

More Day to Dawn
Inaugural Address of Richard H. Brodhead
Ninth President of Duke University
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Distinguished guests, colleagues, students, friends, I thank you for joining me on this great day. Never having been inaugurated before, I didn't know exactly what I was in for, but a stray remark gave me a clue. As you may know, I had a deep attachment to my former school, having spent my whole adult life there, and when the news broke that I was leaving, not everyone took it well. A student I knew put her dismay this way: "See, it was like Dean Brodhead was married to Yale-and now we learn that he's leaving us for someone younger and more athletic." To this I could only reply, Well, these things happen! And by the logic of her analogy, today we solemnize my new union. Let's do it right. Do I, Richard, take you, Duke, to be my chosen life? I do. Forsaking all others, will I do everything in my power to further the aims of this university? I will. As we pursue these goals, will I work to promote the welfare of every member of the Duke community-every faculty member, student, librarian, lab or office assistant, food server, maintenance worker, chaplain, coach-every single person whose labor and devotion make this place thrive? Yes I will. I'm grateful for your welcome and will do my part with energy, dedication and joy.

When I reflect on what I'm coming into, the scene around us supplies a major part of my idea. Venerable and time-worn though they seem, this gothic village and chapel rivaling many European cathedrals in beauty were not always here. Less than eighty years ago, the place where we stand was thick, unbroken woods. The site became the campus of one of the world's great universities through a great act of making and imagination, and properly seen, every one of these buildings is a physical signature of that act. When I first walked this space, the raw force of this primal act of construction put me in mind of Faulkner's Thomas Sutpen, in *Absalom, Absalom!*, wresting his baronial estate from the uncleared forests and swamps of northern Mississippi, "dragging house and formal gardens out of the soundless Nothing and clapping them down like cards upon a table, the *Be Sutpen's Hundred* like the oldtime *Be light*." But this analogy, I've learned, is both right and wrong. Right, because building this place did involve the insistence into being of something that at first existed only in the mind; wrong, because that creation was not the work of one time or one man.

The school we know as Duke was founded in the late 1830s in Randolph County, one hour to the west (Cindy and I made a pilgrimage to the site as one of our first acts as new settlers), in the hinterland of what was one of the South's least developed states. But no place is so poor that its people can't care about education, and no group is so ever deprived that it can't take steps to acquire this good. Urged by these motives, Methodist and Quaker families built a one room school in what is now Trinity, North Carolina. Unlike the hundreds of other backwoods academies founded at the same time, however, this school had a gene of self-advancement that acted on it in powerful ways. Within its first few years, it had transformed itself first into a normal school, a center for the production of trained teachers, then into a somewhat rudimentary liberal arts college, Trinity College. Though the Civil War left it almost decimated, it continued to dream of what it could be. After Reconstruction, at a time when it was not always able to make the payroll, this school hired as president a product of the new-model graduate education just being elaborated in the American North who brought Trinity the dream of becoming a full-fledged university. President Crowell did not see these ambitions fulfilled, though

in preparation, he did succeed in relocating the college to the more metropolitan Durham. But a generation later, this ambition was powerfully reignited. In the early 1920s, in a document I have hung on my office wall, President William Preston Few sketched out a vision of an undergraduate college with a full array of graduate and professional schools constellated around it. He then pitched it to James Buchanan Duke, the industrialist-philanthropist from Trinity's principal family of backers. Three years later Duke agreed to fund this expansion; a short while after the land was cleared and the building began; and a surprisingly small number of years later, Duke University opened its doors.

My history is severely abridged but you will get the point: this place has always had the character of a rising school. Duke could have leveled off in any number of inertial orbits but it never did. Instead, from generation to generation, it has been driven by the desire to be more than it has thus far succeeded in becoming, to push toward the limit of what a great school could be. Another striking trait, Duke's extraordinary institutional plasticity, derives from this first. Much as it might admire what it had already become, Duke is a school that has been continually willing to remake itself in sometimes fairly drastic ways to the end of becoming better. President Few and Mr. Duke produced a high point in this history but the story did not end there. Each of my predecessors-and I am honored to have three of them here today, Douglas Knight, Keith Brodie, and Nan Keohane-has presided over a raising of the sights. I come to this university in the conviction that, in Thoreau's words, there is more day to dawn. I take this office with the idea that, together, we will write the next chapter in this school's rise.

In the last few decades, Duke has become a center for the sorts of research and teaching that characterize the greatest universities in this nation and the world. But I have been finding that Duke has a distinct character (within the company of great universities), one that marks its doings with a certain Duke difference. One thing that amazes and delights me every day I spend here (I recognize that when we have been married a little longer we may take each other's charms a little more for granted) is the way this school permits, even encourages, the crossing of intellectual boundaries. Duke has the same divisions by school and department as everywhere else, but at Duke these administrative conveniences have not hardened into the walls and barriers they form elsewhere. Faculty here are in conversation with people in a wide array of other fields, combining and recombining their expertise in compelling new compounds and conjunctions.

The other thing I'm struck by virtually every day is that the balance between theory and practice has been struck in a somewhat different way at Duke. In the modern state of things, no school can be expected to produce much new understanding that does not give free rein to highly specialized research. But at this school, such study does not enclose itself within the intramural exchange among specialists that characterizes much modern academic life. At Duke it forms the research end of an arc that extends from inquiry through discovery to translation into practice, a continuum that links the most abstruse research with practical improvements to actual lives.

I remember the day last winter when I first visited the Duke Clinical Research Institute. (It's fun to be the president. You get to go everywhere.) I had already spent considerable time in the Medical and Nursing Schools and taken the measure of their strength across the spectrum from basic science to patient care. But until that visit, I did not grasp what it meant to say that Duke leads the world in testing medical discoveries for their value for human care. On the day I visited, DCRI was at work on two studies with vast implications for bookend phases of life: a major study (since published and widely noted) on the treatment of teenage depression and a study of

an intervention that might prevent bone breakage in the elderly in nursing homes. DCRI has now launched a study of heart disease, the largest cause of death and disability in the world, that will involve 1500 hospitals in 30 countries.

This facility does more than contribute to improved health care in Durham and around the world, important though that is. It supplies the bridging device that puts research-generated knowledge in effective contact with practice and service-and once I started to notice, I found myself surrounded by such bridges. It seemed typical of Duke that when I visited the Divinity School, I would learn of a collaborative program between the Schools of Divinity, Medicine and Nursing on Care at the End of Life-typical that schools should cooperate so deeply and effectively across disciplinary boundaries, and typical that this collaboration should be grounded in an address to the multiple faces of a fundamental human need. When the forest was cleared to build this site, there was small thought for the meaning of the environment or the harm humans do themselves through their action on the natural world. As we grasp the gravity of these issues, the Nicholas School of the Environment and Earth Sciences gives a powerful means to address them. But what's so "Duke" about the rapidly-expanding Nicholas School is how it is building the interface between scientific research and its application at the level of social cure-a marriage of pure and applied strengthened by collaborations with colleagues in law, economics, engineering, medicine, and the Sanford Institute of Public Policy.

Further features of Duke began to make new sense to me once I detected this pattern. The culture of public service is immensely strong across this campus. Last winter when I had lunch with students in the Law School and the Fuqua School of Business, what they wanted to talk about was their volunteer work in clinics giving legal advice to local non-profits or advice to small business owners. A recent day in my new office began with a current medical student and a recent Trinity College student who had studied Econ and Management and Markets (I knew her visually from her role as head cheerleader in Cameron last year) who have mounted an ambitious health and fitness program for city kids under the sponsorship of Mike Krzyzewski, Coach K. What I've come to understand is that at Duke, public service is not some ornamental activity extraneous to the real business of the place. The culture of service is strong here because it grows directly from the mission of the school-this school having been founded, in Mr. Duke's words, to serve "the needs of mankind along physical, mental and spiritual lines."

So too I rejoice in the Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership that Mayor Bell and President Keohane did so much to further, and I pledge to carry this partnership to new heights. But this partnership works, on Duke's end, not because the administration pushes it but because it is rooted in the genius of this place. Duke has something more valuable than money to give to the community we share: namely, the expert knowledge faculty and students bring to bear in the schools, health, and legal aid clinics in this town. What we get in return, beside the satisfaction of citizenship, is the education that flows back to theory from practice: the learning that arises when theoretical intelligence is tested in the arena of real human needs.

I was lured here by the spectacle of a school that has established itself in the top rank of research universities and professional schools but that habitually connects the pursuit of knowledge with the search for the social good. It's my guess that our society is going to require universities to have a character more like this in the future. If the public is to continue to fund inquiries largely unintelligible to the common understanding, and the progress of knowledge in our time would grind nearly to a halt if this support were lost, universities are going to

need to become far less self-enclosed and self-absorbed, to take more pains to demonstrate the value of advanced research for men's and women's lives. As I assume the presidency of a school with this inspiring character, my role will be to build on its special strengths. This isn't the place for a litany of detailed plans, but I might touch on a few aspects of the task ahead.

Duke has many initiatives underway, and I was attracted here by Duke's ability to identify and advance toward key strategic goals. Starting these ambitious projects took one kind of work; but as we near these destinations we need to engage in another, namely remembering what we were trying to accomplish and making sure we reach that goal. The newly opened Center for the Interdisciplinary Engineering, Medicine, and Applied Science is a glorious interdisciplinary research facility, and the competitor in me is eager for all representatives of other universities to go see it. (P.S.: Eat your heart out.) But the goal of CIEMAS wasn't to build another laboratory, but to enable the ascent to the higher level of creativity in technology and biomedical engineering-key tools for our time-that such a facility could facilitate. With this as with all our projects, we need to be careful to remember the ends we built toward and not mistake the means for the end. That would bring us somewhere, but not to the place we seek.

More generally, as Duke completes a phase of building surpassed only by that of the 1920s and 1930s, we reach the time for building of another sort, a building of intellectual capital commensurate with a splendid physical plant. Every great university is great by virtue of its faculty, and an aspiring university will always be adding to its company of great minds. The kind of scholar-teacher the best future university will be built from is only partly identified by the standard markers of academic achievement. We need to look for people who enliven inquiry in their field but retain a sense of a larger picture, the larger questions their specially trained powers could help engage; people too who will keep asking new questions and engaging colleagues in flexible and opportunistic combinations to help them toward an answer. These scholars will be real teachers too: people whose love of their subject compels them to share that love with students, and to nourish their independent mental growth.

There's no knowing what apparently arcane study will prove to be of burning relevance some future day. (Think of the changing role experts on Islam have taken on in American universities after 9/11.) So I would continue to build intellectual strength in every field, not in obviously "applied" ones alone. That said, it does seem that a school of Duke's character has special opportunities to lead in certain crucial areas, one of which is global health. Duke medical researchers are already active from Tanzania to Singapore to Honduras and back to the Carolinas and are working on virtually every health challenge a growingly populous, growingly interdependent world will face. As a by-product of its profoundly interdisciplinary character, this school also spawns every day the sort of partnerships that might solve multi-sided problems in this domain: problems at the interface of medicine and engineering-imaging, cell and tissue engineering, the design of new medical devices; problems at the interface of medicine and law, like intellectual property rights in breakthrough discoveries; problems at the interface of medicine and the social sciences-the management and economics of health care, the cultural factors that keep people from making full use of available care; and problems at the interface of medicine and ethics. In my dream, Duke would be the place where people from around the world come to learn and contribute to a growing understanding of our shared health future; and no student would leave without a deeper understanding of this dimension of our common lot.

As we build the best facilities and programs, we must keep in mind the students they are meant to serve, and ensure that the university fully delivers on the promise of education. The graduate and professional students at my new home seem not just very smart but wonderfully positive in outlook, and it's my impression that this school does better than many another in mentoring and in including advanced students in the full life of the place. (Yes, I did visit your campground last Saturday. Where else do they do these things?) Nonetheless, the specialization and discipline exacted by advanced study can be powerfully isolating, and we must work to realize the full community we might achieve among these students—a community of friends but also an intellectual community among disciplines and disparate points of view.

Graduate and professional students have chosen their calling. But college is a place of discovery and becoming, a place where students find their interests, their powers and their mature selves. This fall Duke freshmen read Tracy Kidder's biography of Paul Farmer, the humanitarian doctor in rural Haiti and leader in the fight to secure the benefits of medical research for the world's poor. Paul Farmer went to Duke, but it might be truer to say that he became Paul Farmer by going to Duke: this is where he found the calling we know him by, through an unplanned convergence of experiences in class and out. I'd like every undergraduate to run the risk of such self-discovery and self-enlargement by enrolling at Duke. Toward that end, we need to find more and more ways to include Duke students in the excitement of direct academic inquiry, and to make the whole of college life a maximally stimulating, growth-inducing experience. Building projects in key undergraduate spaces—the rebuilding of Central Campus and the area around the Bryan Center—will take place on my watch. We will get these right if we remember that the point is not to build buildings, but by means of building to support the richest forms of communal life.

Going to such a college is one of the most valuable privileges our society affords. For that reason, as we strengthen this already-strong place, another part of our work must be to assure that this university stays wide open to every young person with the requisite talent and commitment. It was not so long ago that schools and universities (the best not least) played a role in reinforcing received social hierarchies, assuring that to those who had, much was given, while denying others the best means to advancement, a first-class education. The namesakes of this school were far more enlightened than many of their time, but Duke remained racially segregated until the 1960s, and the first African-American undergraduates and medical students at Duke (I've met members of both groups) are people my exact age. (I myself attended a college that excluded women until 1969.) Through the work of men and women, many of them still alive, the high places of American education have been reconstructed from sites of exclusion and inequality into scenes of access and opportunity, but it's not time to stop that labor now. We must make the whole of Duke, every school and every department and every office, a place of open opportunity—and we need to make this a place not just of numerical demographic inclusiveness but of real mutual engagement, a community in which each of us will educate and be educated by every other.

Nowadays the danger is that colleges and universities will exclude not in the crude old-fashioned way, by category of social identity, but more invisibly, by cost. The figure for tuition, room and board for an undergraduate at Duke approaches \$40,000 a year. Mention of this figure provokes a predictable spasm of outrage from the American public, but for all the polemics that may soon be mounted on the issue, the problem of private college cost is not trivially easy. In the last generation and indeed in the last decade America's selective colleges have offered a more and more super-enriched experience to students, and every component-

state-of-the-art labs, the most up-to-date information technology, instruction in more and more foreign languages, the widest array of extracurricular activities-comes at considerable expense. But the problem can't be solved by simple-minded cutting. Rich or poor, the students a school like Duke wants would never be attracted to a no-frills university or the academic equivalent of a generic drug.

Just for that reason, however, universities must do everything they can to mitigate the problem of cost for those who can't pay the full fare, and to advertise the availability of aid to those who might miss such opportunities out of ignorance. This university admits undergraduates without regard to need and spends in excess of 40 million dollars a year meeting their financial need, and on my watch it will continue to do so. But the comparative youth that gives Duke enviable vigor does have a downside, namely that we lack the endowment older schools have accrued through time to meet this fundamental need. Recruiting the support to assure that this school never closes its doors to a worthy applicant will be a project especially close to my heart.

I could go on-I could rip an hour, as Herman Melville once wrote-but lest you perish of rhetorical overload, I will conclude. My colleague A. Bartlett Giamatti, who became President of Yale at 39 and died at the age of 51 and whose professorship I had the honor of holding, introduced me to this line from Rabbi Tarfon from the *Pirke Avot*: "You are not required to complete the work; but neither are you free to desist from it." Amateur that I am, I will interpret. What is the work? It can only be the great work given us as humans, making a better world wherever we happen to find ourselves with whatever tools we have to hand. Why are we not required to complete the work? Because we never could: if that work could be completed, others would have done it already and we would be spared the struggle. But why, if we cannot complete it, can we also not be allowed to give it up? Because that would be cowardly and would leave an imperfect world in even more desperate shape than it needs to be.

My predecessors at Duke did not complete the work, and neither will I. But like them, I will embrace the work that awaits me here. This is the work of a great university: the struggle to expand the domain of knowledge; the struggle to share that knowledge through education; and the struggle to put that knowledge to profound human use. On this the day of our union, I know that whatever I will do will be accomplished with your partnership and help. Others have given us this great place. Let's see what we can build together.