why not let them end up where they will, by trial or error, or encourage them to keep starting over?

A good example here is the GI Bill. Hutchins of Chicago and Conant of Harvard were distressed because it did not “distinguish between those who can profit most by advanced education and those who cannot”. Yet, the 2.3 million veterans enrolling became the most successful group of students American universities have ever seen.

Japan’s theory of intelligence is designed to make everyone rise to challenges. Japan is often, and accurately, described as having the “best bottom 50% on earth”.

Americans assume we need channeling for social order. But the preoccupation with “ability” rather than “competence” has only made our society more rigid. (The teaching profession itself is an obvious case in point!)

Whenever scholars have looked closely at what people do in their jobs, they’ve found substantial differences between what it takes to get a job and what it takes to do it well. Part of the problem is that as licensing requirements have become more restrictive and been based even more on schooling, they haven’t necessarily been tied to practical job skills. Moreover, once a person does get a license, he’s practically immune from later scrutiny.

A New Status System

The traditional forms of American snobbery have been those based on race, money, and family name.

We now have a new status system based on education.

It may seem odd to complain about an overemphasis on “intelligence” at a time when Americans trail the developed world in their knowledge of geography, foreign languages, math,...

But snobbish exclusiveness based on the idea of innate intellectual superiority is different from real scholarship and is connected to several harmful cleavages in American culture.

Two powerful institutions encouraged the sense that most Americans were part of a single, broad, common culture.

i) the public school system

ii) the pre-Vietnam War draft

However, both began to erode in the 1960s and 1970s...

...the draft was skewed by the Vietnam policy and later by an all-volunteer force

...and public schools became more stratified by
income and class, just as residential neighborhoods
have become

The aristocracy of intellectual merit poses a danger to America.

Rather than liberating, certain “intellectually driven”
occupations have become our “version” of gentlemen’s work.
For smart people they offer the most secure and predictable
financial returns and the most prestige. They steer
well-trained people away from the most creative and
useful jobs.

Law is the principal example. The “best”, most talented
students find the temptations of law hard to resist.
In the 1950s, 5% of Phi Beta Kappas became lawyers.
In the 1970s, 20%...in 1990, perhaps 50%.

The Reopening of America

America is strongest when it is most open and optimistic.
When ordinary people believe they have a fair chance, they
usually to their best and the country benefits from their efforts.
But if Americans think they are trapped, cheated, stuck, or doomed,
most of them do not try.

An excellent case in point has been the experience of blacks.
In those fields in which they have a chance to compete fairly
and be judged strictly on how well they perform, they
have tried hard and excelled

...in the military
...in sports
...in show business
...most recently in politics

It is clear that the way to make America more like us is to allow
more people to believe that they can control their fate.

We shouldn’t try to imitate the Japanese. Indeed, in one sense
the present American trade deficit simply means that
Japanese and Korean workers are toiling to subsidize us.
America’s long-term prosperity depends on millions of people
being motivated to try their best day by day.

Anything that convinces Americans that they have been denied
a fair chance weakens the country and exposes it to the
many divisive forces built into a big, disorderly,
untraditional, multiracial society.

Example 1:

We should shift public spending from “entitlement”
to “insurance”...

Too much of the money that we pay in taxes is already
committed to “automatic” spending--on interest payments,
retirement programs, Medicare...

The main problem is not defense...in fact, as a share of the
GNP it is lower today than it was in the 1950s.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the government spent only 20% of
the GNP; today it spends 25%. That’s where the federal
debt--and the limit on future freedom of action--comes
from; where most of the spending, in turn, comes from is
middle-class entitlement programs, such as Social Security
and Medicare.

These middle-class entitlements have become less like
insurance against difficulty and more like a guaranteed
subsidy or reward. The financial structure of Social Security
and Medicare has been so designed that the typical
beneficiary is paid much more than he and his employer
contributor. Someone retiring in 1990 can expect to receive
about 50% more than contributions.

Of course, this reduces everyone’s flexibility. Most Americans
pay more today for retirement programs than they do in
federal income tax.

Michael Boskin notes: "Above and beyond replacing income for low-income retirees, Social Security is transferring billions annually from the general taxpaying working population to well-off retirees. It would be hard to imagine Congress voting to transfer \$800 billion to well-off elderly individuals, financed by a flat-rate payroll tax. yet that is exactly what the Social Security system is doing!"

Example 2: Dealing with the legacy of slavery

Racial diversity is not America's problem, no matter what the Japanese think.

American society has absorbed people of all backgrounds, including many thought unabsorbable when they arrived.

Rather the problem is that slavery, which ended only 125 years ago and legalized segregation, which ended only a generation ago, contributed to a culture that still leaves people feeling trapped and helpless.

Racial prejudice, in the form of slavery and segregation, was a necessary condition to the creation of today's underclass, but as the success of black immigrants and the black middle class shows, it is not sufficient. The culture left over from slavery also played a part; it convinced people that they would never be allowed to rise.

Working out solutions to the growth of the underclass is America's most complicated challenge.

Two points might help:

- i) Welfare should be tied to work. Just as everyone should be entitled to insurance against disaster but not to guaranteed subsidies, everyone should be expected to work in exchange for benefits paid for by other Americans. Instead of offering cash welfare benefits, the federal government should offer jobs to anyone unable to find work elsewhere. The goal should be to reinforce the idea that the society runs on work, and that individuals are finally responsible for themselves.
- ii) The second principle is that children should not be hobbled for the rest of their lives because they start out in third-rate schools. This may require vouchers and choice to shake things up.

Example 3: Deemphasizing credentials and eliminating Confucianism

Modern American should not use schools as a filter, sorting people into categories early in life.

Rather professions should be deregulated to:

- i) ignore educational background wherever possible
- ii) to let people perform whatever service they've shown they can perform competently, whether or not they have prepared for it in the conventional way
- iii) to keep judging people on competence even after they've gone into practice.

Example 4: Letting immigrants in

Immigration is important in both a practical and symbolic way.

It continues to be America's major advantage over other countries, particularly Japan. A disproportionate share of the ambitious people of the world are fighting for the chance to use their ambitions in America.

The economic evidence about immigration is an open and shut case. Immigrants are disproportionately entrepreneurial, determined, and adaptable, and through history, they have strengthened the economy of whatever society they join.

Of course there are fears, expressed as:

"None of the great outpourings of human civilization was, so far as I know, prompted by immigration. In fact, Attic Greece, Imperial Rome, Han China, Renaissance Italy, Bourbon France, Imperial England all were products of a racially and culturally homogeneous people. With the most depressing regularity, it seems that the great cultures have been the

products of single peoples. I think that part of the horror of New York City is due to its ethnic heterogeneity. It is very, very hard to develop a sense of kinship or commonality with people who look, act, and sound so different from oneself. When there is no sense of commonality, there is not even the semblance of order, and where there is greatness there is always a strong sense of commonality”...

But here, we must keep in mind that America IS abnormal.

It faced the challenge of immigration in a much more intense form a century ago, and instead of being weakened, it was enriched.

In fact, at that time 1% per year was immigration--compared to only 0.2% today.

Hence our experience has been far different than other societies, and we should recognize this as a strength.

More Like Us

Japan is strong because of its groups; America because of its individuals.

Men and women who believed they could change their life found America different from any other society, and continue to make it unique.

But no society, not even this one, can survive on naked self-interest.

We see this with the drug economy, special interest politics, wheeling dealing, inequalities that leave New York's streets as beggar-ridden as Manila.

Self-interest is the basic energy that has made America go, but it has been tempered and harnessed by other powerful forces.

i) the belief in fair play

ii) face-to-face democratic contact that kept Americans

from putting on airs or separating into distinct classes

The institutions that kept Americans in contact with one another

...the public schools

...the “general” publications

...the middle-class army

may have gone beyond recall, another set of victims of America's constant change.

But new institutions can be created if we revive the idea that America is one coherent society, with bonds that are stronger than its internal differences.

The first sign that America is moving in this direction will be a reawakened sense of US. We should not be driven together by the hate of others.

But we will do better if we realize that we don't simply stand or fall on our own.

Peter Drucker--Managing Nonprofits

The Commitment

The key quality of leadership is not charisma, but a sense of mission. Hence the first job of a leader is to think through and define the mission of the institution.

A mission statement has to focus on what the institution really tries to do and then do it so that everybody in the organization can say, “This is my contribution to the goal.”

One of the problems about mission statements for colleges is that they are too confused--they are trying to do too many different things.

You have to think through which are the few things that can be accomplished that will do the most.

There are several “musts” for a successful mission:

i) Do better what you already do well--if it's the right thing to do.

ii) Look outside at the opportunities and the needs.

iii) Must determine what one really believes in, since nothing will be done well unless people are committed.

These are the three factors:

- 1) competence
- 2) opportunities
- 3) commitment

Every mission statement has to reflect all three or it will fail to mobilize the human resources of the organization for getting the right things done.

Leadership is a Foul-Weather Job

The most important task of an organization's leader is to anticipate crisis...not to avert it, but to anticipate it.

It is important to recognize that change is not a threat.

It's an opportunity.

Unfortunately, most of our reporting systems don't reveal opportunities; they report problems; they report the past.

Hence, it is difficult to develop the new within an existing operation. It usually must be set up separately.

Leaders need to be folks who can look at a situation and say this is not what I was hired to do or what I was expected to do, but this is what the job requires---and so I'll roll up my sleeves and do it.

How does one pick a leader?

First, look for strength.

Next, identify the key immediate challenge for the institution--eg., raising money, building morale,...

Then, look for character or integrity.

Note, mediocrity in the leadership of a nonprofit shows up far more rapidly than in other areas. The leader of a nonprofit doesn't have much time to establish himself.

Leaders who work most effectively never say "I"...they say and think "we".

Need the willingness, ability, and self-discipline to listen.

Listening is not a skill; it's a discipline. Anybody can do it.

Second, one needs the willingness to communicate, to make oneself understood. This requires infinite patience, since one needs to say the same thing over and over again.

The last basic competence is the willingness to realize how unimportant you are compared to the task. The worst thing one can say about a leader is that on the day he left, the organization collapsed!

One should not give his life to an organization...but rather one's very best efforts.

One of the key tasks of a leader is to balance up the long range and the short range, the big picture and the pesky details.

Cannot deal only with the big picture and forget the individuals who are dealing with the events of the moment. yet also cannot become a prisoner of operations.

Some "don'ts" of leadership:

Far too many believe that when they announce things, everyone understands. Yet no one does at first, as a rule.

But very often one can't bring in people before the decision; there just isn't enough time for discussion or participation.

Hence effective leaders have to spend a little time on making themselves understood...and explaining (perhaps after the fact) why certain decisions were made.

Don't be of strengths in your organization. Able people are ambitious.

The first task of the leader is to make sure that everybody sees the mission, hears it, lives it.

The New Segregation on Campus (D'Souza)

The Problem

Nowhere is the new segregation more evident than in

that seemingly most progressive of institutions,
the American University.

Of all American institutions, perhaps only the military
brings people of such different backgrounds into more
intimate contact.

See proliferation of separatist minority organizations in
virtually every college campus.

Students remark on the widespread phenomenon of
“black tables” at the dining halls.

It is no exaggeration to say that many colleges are divided
into sharply distinct ethnic subcultures--black, Hispanic,
Asian, and a (residual) white culture.

Rhodes: “We face an unresolved conflict between the
natural impulse toward proud separate racial and ethnic
identity on one hand, and the genuine desire, on the other,
for meaningful integration that transcends differences of
background.”

The Response

University leaders have developed a model of “pluralism” that
they say replaces the antiquated concept of integration.

While integration relied upon the concept of racial groups
dissolving their distinctive cultural habits into a common
American culture, pluralism affirms and accentuates ethnic
differences.

The “melting pot” has been replaced by the “salad bowl”.

Far from asking racial and ethnic groups to jettison their
particularities, universities help to preserve the varied
cultural ingredients that produce a rich and savory
“multiculturalism” or “diversity”.

The only problem with this vision is that the campuses most
dedicated to advancing pluralism of this sort are precisely
the ones undergoing the greatest volume of racial tension
and racial incidents.

We have failed to tutor young people in the lessons of the civil
rights movement, thus allowing an upsurge of adolescent
prejudice to express itself unembarrassed and unchecked.

Students come to college thinking of themselves as “individuals”
or “Americans” but soon begin to think of themselves as
African American, Asian American or whatever.

What is going on?

The answer begins with admission policies at American universities.

They strive to “proportional representation” so that the racial
groups on campus roughly approximate their proportion in
the general population.

Unfortunately, the number of students from affirmative action
minority groups who meet the demanding admissions standards
of selective colleges is extremely small:

In 1988, 100,000 blacks took SAT

...116 scored above 700 on verbal

...342 scored above 700 on math

...average white-black differential is 200 points

Overall effect of aggressive preferential treatment programs is to
assemble freshmen classes with racial groups of measurably
unequal preparation. Moreover, from the perspective of
academic qualifications, such programs misplace minority
students throughout higher education--students who are
prepared for Towson State are admitted to the University
of Illinois

Blacks on predominantly white campuses undergo “feelings of
competitive rejection” that lead to lethargy, depression, and
fear of failure

Affirmative action students are usually astonished at their academic
hardships, because for the year before college they have enjoyed

the avid courtship of admissions officers who have assured them that they belong at the university.

The high expectations of these minority students are typically eroded by the end of the first semester...and they begin to look for comfort and security among their peers in a similar situation.

Reaction

These separatist institutions have no remedy for the students' academic problems, so instead they offer an attractive rationalization: minority students suffer not because they are inadequately prepared for the work, but because of the pervasive bigotry that makes it impossible for them to advance.

Once racism is held accountable for minority unrest on campus, it is now up to students to find, expose, and extirpate it.

However comprehensive the effort of universities to ameliorate minority concerns, it seldom succeeds. Eventually minority discontent, which was spawned in large part because of academic difficulties, returns to the classroom.

This leads quickly to demands for a multicultural curriculum

Reality

Surveys have shown that today's generation of young people has remarkably tolerant views, including widespread acceptance of interracial dating.

White students tend to have a mixed response to minority separatism.

Minority separatist institutions are most irritating, not so much because they are separate, but because in many cases they become institution launching pads for systematic attacks directed against whites.

In summary, university policies of preferentialism and double standards create racial division and tension on campus, and when this happens administrators call for an intensification and multiplication of such policies.

When legitimate questions about equality and fairness are repressed by an atmosphere of accusation, intimidation, and censorship, they tend to ferment under the surface and finally erupt in perverse, rebellious, and outrageous expression.

MLK's legacy is being undone by university activists and leaders who claim to be advancing the civil rights cause. But, alas, the only consequence of their policies seems to be the encouragement of bigotry and racial division, which do not bode well for America's future as a multicultural community.

Student Activism

The "counterculture" movement attempted to reject the norms of adult middleclass life; but the rejection was profoundly middleclass in spirit.

Middleclass Americans are a driven, pampered, puritanical, and self-indulgent group of people.

Before the 60s these contradictions were rationalized by the principle of deferred gratification: you exercised self-discipline in order to gain entrance to a profession, show showed dererence to those above you on the career ladder, and the material rewards followed and could be enjoyed more or less promiscuously.

Students attack these "false gods"...e.g., students who tore up the university in an apparent frenzy of self-destructiveness--for wasn't the university their gateway to the good life?--were, in effect, smashing the golden calf.

Once the media discovered it, the counterculture ceased being a youth culture and became a commercial culture for which youth was a principal market.

The silliest charge brought against the 60s was moral relativism.

This suggests that ordinary life must be built on the solid

foundations of moral values, and the 60s persuaded people that the foundations weren't solid, and that any morality would do that got you through the night.

The accusation isn't just wrong about the 60s, it is an injustice to the dignity of ordinary life, which is an irredeemably pragmatic, and open-ended affair. You couldn't make it through even a day if you held every transaction up to scrutiny by the lights of some received moral code.

Radicals and youthful counterculture types in the 60s weren't moral relativists. They were moral absolutists. They scrutinized everything, and they believed that they could live by the distinctions they made.

America's college students are changing.

No longer do they exude the unbridled optimism of the early 1980s...

...now "pragmatically optimistic" or "cynically optimistic".

They also seem imbued with a new spirit of social activism.

More than one-third report having participated in a demonstration.

Half are involved in volunteer work.

This constellation of changes--rising optimism, the revival of heroes, increasing social involvement--marks a transition in the character of college students.

Historically students have followed a cyclical pattern, oscillating back and forth between personal preoccupation and social engagement.

Three periods of student self-absorption have occurred, following

WWI, WWII, and the Vietnam war...each lasting 15 years.

...following WW

The recent era of student self-preoccupation is drawing to a close.

Students appear to be making the transition to a period of social engagement.

In the next few years can expect to see a revival of political activism on campus and more student interest in the "relevance" of college courses. We should also expect students to be more concerned about international and social issues and in campus governance.

Campuses have been slow to perceive such changes and even slower to respond...thereby generating student anger.

Steps to take:

- i) Does the curriculum teach students knowledge needed for civic engagement.
- ii) Are there adequate opportunities for community service?
- iii) Do current governance mechanisms allow for student involvement and reflect values inherent in an engaged academic community--commitment to truth, equity, fairness, and mutual respect?
- iv) How do colleges communicate ethics and values?

Cultural Differences

While Americans say "the squeaky wheel gets the grease", the Japanese say "the nail that stands out get pounded down".

While individualism runs deep in Western cultures, it is not a strong tradition in other cultures.

The "collectivist cultures" comprise about 70% of the world's population.

The cardinal American virtues of self-reliance and individualism are at odds with those of most non-Western cultures.

The nature of American individualism has been changing toward a greater emphasis on raw self-interest, and that the rise of individualism in a society goes hand in hand with economic growth.

The "what's in it for me" search for immediate gratification is increasingly becoming before other loyalties...such as commitments like marriage.

Collectivists are very nice to members of their own groups, there is a strong distrust of other groups. Can see this in the ethnic fighting common in many other parts of the world.

In an individualist culture, people's personal goals take priority over their

allegiance to groups like the family or the employer.
 In such cultures, people subscribe to values like “winning is everything” and “to be superior, a man must stand alone”.

Collectivist societies put high values on self-discipline, accepting one’s position in life, honoring parents and elders, preserving one’s public image for the sake of the group.

Individualists stress equality, freedom, having an exciting and varied life, and personal enjoyment.

People with a collective focus tend to think in terms of long-term goals, which benefit the whole group.

Individualists, by contrast, look for immediate rewards for their efforts.

Growing affluence and geographic mobility contribute to the spread of individualism in a culture. As countries like Japan become more prosperous, people start to show more signs of individualism, especially the young and urban.

In middleclass America, people think of themselves as a bundle of traits, preferences, and desires. In Asian culture, people conceive themselves in terms of a dense web of social relations.

Failure to realize the limited appeal of individualism around the world leads to basic errors in social sciences like economics. The pitfall is in overgeneralizing how essential a part of human nature individualism is; a “greedy self-interest” cannot be assumed as an “eternal law of human nature”.

In earlier days the individualism in America was one that also honored community values. Today we have an ideology of individualism that simply encourages people to maximize personal advantage. This leads to a consumer politics in which “What’s in it for me?” is all that matters, while considerations for the common good are increasingly irrelevant.

There is a better model in the democracies in Europe, where there is still a strong sense of the dignity of the individual with an equally strong social responsibility.

Multiculturalism vs Particularism (Ravitch)

Of course students should still study Western culture, and they should learn about the emergence of the democratic ideology and the concept of individual freedom that have been so crucial in the history of the world. But they must also learn about the cultures of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. These all represent complex civilizations, containing many cultural groups and different languages.

The real issue on campus is not whether there should be multiculturalism, but what kind there is. Two versions presently compete:

- i) One approach reflects cultural pluralism and accepts diversity as a fact
- ii) The other represents particularism and demands loyalty to a particular group.

The two coexist uncomfortably, because they are opposite in spirit and purpose.

The pluralism approach recognizes that the common American culture has been shaped by the interaction of the nation’s many diverse cultural elements. It sees American culture as the creation of many groups of immigrants, Native Americans, Africans,... yielding a culture that demonstrates the comingling of diverse cultures in one nation. Paradoxical though it may seem, the United States has a common culture that is multicultural.

The particularist approach to American culture can be seen most vividly in ethnic-studies programs whose goal is to “raise the self-esteem” of students by providing role models. Particularists seek to attach their students to their ancestral homelands as the source of their personal identity and authentic culture.

The pluralists promote a broader interpretation of common American culture by recognizing first that there IS a common culture, and second that it has been created by many groups. At its most basic, our

common culture is a civic culture, shaped by our Constitution, our commitment to democratic values, and our historical experience as a nation.

- The cohesive element in the pluralistic approach is the clear acknowledgement that, whatever our differences, we are all human.
- Particularists have no interest in extending American culture; indeed, they deny that a common culture exists. They do not appeal to the common good, because their idea of community is defined along racial or ethnic lines. They espouse a version of history in which everyone is either the descendant of victims or of oppression. By doing so, ancient hatreds are fanned and recreated in each generation.
- Particularism has spurred a separatist ethic in higher education. Students are taught to believe in the subject, to immerse themselves in its truths, and to champion them against skeptics. They are taught to believe, not to doubt or criticize.
- The severing of such courses from established disciplines probably encourages separatism and ideological extremism.
- The essential difference between pluralism and particularism is that the former actively combats ethnocentrism and the latter purposefully teaches it. Yet ethnocentrism is the spectre that has been haunting the world for centuries--causing war, injustice, and civil conflict.
- The purposes of education should be not to reproduce and reinforce the prejudices of our inherited culture.

America's Decadent Puritans (The Economist)

- The world views America with mixed feelings.
- Japanese will mention idleness and self-indulgence.
- Europeans mention philistinism and naivety.
- Others mention insensitivity, boorishness, materialism
drugs, guns, crime; a television culture catering to
the lowest common denominator of public taste,
shocking contrasts of wealth and poverty,
a moralistic and litigious approach to free expression.
- America attracts such bile partly because it is more
self-critical than other nations.
- Hypocrisy is often in the eye of the beholder; how dare
a European look down his nose at a country to whose
universities his brightest fellow-citizens choose to flock.
- To criticize America is to criticize what the future holds
in store.
- Nevertheless, the Economist is concerned about a
phenomenon that might be called "decadent puritanism"
in America...an odd combination of ducking responsibility
and telling everyone else what to do.
- The decadence lies in too readily blaming others for
problems, rather than accepting responsibility oneself.
- America's litigiousness is virtually banishing the concept
of bad luck. To allow legal redress for negligence, or
to seek to rehabilitate rather than punish victims
are worthy aims. But fair redress is not always
appropriate; sometimes the buck must simply stop.
- Just as an over-padded welfare state breeds a habit of
blaming and expecting help from government, so
America's legalism breeds a habit of shifting burdens
on to somebody else.
- Another facet of this phenomenon is the warped idea that
the problem with America's underclass is a lack of
self-esteem, and that the answer to poor educational
performance is to teach more self-esteem. Bunk.
- The characteristic that in the past drove generations of
immigrants from the underclass to prosperity was
not self-esteem, it was self-discipline. The reason that
Japanese schoolchildren--and the children of Asian
immigrants in America--learn so much more than their

American counterparts is discipline, not self-esteem. There are few countries on earth in which people are generally less prejudiced about color than America. Yet there are few countries where the issue looms so large; where pressure groups are so quick to take offence at a careless remark, or where words are made to carry such a weight of meaning. Some universities, egged on by their students, have recently imposed disgraceful restrictions on free speech rather than let bigots speak out on campus and be judged for what they are. As for puritanism, America's search for fairness has begun to conflict with its famous tolerance for new peoples, new ideas, and new technology. A conformist tyranny of the majority, an intolerance of any eccentricity, is creeping into America. As Americans get even richer, they seem to grow more risk-averse, so that they become paranoid about hazardous waste in their district, obsessed with their cholesterol levels, etc.

If we are all to enjoy the 21st century, America must lighten up a bit.

The Journey Up From Guilt (George Will)

The middle class has begun giving up guilt. Example come from the Chronicle of Higher Education: "Racial Tensions Continue to Erupt on Campuses Despite Efforts to Promote Cultural Diversity" "Despite"? Try "because of". A multitude of sins are committed and excused in the service of "diversity". On campuses tensions reflect the fact that many people are now resisting being conscripted into the role of the guilty. The rhetoric of collective guilt has worn our its welcome. The repudiation of collective guilt may mark a historic cultural turning. Collective guilt has long been a familiar idiom of contemporary politics. The middle class is weary of boing on a moral treadmill, unable to avoid guilt even by leading blameless lives because guilt arises from membership in a guilty society. Proliferating communities of victimhood assert their own histories and value systems to go with their grievances. They nominate pantheons of heros (hence anthologies of "gay poets" and exhibits of "feminist artists"). Universities are balkanized by the multiplication of black studies, women's studies, homosexual studies, and so on.

Humble Decision Making (Amitai Etzioni)

Decision making in the 1990s will be even more of an art and less of a science that it is today, since non only is the world growing more complex and uncertain, but the old decision-making models are failing. A new decision making model is evolving that understands that executives must often proceed with only partial information which they have had no time to fully process or analyze. He calls this model "humble decision making".

Rationalism:

Rationalists argue that decision makers should and could explore every route that might lead to their goal, collect information about the costs and utility of each, compare these alternatives, and select the most effective course.

Simply cannot expect to do this today. Not enough knowledge (and too much information). Executives

today face continuing information overloads but little growth in the amount of knowledge usable for most decisions.

Actually, decision making was never as straightforward as the rationalists would have us think. Psychologists note that the human mind cannot handle the complexities that important decisions entail. For example, at best we can focus on 708 items at a time.

Hence, decisions makers allow emotions to get in the way..

...defensive avoidance (delaying decisions unduly)

...overreaction (making decisions impulsively in order to escape the anxious state)

...hypervigilance (obsessively collecting more and more information instead of making a decision)

Political factors are another complicating consideration.

By disregarding the emotions and politics of decision making, rationalism has taught executives to expect more of themselves than is either possible or desirable.

Successful decision making strategies must necessarily include a place for cooperation, coalition building, and the whole panorama of differing personalities, perspectives, responsibilities, and powers.

Incrementalism (or “muddling through”)

This strategy involves not so much moving toward a goal as moving away from trouble...trying this or that small maneuver without any grand plan or sense of ultimate purpose.

This eliminates the need for complete information by focusing on limited areas, one at a time.

It avoids the danger of grand policy decisions by not making any.

Its main weakness is that it is highly conservative; it invariably chooses a direction close to the prevailing one; grand new departures, radical changes in course, do not occur.

Damn the torpedos...

This approach is openly opposed to reflection and analysis.

It calls on executives to steam full speed ahead and remake the world rather than seek to understand it.

Pumping enough resources, dedication, and ingenuity into the course they have fixed on can make it work, can render an underprocessed decision right.

Yet this course is much more likely to end in shipwreck than in victory, particularly in ever more treacherous seas.

Rational Ritualism

Executives and staffs take part in an information dance whose prescribed moves include the data pas de deux and the interpretation waltz...except the data is generally poor.

They make ritualistic projections...and know enough to avoid them.

“Humble Decision Making”...or Adaptive Decision Making

Adaptive decision making or mixed scanning involves a mixture of shallow and deep examination of data--generalized considerations of a broad range of facts and choices followed by detailed examination of a focused subset of facts and choices.

Mixed scanning contrasts strongly with rationalism and incrementalism by using two sets of judgements:

i) broad, fundamental choices about the organization's basic policy and direction

ii) incremental decisions that prepare the way for new basic judgments and that implement and particularize them once they have been made

Hence, this is much less detailed and demanding than rationalistic decision making, but still broader and more comprehensive than incrementalism.

This is an adaptive strategy that acknowledges our inability

to know more than part of what we would need to make a genuinely rational decision.

Incrementalism is profoundly cautious and avoids decisions based on partial knowledge; mixed scanning seeks to make the best possible use of partial knowledge rather than proceed blindly with no knowledge at all.

A good example is medical diagnosis...focus rapidly on possible causes of symptoms and try treatment...but are rapid to evaluate and change, if necessary.

Specific Tools

Focused trail and error

...knowing where to start the search for a solution...

...checking outcomes at intervals to adjust and modify the intervention

Tentativeness

...a commitment to revise one's course as necessary

Procrastination

...delay permits the collection of fresh evidence, the processing of additional data, the presentation of new options

...it can also give the problem to recede untreated

Decision staggering

...phasing implementation to see impact

Fractalizing

...treats important judgments as a series of subdecisions

Hedging bets

...spreading investments over several alternatives

Maintaining strategic reserves

...need reserves to cover unanticipated costs and to respond to unforeseen opportunities

Reversible decisions

...avoid overcommitment in face of partial information by making only decisions that can be reverse

This list of adaptive techniques illustrates key features:

...flexibility

...caution

...the capacity to proceed with partial knowledge

Only fools make rigid decisions and decisions with no sense of overarching purpose.

Most effective leaders probably already practice humble decision making...applying the good sense and versatility of this tested, realistic model.

NAE Notes

Quote:

Great universities are not defined by what they do...

...but rather by what they choose not to do!

Public Criticism

Most public criticisms fall into two categories:

i) cost: by assuming all universities cost \$20 K/y

ii) research: all universities do too much research

In reality, most universities (2,900) are inexpensive and do NO research. Only the most elite privates are expensive...and only the research universities do significant research.

Perhaps fewer than 10% of universities do this.

Hence, in reality, the public attack is suggesting that we make these few universities like all the rest...

That we make Harvard more like South Dakota State...

In a sense, the public wants to convert those few institutions they really respect...into those they do not.

If the Harvards and Michigans are doing things so poorly, then why does everyone want their children to attend them...and why do employers always want to hire their graduates?

Gordon Gee:

The difference between whether a university is excellent or elitist depends on whether your child was admitted or not...

Science Education

National longitudinal study shows that the subject with the strongest correlation to earning capacity is advanced mathematics. The more advanced courses one takes, the more they end up earning.

Over half of all industry CEOs have engineering training.

Reich Notes

New Republic Article (1988)

In fact, as Robert Reich has noted in his recent article in The New Republic, a company with headquarters in the US, production facilities in Taiwan, and a marketing force spread across many nations competes with another, similarly ecumenical company.

This has extraordinary implications, since it means that we all are really part of an international labor market encompassing Asian, African, Western Europe, etc.

Hence, our competitiveness as workers depends not on the fortunes of any American corporation, or any American industry, but on what function each of us serve within the global economy.

This has created dramatic discrepancies in America...

...those professions involved with the manipulation of information, so-called "symbolic-analytic services", are highly competitive in the world marketplace and seeing incomes rising rapidly.

...in sharp contrast, those involved in routine production services or routine personal services are simply no longer competitive, and will continue to suffer from declining real income levels for the foreseeable future since they are competing directly with other low-skilled workers throughout the world.

New York Times (1/91)

The key unifying theme for modern American communities is similar incomes. Hence, educational backgrounds are likely to be similar, and they indulge in the same consumer impulses.

America's high earners, the top fifth, increasingly feel justified in paying only what is necessary to insure that everyone in their community is sufficiently well educated and has access to the public services they need to succeed. This top fifth took home more money than the other 4/5s combined.

But while there is a continuing debate about whether this group is paying its fair share, it is certainly clear that this "fortunate fifth" is quietly seceding from the rest of the nation.

The secession is taking several forms. In many cities, the wealthy have in effect withdrawn their dollars from the support of public spaces and institutions shared by all and dedicated the savings to their own private services.

This secession is dramatic because the highest earners now inhabit a different economy from other Americans. Most of their jobs consist of analyzing and manipulating symbols--words, numbers, or visual images. Among the most prominent of these "symbolic analysts" are management consultants, lawyers, software and design engineers, financial advisors,...

These symbolic analysts are in great demand in a world market that places an increasing value on identifying and solving problems. This largely explains why most symbolic analysts have become wealthy, even as the ever-growing worldwide supply of unskilled labor continues to depress the wages of other Americans.

George Bush said that the real magnanimity of America was to be found in a "brilliant diversity" of private charities. But close

examination reveals that many of these acts of benevolence do not really help the needy. Indeed, most voluntary contributions of wealthy Americans go to the places and institutions that entertain, inspire, cure, or educate wealthy Americans.

And even these charitable contributions are relatively skimpy:

...American households with incomes of \$10,000 gave 5.5%

...Those with incomes over \$100,000 gave 2.9%

...Those with incomes over \$500,000 gave \$16,000 in 1988, compared to \$47,000 in 1980

Corporate philanthropy is following the same pattern

...Despite the hoopla, business donations to education and charitable causes tapered off markedly during the 1980s

...Most gifts went to alma maters of symbolic analysts

...only 1.5% of corporate contributions went to K-12

...Notably, these contributions have been smaller than the amounts corporations are receiving from states and communities in the form of subsidies or tax breaks. The paradoxical result has been even less corporate revenue to spend on schools and other community services than before.

Example: GM's successful efforts to reduce taxes in North Tarrytown by \$1 M in 1990, forcing town to lay off scores of teachers.

The secession of the fortunate fifth has been most apparent in how and where they have chosen to work and live. Most urban centers are now splintered into two separate cities...

...One composed of symbolic analysts

...And the other composed of local service workers

Symbolic analysts spend considerable time and energy insuring that their children gain entrance to good private schools, and then small fortunes keeping them there--dollars that might under a more progressive tax code finance better public education.

Also a physical separation. Engineers and strategists of American auto companies do not live in Flint or Saginaw, where the blue collar workers reside; they cluster in their own towns of Troy and Auburn Hills.

This secession has been encouraged by the federal government which during the 1980s shifted responsibilities for many public services to local governments.

The growing inequality in government services has been most apparent in the public schools.

The 4/5s of Americans left in the wake of the secession of the fortunate fifth include many poor Blacks. But racial exclusion is neither a primary motive for the separation nor a necessary consequence, since many high-income Black symbolic analysts also exist. The segregation is economic rather than racial, although economically motivated separation often results in de facto racial segregation.

In all these ways, the gap between America's symbolic analysts and everyone else is widening into a chasm.

In the new global economy--in which money, technologies, and corporations cross borders effortlessly--a citizen's standard of living depends more and more on skills and insights, and on the infrastructure needed to link these abilities to the rest of the world.

But the most skilled and insightful Americans, who are already positioned to thrive in the world market, are not able to slip the bonds of national allegiance, and by doing so disengage themselves from their less favored fellows.

The stark political challenge in the decades ahead will be to reaffirm that, even though America is no longer a separate and distinct economy, it is still a society whose members have

abiding obligations to one another.

Atlantic Monthly (1/91): The Real Economy

We are presented with tradeoffs

...growth or fairness, private investment or public spending,
tax cuts for the rich or entitlements for everyone else

But these are the real choices facing Americans.

Republican economics is wrong

The success of American capitalism no longer depends
on the private investments of highly motivated
American capitalists.

Our nation's economic future depends instead on our
unique attributes--the skills and insights of our work
force, and how well we link those skills and insights
to the world economy.

The Democrats are also wrong.

Government's role is not just to spread the wealth.

It is to build our human capital and infrastructure,
and to bargain with global capital on our behalf.

To prepare us for the 21st Century, American economic
policy must be adapted to the new realities of the world economy.

Global Capital

The investments of wealthier Americans no longer trickle down to
the rest of the American population. Instead, they trickle out to
wherever on the globe the best returns can be had.

American capital also leaves the US in the form of factories, equipment,
and laboratories placed in foreign lands by American-owned
companies.

Wealthy Americans may reap high returns from their worldwide
investments, but the rest of us enjoy few of the beneficial
consequences. With the connections between American
capitalists and the American economy thus unraveling, all
that remains rooted within our borders is the American *people*.

National Assets

The answer isn't simply to take money from the wealthy and spread
it around, as Democrats want to do.

The new logic of economic nationalism: the skills and insights of a
nation's work force, and the quality of its infrastructure (transportation,
communication) are what make it unique, and uniquely attractive,
in the new world economy.

Increasingly educated brainpower--along with roads, airports, computers,
and fiber-optic cables connecting it up--determines a nation's
standard of living.

The highest earnings in most worldwide industries are to be found in
locations where specialized knowledge is brought to bear on problems
whose solutions define new horizons of possibility.

Business is profitable both because customers are willing to pay a
premium for goods and services that exactly meet their needs,
and more important, because they are knowledge-intensive business
that cannot easily be duplicated by low-cost competitors elsewhere
in the world.

The Core Skills

Look closely at high-value business and you will see three different
but related skills

...problem-solving skills required to put things together in unique ways

...problem-identify skills required to help customers understand and
meet their needs

...strategic brokers that can link together problem-solvers and
problem identifiers.

In high value businesses, profits derive not from scale and volume,
but from an ongoing discovery of connections between the solutions
to problems and the identification of new needs.

The idea of "goods" as something distinct from "services" has become
meaningless, because so much of the value provided by a

successful enterprise entails services: knowledge services.

A Nation's Key Exports

The value a nation's workforce adds to the world economy is no longer measurable in terms of products shipped across borders.

Increasingly a nation's key exports are the skills involved in solving, identifying, and brokering new problems.

The notion that products have national origins is so deeply ingrained that governments, and the publics they represent are often preoccupied with such things as calibrating trade imbalances and determine corporate taxes when they should be concerned with a far more relevant issue: what portion of the value of any given product derives from the ability of the nation's workers to conceptualize problems and solutions?

Why Ownership Matters Less

The key industrial struggle of the late 19th and early 20th century was between those who owned the machines and those who ran them.

In the emerging global economy, however, the interests both of laborers and of investors are increasingly subordinated to the interests of those who solve, identify, and broker new problems.

The increasing subordination of financial capital to intellectual capital has confused investors. As intellectual capital continues to displace plant and equipment as the key asset of corporations, shareholders find themselves in an ever more tenuous position, for much of the value of an enterprise can disappear with the departure of a few key employees.

Note that it is frequently the case that foreign investment allows the further development of US intellectual capital, hence benefiting us.

That some of the profits go back to investors abroad is of no great concern; the assets with the greatest value, commanding the highest return, remain with our borders since they are people!

The Virtuous Cycle

In the 21st Century economy, only one asset is more valuable as it is used: the problem-solving, problem-identifying, and strategic brokering skills of a nation's citizens.

Conventional economic theory assumes that a resource gets used up when it is put to work.

But human capital operates according to a different principle because people learn through practice.

Many countries are recognizing this...

...Germany's education system

...Japan's \$250 B fiber-optic network

...France's videotext system

The National Bargain

It is easier to form a virtuous relationship with global capital if you are a nation strongly committed to economic development.

But how does a decentralized and contentious democracy like the United States, which deeply distrusts concentrated power, manage to do this?

Allocating the responsibility for such negotiations to the local level generally leads to short term thinking...the "good business environment", meaning low wages, few regulations, low taxes, and generous subsidies.

Disinvestment

Even as other nations have been increasing their public investments in people and infrastructure, the US as a nation has been cutting back.

Note: Federal Government Investment Spending as % of GNP

1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990

Physical Investment: .97, 1.03, 1.14, .91, .75

Education: .43, .43, .51, .40, .37

Civil R&D: .36, .39, .42, .37, .31

Infrastructure:

Spending on infrastructure has fallen from 2.3% in 1963 to less than 1% today.

As Western Europe and Japan lay plans for smart roads,
high speed trains, national information networks, the
US lies dormant.

Education

Our investment in education has also fallen even as intellectual
capital has become a uniquely important asset.

Researchers have found that schools with smaller classes and
better paid teachers produce students who command higher
salaries once they join the workforce.

It is true that public spending per student increased 36% during 1970s
and 38% during the 1980s.

But today, per-public expenditures are below those of 8 other
nations (Sweden, Norway, Japan, Denmark, Austria, Germany,
Canada, Switzerland).

Further, demands on public education in the US have grown
significantly in the past 15 years...broken homes, crime, immigrants
Ironically the schools facing the biggest social problems have been
getting the least help.

The same story is true with colleges. Both the federal government
and state governments have backed away from higher education
(lowest increases in 30 years).

Federal funding to train workers dropped by 50% during 1980s.

Corporate investment of \$30 B is focused primarily on "executive
training", not workforce.

Can We Afford It?

The official reason for why America has stopped investing is
that we cannot afford it.

Bush: "We have more will than wallet."

But

...Americans are not overtaxed...in 1989 we paid less in taxes
as percentage of GNP (30%) than any industrialized nation

...Wealthy Americans have the lowest top tax rate of any
industrialized nation

...Nor does government overspend...accounts for a smaller
share of GNP than any other industrialized nation

But

...Republicans do not want taxes on wealthy raised

...Democrats do not want entitlement programs diminished

The current debate between Republicans and Democrats over
economic growth or fairness obscures the real issue:

How much are we willing to invest in the future productivity
of Americans.

Where could the money come from?

A more progressive income tax...\$1 trillion)

Limiting entitlements to those who need them. (\$600 B)

Defense cuts (\$450 B)

Grand total: \$2 trillion for the 1990s

This sum could constitute a significant down payment on the future
productivity of all Americans...it could be spent on education,
training, research, and infrastructure.

It should not be used to eliminate the deficit...

Deficits are not bad if they reflect borrowing to invest...

They are only bad if they represent consumption.

To be sure, we have already engaged in a consumption frenzy
in the 1980s.

Politicians and business leaders are quick to concede the central
importance of national economic strength, but they fail to
comprehend the new basis of that strength, which is to an
ever greater extent public investments in work-force skills and
infrastructure.

Bush has it wrong. "National economic strength" is not represented
by the savings and investments of individual Americans...
these generally go to consumption. Rather it is investment in

education, research, infrastructure.

The national wealth no longer depends as it once did on the accumulation of financial capital in American hands.

It depends on the skills and insights of our citizens, and on the infrastructure necessary to link them to the new world economy.

Note Democrats aren't any better: They have insulated Social Security benefits and Medicare from budget calculations. As a result, only programs for the elderly will grow for the next decade in real terms. Public investment in education, training, research, infrastructure will be frozen.

The message for Republicans and Democrats alike: Stop fighting over how much money government is taking from the wealth or redistributing to everyone else.

Start worrying about the capacity of Americans to add value to the emerging global economy.

What we own is coming to be far less important than what we are able to do!

Powershift

The entire structure of power that held the world together is disintegrating. A key, unnoticed reason for this global shake-up is the rise of a radically new system for wealth creation in which information plays a dominant role. This new system for making wealth is totally dependent on the instant communication and dissemination of data, ideas, symbols, and symbolism. It is a "super-symbolic" economy.

Money itself is becoming "de-massified". As products and services diversify, new technologies make possible a return to a condition that existed before the Industrial Revolution...the coexistence of multiple currencies in a single economy. We may be approaching the age of "designer currencies".

The new model of production that springs from the super-symbolic economy sees production as increasingly simultaneous and synthesized. The parts of the process cannot be isolated from one another.

Vast amounts of power in society have been concentrated in bureaucracies--in business, government, the military, the church, the schools. But the new system threatens the very nature of bureaucratic power.

Meanwhile, new kinds of data bases and software permit searching for information across cubbyhole barriers in an intuitive fashion. These new forms of anti-bureaucratic information storage and processing point the way toward a deep revolution in the way we think, analyze, synthesize, and express information, and a forward leap in organizational creativity. But they also eventually mean the breakup of the rigid little information monopolies that honeycomb the bureaucratic firm. And that means a painful shift of power away from the guardians of these specialized monopolies.

Nonhierarchical communications networks are being built that crisscross companies, crash through departmental perimeters and link users not merely between the specialized departments but also up and down the hierarchy. A young employee at the very bottom of the ladder now can communicate directly with top-level executives working on the same problem; and significantly, the CEO at the top can access any employee down below. They can jointly call up images, edit a proposal, or analyze a spreadsheet, all without going through middle managers.

Today's resurgence of family business is not just a passing phenomenon. We are entering a "post-bureaucratic"

era, in which the family firm is one of many alternatives to bureaucracy and the power it embodies.

What companies have not yet grasped, however, is that flexibility must cut far deeper--right to the very structure of the organization. The rigid, uniform structure of the firm must be replaced by a diversity of organizational arrangements. To grasp the "flex-firm" concept, it helps to remind ourselves that bureaucracy is only one of an almost infinite variety of ways of organizing human beings and information--from jazz combos to espionage networks.

The company of the future could conceivably have within it a monastery-style unit that writes software...a research team organized like an improvisational jazz combo...a compartmentalized spy network to scour for merger or acquisition possibilities...

If it is true that a new system for wealth creation is superseding smokestack production, then we should expect a historic struggle to remake our political institutions, bringing them into congruence with the requirements of a revolutionary post-mass-production economy.

The age of mass democracy was also the age of immense concentrations of power at the level of the nation. This concentration reflected the rise of mass-production technology and national markets. But new technologies are making local production competitive again.

What is emerging is no longer a mass democracy but a highly charged, fast moving "mosaic democracy" that corresponds to the rise of mosaics in the economy.

what it all adds up to is a society and economy so diverse, complex and fast-changing as to overwhelm or paralyze existing political structures. Politicians are called upon to make too many decisions, too fast, about complexities they cannot possibly understand. The new heterogeneity also makes consensus harder to sustain and national interests harder to define.

If the essence of the new economy is knowledge-based innovation, the democratic ideal of freedom of expression becomes a top political priority, rather than a peripheral matter. The more the society advances toward a super-symbolic economy, the more important it is to permit an extremely wide range of free expression. The more any government chokes off this rich, free flow of knowledge--including wild ideas, innovation, even political dissent--the more it slows down the advance of the new economy.

The fight for free expression, once the province of intellectuals, thus becomes the concern of all who favor economic advance. Like adequate education, freedom of expression is a precondition for economic competitiveness.

Good News

25 UM MBA students will be researching business opportunities in the Soviet Union by traveling to Moscow.

Michigan Rankings (2/91)

Child well-being: 37th
Percent low weight babies: 35th
Infant mortality: 41st
Child death rate: 27th
Teen violent death rate: 23rd
Percent out-of-wedlock births: 28th
Juvenile incarceration: 28th
Percent of children in poverty: 34th
Percent graduating from HS: 30th