"WE WORK HARD, WE PLAY HARD"

A REPORT
FOR THE PRESIDENT
AND THE PROVOST, AND THE VICE
PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT LIFE
OF DUKE UNIVERSITY

BY
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APRIL 25, 1993
"WE WORK HARD, WE PLAY HARD"

"Duke students are the happiest in the nation. And why not? They attend one of the best universities in the country (said one student, 'we all know it's number one!'), have access to incredible resources, inhabit a beautiful campus, and, best of all, don't work all that much harder than their peers at much less prestigious universities. In fact, the number of hours the average Duke student puts in each day—about three hours and ten minutes—is below the national average (not what you'd expect at one of the top schools).... this largely pre-professional student body.... Durham is not popular with the students.... That hardly matters, though, since students are quite happy to spend all their time on campus. Fraternities and sororities are popular and host lots of parties; their challenging studies notwithstanding, Duke students can always find the time for a few brews. ... 'work hard and play hard' ..."


"[At Duke] The drinking age of 21 doesn't seem to have curbed the flow of alcohol."


"Student social life and regulations are under virtually complete student control with a few limitations. ... Although
Greeks dominate campus social life and there is little interaction with independents, the latter are numerous enough to make up a separate world."


Best things About School: "Relaxed, easy-going atmosphere." "The people. Dukies study hard and work hard. The students are intelligent and friendly."

Worst Things About School: "Too many rich, snobby, and fake people. People are very cliquish. Limited social life if you don’t care to get drunk and get laid every weekend." "Can be too homogeneous." "The social life is centered around fraternity kegs. There needs to be more diversity."


It is 2:00 am. I am standing next to a young Public Safety officer, on the quad on West Campus, watching as the last embers die in the bonfire. For the past two hours, we have joined exuberant students gathered around the fire. The fire, which was fueled by a couple of benches dragged from various locations on the quadrangle, has been extinguished by Public Safety officers. (Public Safety had sprayed fire retardant chemicals on all the benches during the previous week, yet these benches have burned anyway.) Now Public Safety has decided that the students have had enough fun for one night. A cadre of officers, armed with fire extinguishers, has doused the fire, to the accompaniment of jeering students.

During the waning hours of this night, I have watched the proceedings and engaged in conversation with a number of
students, some of whom were very inebriated, some of whom were not. I accompanied the Public Safety officer as he broke up two fraternity parties for noise policy violations. We escorted four football players out from a fraternity party where they were not wanted. We interviewed a student who had been chased back to his room on Central Campus by a lead pipe swinging group of community hooligans. Then we answered a frantic complaint that someone was "beating up his girlfriend in the room next to mine." By the time we got there, no one wanted to talk, everyone denied that there had been a problem, and we left.

And now I am standing in subfreezing weather, as Saturday becomes Sunday, and a little group of students bids me farewell with, "Bye Reverend. Hope you see some more action tonight."

Why am I, of all people, standing out here, with people like these, on a night like this?

I am here because my President, Provost, and Vice President for Student Life have put me here, sent me on an improbable mission to "listen to the students" and then to tell them what I have heard. This is a report on what I have heard.

LISTENING TO THE STUDENTS

Shortly before Thanksgiving, I was summoned to the President's office. There I encountered the President, the Provost, the Executive Vice President, and the Vice President for Student Life. They told me they had become increasingly concerned about student life at Duke -- alcohol, residential life, safety, social activities, fraternities, sports -- particularly as student life helped or hindered the academic mission of the university. Perceiving a possible gap between students' academic pursuits and their life after dark and on weekends, they asked me to listen to the students, to gather information on the interface between student life and academics, and to report my findings back to them.

When I objected, wondering why, for example, the Vice
President for Student Life did not undertake this task (or assign someone in her office to do it), I was told that point of view might be part of the problem. Life in the university has become segmented, compartmentalized into separate and sometimes conflicting "kingdoms" each with its own bureaucracy, its own programs. Academic matters are over here, student life matters are over there.

Someone needs to try to see the whole picture, they said. That "someone" was to be me.

For the next four months, utilizing any time I could spare from my other duties, I devised as many means as possible to listen to students, to be with students, particularly after 5:00 pm and on weekends. I met with every student group that I could locate and who would talk to me. Scores of individual students were interviewed, totalling over two hundred hours of interviews. Twenty or thirty individual students heard about my project and made appointments to talk to me.

I spent three evenings with Public Safety, riding about campus, observing their work. There was an unforgettable evening in the dorm. I gave twenty or thirty dinners and pizza study breaks for groups of students. I attended about a dozen keg parties, mixers, etc. I perused this past year's copies of The Chronicle of Higher Education and read a couple of books on the subject, as well as a few dozen articles on student life from various publications.

Senior Evan Berg has done a fascinating video documentary this semester, "How 'Educated' Am I?" Berg travelled throughout the campus, interviewing scores of students and faculty on the theme of how well they have been served by the learning experience at Duke. I utilized his interviews to augment my observations.

Trying to be as open to new information and insights as possible, wanting to be surprised by novel insights, yet approaching my task with nearly a decade of work with students informing my direction, I listened. No passive observer, I asked
questions, pursued areas of interest as they arose, made appointments with students, faculty, or administrators whose names came up in conversation, argued and debated. I searched for clues, metaphors, facts, and insights which would uncover what it was like to be a student at Duke, particularly as that experience related to the academic mission of the university.

This is the report of what I heard, along with suggestions for possible administrative and faculty response to what I heard.

THINKING HARD

Scarcely had I begun my project than I joined with other faculty and students in celebrating our annual Founders Day in Duke Chapel. There, Professor Reynolds Price delivered what is sure to be remembered as the most challenging, or at least the most abrasive, Founders Day speeches. Price charged that Duke has veered from James Buchanan Duke's desire for a school which trains leaders who are educated "along sane and practical" lines, educated by faculty who are noted for their "character, ability and vision."

In his (all elective) classes, Professor Price charged that he encountered "the stunned or blank faces of students who exhibit a minimum of preparation or willingness for what I think of as the high delight and life-enduring pleasure of serious conversation in the classroom and elsewhere." He challenged his audience to "Stand at a bus stop at noon rush-hour; roam the reading rooms of the libraries in the midst of term and the panic of exams. Lastly, eat lunch in a dining hall and note the subjects of conversation and the words employed in student discussion...." Listeners would hear, said Price, one sentence more than any other -- "I can't believe how drunk I was last night."

As someone preparing to listen to students, I took Professor Price's challenge seriously. Had we at the university wandered as far afield as Price charged?
The very next day, I was interviewing a senior, a person who had been identified for me by Professor Bruce Payne as one of the most knowledgeable and thoughtful of our students.

He recalled that, when he arrived at Duke, "I quickly found, my freshman year, that this place had some very definite ideas about the picture of the 'good' Duke student. I found myself caught up in the fraternity rush scene, the keg scene. I changed my wardrobe, my hairstyle to suit the image I was trying to adopt. Then, when I went home over the holiday break, it hit me. The conversation was better around my family dinner table at home than any conversation I had all semester at Duke! You see, my family loves to talk, argue, and debate around the dinner table.

"I took a look at myself, what I had become. I said to myself, 'This isn't you. What are you doing? You want something else.' So I decided then and there that I would have to move off campus if I were to have the intellectual life that I wanted. After my freshman year, I got an apartment, friends who love to argue and have a great time together, though I think it's sort of a shame that a student would have to leave campus in order to get an education."

Then he said something which lodged in my mind for the next four months. "Duke students say 'We work hard and we play hard' but do we say we think hard? Are we really developing for ourselves the critical thinking skills we need?" He then told me how he had joined a group of other students in founding "The Critical Thinking Group" at Duke, a group of students engaged in debate, research, and reflection of current issues on and off campus.

"We say 'We work hard and we play hard.' But would we ever claim that we think hard?"

STUDENT DOCILITY

In her 1987 book, Campus Life, Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, in chronicling the development of undergraduate culture on American
campuses and universities since the end of the eighteenth century, notes in her concluding Coda that the children of the rebels of the 1960’s were now entering college. She predicted that they would bring with them to campus "an assertive independence" and "heightened consciences." She predicted that there would be a new brand of college rebel, a student who wants to learn, believes in academic accomplishment, but is free of the mindless grade-chasing which characterized many of the students she observed in the 1980’s. She predicted that these children, new rebels who were children of the old rebels of the 60’s, would want things to change and would soon be "transcending the tired plots of the past to create new scenarios."^2

From what I observed, Horowitz’s predictions were unfounded. While one can locate them at Duke, in places like Epworth Dorm, in tiny pockets throughout the University like The Roundtable, they are a definite minority. The majority of the students seem to believe that the University is merely a step on the way to Law School, a necessary evil to be endured before Wall Street. They are here because they want to move up, not because they want to change Duke for the better.

One of the main complaints of the campus leaders who work in ASDU was, "Students are far too passive." They confessed to great frustration in their attempts to organize and mobilize students for common concerns. The night I met with the Angier B. Duke scholars, many of them were quite critical of their experience in the university, yet none of them at the table that night had considered running for any student government office. At times I was rather amazed that students would complain about the lack of social options, yet always saw this as a problem for the administration to solve, rather than as a specifically student problem begging for peculiarly student solutions.

Perhaps our students merely mirror the political apathy of the rest of the populace, the cynicism about political solutions to human problems. Perhaps Duke draws a relatively high number of students who have been the beneficiaries (or victims?) of a
high amount of parental care and initiative on their behalf.

Constantly I found myself agreeing with Senior Evan Berg's contention that far more students ought to be asking themselves, "Are we really getting educated?" Part of faculty and administrative frustration with the current state of student life is related to student docility and the failure of students both to reflect critically upon their situation or to organize to change it.

Yet a representative of ASDU asked, "When students take initiative, when they really do think in class and out of class, are they being rewarded? Students get the message that the best way to get ahead is to 'stick with the program,' to 'keep your head down,' and keep your nose to the grindstone rather than to think. The way the students perceive it, some of their most popular professors (people like Grimes and Lomperis) were not retained here at Duke. It appears to the student onlooker that these people were punished for their good teaching."

"Patterns of passivity begin the freshman year," noted one student. "Freshmen are marginalized. During orientation, their main job is to sit and be instructed. They are lectured to. If one is in the sciences, the impression of freshman year is very large classes which are exclusively lectures where nobody takes the trouble to know your name. This clashes with the 9:1 teacher ratio which is listed in the catalog."

Another agreed, "The marginalization continues. The Undergraduate Writing Curriculum has become the most determinative academic experience of the freshman year. In the UWC, there are rigid rules for writing and freshman must follow them. There is no interest in content, or ideas, just in one's ability to follow the rules."

The students note that professors like Dr. Grimes and Dr. Lomperis were not brought back, even though they were very popular with the students. This gives the students the feeling that they are not being considered in decisions about faculty. "Our job is to pay tuition so you can do your writing and
research," charged a Senior campus activist. "Students are only
here as a necessary evil -- to finance faculty research."

In some students' minds, all of this combines to produce a
very passive student body in which there is little
acknowledgement of students as people with any control over their
lives. Students are initiated into a system with certain norms,
certain expectations. Because a student is here for only four
years, because students have little knowledge of the history of
the university, the university gives them an eternal, God-
ordained visage. "I guess it's always been like this at Duke,"
was how one student responded to my question about academic life.
The status quo appears to be divinely ordained, created this way
for all the ages. Even among would-be student activists, the
university appears to be a huge, amorphous blob of bureaucracy
where those administrators with power are very difficult to
identify.³

INITIATION

When a student arrives on campus, that student begins a
subtle but well developed program of initiation into a new
culture, a culture which, like any culture, has a rather clear
set of rigidly enforced values, myths, stories, and symbols, a
history and a unique language.⁴

Within the university, there is the administratively
sanctioned, "official culture." The official culture holds less
sway over students' lives than the culture which has been devised
and sanctioned by the students themselves. Initiation into the
student sanctioned culture begins long before a student arrives
as a First Year student. This student sanctioned culture is a
major part of what Lawrence Kohlberg has examined as "the hidden
curriculum," that unstated, yet powerful force on students' lives
which is embedded in the institution as a whole.⁵

Campus image is an amorphous, subtle, but extremely powerful
force. There are campus norms, norms which are very difficult
for a new student, who is anxious to "fit in," to break out of. These norms tell the students that, as far as their social life is concerned, it is "kegs or nothing."

Archivist Bill King has noted that, when he was at Duke in the early 60's, the nickname for the campus was "The Gothic Rockpile." Now it is changed to "The Gothic Wonderland." What does that change in self-designation say? In 1968, the Krueger Report recommended that we move to a four course load and abolish Saturday classes. The philosophy behind the Krueger Report was that this curriculum change and schedule change would result in more in-depth study in courses and a better campus climate. Many observers of Duke today think that one of the major results of the shift to four courses per semester only resulted in the same amount of work being expected for fewer courses leading to too much discretionary time for many of our students.

Student tours on campus are a factor in the initiation of a new student into the campus culture, along with Orientation, as well as conversations with student friends from high school who are at Duke. When does a student begin to be initiated into the Duke system? I challenge faculty to listen in on a student tour, all of which are conducted by students, and reflect on the image of Duke which is presented in most of those tours.

"This is West Campus," said one tour leader, gesturing toward the residential quad. "As you can see, fraternities are a big part of life at Duke." We noted the signs identifying the most attractive dorms as those occupied solely (it appeared) by fraternities. Then someone in the group noted the large benches, also bearing the names of fraternities. Our impression was that fraternities owned the best dorms, the biggest benches. The signs designating the fraternity areas are the only signs on West Campus that a visitor sees.

What is the effect of our alumni network on the image of Duke which is projected to freshmen? Our Admissions recruiters report a depressing sameness in the responses of high school seniors when asked why they want to come to Duke. They give the
"work hard--play hard" line. Students are already being integrated into Duke life, by their friends from high school who are at Duke and by alumni.

The admissions counselors all stressed that Duke really needs to have a discussion about what sort of university it wants to be. The University has experienced rapid change in the last decade, a marked increase in the size and quality of our applicant pool. Yet, we give off mixed signals. There are certain assumptions (often gleaned from the very visible quality of our basketball program) about the sort of school that Duke is.

For instance, in conversations with our Admissions Staff, I was impressed by how many students may self-select themselves out of the applicant pool long before they have conversations with an official representative of Duke. An admissions counselor complained that, in talking to a prospective student, it is often like listening to a tape recording. The all too typical prospective student will say something like, "Well I have always done fairly well in school. I thought about attending Stanford but you see I like to work hard and play hard."

Where did that student receive that "tape?" More than likely, it was derived from high school friends who sent reports back from their experiences at Duke. The university uses alumni extensively in its recruiting program. These alumni remember (or think they remember) what their student days were like at the university.

The alumnus tells a prospective student, "You'll love it at Duke. I was in a fraternity. Everybody is in a fraternity there and we had a great time. Have you ever lived in the South? Well, in the South, at Southern schools, fraternities are very important. You'll certainly want to join one when you arrive there." The prospective student is already picking up definite signals and clues about what life is like at the university. Unfortunately, the memory of the alumnus may be somewhat blurred through the years about what actually goes on here. Also, fraternity life in the late 1950's may be a very different
experience than fraternity life in the mid-90's.

Thus the Admissions Office expressed some frustration with the nature of many students who apply and those students who choose not to apply. A number of interesting prospective students have been lost, according to the Admissions Office, after unhappy visits to the campus over a weekend. One young woman, whom the Admissions Office was very interested with, said, "Gosh, I don't mind drinking. And I certainly like to party. But what I saw this weekend sort of scares me. I'm not sure that I would fit in here."

One of the strongest messages I received from the Admissions Officers was not unlike the message I received from those who work in Student Life or CAPS or the Religious Life Staff: "The university needs to decide what it wants to be. It is very difficult to recruit students into an entity which appears to have no idea of who it is. If the university can ever decide who it wants to be, we are confident that we can recruit students on that basis. Unfortunately, we receive many conflicting signals from present students, alumni, and the administration. "

These conflicting signals often lead to a sense, on the part of many students, that they have been somehow deceived or misled in coming to the university. Groups of our top scholarship recipients revealed a fairly high level of dissatisfaction with their experience at the university. A number of them said things like "I think I was sold the wrong university." Rarely is their dissatisfaction with the faculty or with their classes. Rarely does their dissatisfaction appear tied to specific policies of the university. It is more related to certain subtle, unstated aspects of the student ethos which they find confining, anti-intellectual.

ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM?

Although neither Professor Price, nor the knowledgeable Senior who helped me begin this project, explicitly charged Duke
with anti-intellectualism, but that charge was leveled by a number of students whom I interviewed.

For instance, one evening, meeting with a dozen First Year and Sophomore Angier B. Duke scholars, I was surprised by the level of discontent among them. Their chief source of discontent was their dissatisfaction with the intellectual life of the campus. Nearly all felt that the Duke student ethos mitigates against serious intellectual engagement by students.

"Try bringing up a book you’ve read, or a great lecture you’ve just heard in class and other students will tell you, ‘Keep it in class. My brain meter’s not running now.’"

I noted that, "Sometimes, in fairness to the University, the University gives scholarships, not only to those people who represent who we are, but also to those who represent who we want to be."

Fair enough, said the students, but the University appears to do little, after an energetic and expensive recruiting process, to set up those structures and conditions whereby these "ideal students" can find a home within the present system.

Over half of the people in the group that night, representatives of our most elite scholarship group, confessed that they had completed transfer applications to other institutions during their freshman year. Few of them thought that they would actually transfer, principally for financial reasons. Once one has signed on to a financial aid program at one university, it is difficult to transfer to another. However, I was impressed with their deep level of dissatisfaction, their sense of a certain betrayal and victimization by "false advertising."

African-American students told me much the same story. Many of them had been elaborately entertained during our African-American student recruitment weekend. On the basis of that weekend, it appeared to them that the University was very "Afrocentric." However, when they got here, they found a different picture. This is what students sometimes refer to as
the "viewbook syndrome." That is, there is a huge gap between the pictures of contented students, sitting with professors under trees, or walking hand in hand with other students across campus, and the realities of what life is really like.

When students arrive on campus, they are guided by FACs and their RAs, upper class students who "show them the ropes." These students appear to be a more powerful influence on a student’s first days here than any member of the faculty or administration.

One student said, "In high school, I loved chemistry. But I had to hide it. If I didn’t, if I made the mistake of talking about chemistry with other students, I was labeled as a 'geek.'"

"My mother kept telling me, 'You’re going to love college. In college, everybody will be just like you, have the same interest in being a good student that you have, love to sit up all night in bull sessions discussing things.'"

"Unfortunately," she said, "that is not how it has been here. The same anti-intellectual remarks are made. If you try to discuss something that happened in class, or something from your reading for class, you’re often ridiculed. People want to be able to turn off the academic switch the minute they get out of class."

A student talked about her first day here at the University. After a heady day of presentations, and more presentations on various aspects of university life, her FAC led a group of them back across campus toward the dorm. On the way to the dorm he said, "Let me show you something wonderful."

They took a detour by the parking lot. There, in the parking lot, they all were made to stare at his new car.

"Would you like to sit in it?" he asked. "Would you like to start the engine?"

As they were standing there, one woman freshman leaned over to her and said, "This is depressing. He is the person I thought I had left behind in high school."

Students do not walk into a vacuum when they arrive as new members of the university community. They are subtly but
powerfully initiated into a distinct culture. I have come to the reluctant conclusion that this student culture mitigates against serious and sustained intellectual engagement by the students.

A number of students pointed out to me how the Chronicle never seems to editorialize about matters of any greater significance than to debate the "FlexCard" (Duke's internal credit card system) or to defend the status quo in regard to alcohol policy. Rarely does the student newspaper carry stories about research projects on which students are working, academic or intellectual developments on campus, or matters which relate specifically to the academic mission of the university.

In the popular "Monday--Monday" column, the main subjects of sarcasm and ridicule are "geeks," "pencilheads" or others who take their studies too seriously. The Chronicle knows that it is wrong to ridicule ethnic groups or women, but student intellectuals are fair game.

When the Auxiliary Services hands out "free" pizza and hot dogs, this "free" food (actually of course, nothing is free -- someone pays for this act of generosity) is given to those who have been camping out in line waiting for basketball tickets in the tent city which has now been dubbed as "Krzyzewskisville." As one student noted, it is interesting that free food is not given to those students who volunteer in the public schools tutoring program, or to those who are inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. Certain behavior is thereby reinforced and rewarded.

The "We work hard, we play hard" mentality thus fosters a rather rowdy, carefree, anti-intellectual image of the "perfect" Duke student. Seen in its best light, this means that Duke students are known for their exuberance, their enthusiasm at basketball games, and their general love of life. At its worst, it means that our students are engaged in activities which not only do not contribute to the academic mission of the university, but actually work against that mission by trivializing the time they spend here.

I wonder if Duke's success in attracting students with
superior academic ability has outpaced our internal self-image. Have increasing numbers of academically gifted students arrived here faster than our ability to adapt ourselves to their capabilities?

A LIMITED VIEW OF THE INTELLECTUAL

Sometime in the past few decades, an invisible wall has been erected around academic work. For most students, when the words "intellectual" or "academic" are used, they automatically and exclusively think of what goes on in the classroom. "Academic" is what one does in a classroom for three hours per week. Ironically, the faculty appear to have the very same image. Faculty take little responsibility for anything that goes on outside of the classroom. Both faculty and students complain about the walls between them, the borders between "legitimate" and "illegitimate" academic discourse, but we seem not to know what to do about the walls. Beyond the classroom, the students are left to the administrators, a new class of student life professional, who have been given responsibility for all aspects of "student life." Few of these student life administrators came into student life administration through the faculty. Rather, they are professional student care givers, administrators, and suppliers.

It is tough to get faculty to come on campus in the evenings or weekends for student interaction. Last year, when the Religious Life Staff sponsored its first First Year Student Retreat ("Project Genesis") I went down a list of fifteen faculty members whom the students had chosen to be invited to participate in a panel on academic life. Only two faculty members on the list agreed to come (one of whom was subsequently denied tenure).

When students complained about seeing so little of faculty outside of class, I immediately noted to them how, at a research university, faculty, particularly younger, non-tenured faculty, are under tremendous pressure to write and to do research, saying
that pressure perhaps accounted for the lack of time on the part of faculty. Yet, when I asked them, "Who are the names of faculty who have entertained you in their homes?" I was impressed that the majority of those faculty mentioned were younger, and many of them untenured, faculty. My unscientific opinion is that our younger faculty may be more aware of the need for out of class interaction with our students than our older faculty.

Some faculty appear to have adopted an odd view of how humans function. The faculty has a responsibility for a brain, whereas in all other areas of human life, students are left to their own devices. Considering the current assault of post-modern philosophy on the view of detached, Enlightenment notions of alleged "rationality," and the growing recognition that our reason is formed by the narratives, cultures, and histories which characterize us, the view of the mind as detached from the rest of life, which lies behind current university life, is odd.

Faculty would do well to spend more time pondering questions like: How did you learn? What were the conditions which helped you along in your own intellectual development? Who changed you and how?

When these questions are asked, I am confident that they will be answered by noting that most of the intellectual growth which was worked in us faculty came about through contact, very personal, intimate and deep contact, with a mature and thoughtful person.

A First Year student from a small town in North Carolina spoke of himself as "floating" since his arrival at Duke, not really alighting anywhere, not really being engaged by any of his studies. Then, one night, a popular Duke professor spent four hours in his dormitory commons discussing various matters, particularly the issue of race relations in America. The professor was an African-American, most of the students were white.

When the freshman from North Carolina asserted that he had overcome his earlier racist feelings and he was able to accept
black people, the professor challenged him by asking him who his three best friends were on campus. Who did he go to the beach with over Fall Break? The answer: all of his friends and close acquaintances were Caucasian.

The student said, "It really hit me. My actions in life did not meet my ideals. I decided that I wanted much more of an education than I was getting. I therefore intentionally went out and made contact with a couple of black students. I am planning on rooming with one next year. I am determined truly to overcome my past."

I interpret this as an example of the power of personal faculty interaction with students. It also reminded me that we often use "intellectual" in far too limited a way.

We are following Enlightenment notions of education. That is, we think about things by stepping back from them, viewing them with alleged "objectivity," turning specifics into generalities and particularities into abstractions. Although this notion of the human intellect is being thoroughly discredited through post-modern thought, as well as the science of human development, this model still holds sway at the university. Intellectual is what we do to your brain, when we have you in class.

I believe that we teach people to learn how to think, to learn how to stand on their own two feet, to take hold of their lives, not by stepping back from them, not by leaving them to their own devices, but rather through engaging them, through intense encounters with other people. As Aristotle contended, it is impossible to teach anything important to people who are not your friends, because only friends know how to hurt you in the right way. A friend knows when to speak, and when to listen, when to push, and when to let go.

We have structured the University in such a way that the chances of our ever becoming friends with one another are slim. Detachment seems to be the ruling mode. Forgetting the etymology of the name professor as "someone who professes something," we
are more inclined as faculty to say, "The data show..." than "I have found" or "I believe that..." We maintain a teaching style which presupposes a Kantian epistemology, continuing the spurious Kantian dichotomy between phenomenal knowledge and noumenal reality. As a result, a great deal of human knowledge and experience is excluded from our discussion. Classes and curricula are structured in such a way that faculty and students alike will remain as much strangers to one another when we leave the University as when we arrived.

We say that we are disengaged from our students' lives because we "trust them," we "give them responsibility," we "allow them to be adults." I'm afraid that this is rather thin rationalization for the simple fact that we have abandoned them. We use the students to finance our writing and research, as a base from which to promote ourselves within our professional guilds and disciplines, but we do not really engage them in education. This is an odd way of knowing.

In an extended conversation with the Women's Studies Faculty, I was told that studies of twelve women who transferred from Duke last year showed that the primary reason for leaving was the "anti-intellectual climate" at the university. (This was confirmed by my own observation. Far more women than men appear to be openly critical of the intellectual life of the university.) In the view of the Women's Studies professors, there is far too little appreciation for the learning which occurs outside the classroom. They stressed that it is not the case that no learning is occurring out of the classroom. However, much that is being learned is not education that we may want to support.

"What could we do better to process the events from outside of the classroom into the classroom?" these faculty asked. "This lack of interface is a byproduct of little faculty contact with student life after 4:30 p.m. The students really crave to have more of us." Of the seven areas of educational practice that were examined by the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher
Education, there was most agreement that undergraduate education in America could be improved if more attention were given to the emotional, social development of students.\textsuperscript{9}

Indeed, from my observations, I concluded that the Women's Studies Program is exemplary in its efforts to integrate students' experiences in and out of the classroom. Nearly all the faculty at our afternoon of discussion entertain all of their students in their homes every semester. Furthermore (and perhaps this is due to their feminist determination not to accept the categories and segmentation enforced by establishment scholarship) these professors appear to be so popular with students, in great part because they are determined to achieve an integrated, holistic approach to their teaching, in which the mode of pedagogy is related to the substance of the material being presented and the teacher refuses to recognize traditional boundaries between what is appropriate or inappropriate for serious discussion and investigation, refuses to honor the traditional separation between theory and praxis.\textsuperscript{10} Some of us faculty have become willing victims of what Sharon Parks has called "overdistancing." While it is developmentally appropriate to give young adults adequate "space" for experimentation with different modes of living, the playful trying out of ideas and insights, time away from adult domination of them, we have moved from a healthy distancing to "overdistancing" which has led to virtual abandonment.\textsuperscript{11}

The Twentieth Century America Program gets extremely high marks from the students. So do the First Year Student Seminars. These academic models, coming very early in the student's years here, ought to be heartily encouraged and expanded.

Women faculty agreed that the biggest reason for the lack of interface between faculty and students outside the classroom are times and places. There is a lack of multiple options for eating and conversation. We have multiple dining rooms, but there is a depressing sameness about the way food and people are treated in these areas. They wondered, What could we do to attract more
faculty and their families to campus after 5 and on weekends? The popular and attractive Oak Room might lure faculty and families in the evening, but it refuses to take reservations in the evening. When one faculty member made an effort to attend the Sunday Brunch in the Great Hall on West Campus, he was surprised to find that his children were charged the same price as adults for the buffet. It was obvious that no provision had been made for the presence of children.

In a meeting with the Student Life Committee, the problem of space and dining was discussed. The committee agreed that we are missing a major opportunity for interaction during mealtimes. There is widespread agreement that the Provost made a good move when subsidies to the Faculty Commons were terminated. Faculty Commons is an area of particular scorn among those who are concerned about fostering more faculty-student interaction. Someone asked, "Are faculty allowed to bring brown bags into great hall and other eating areas? Many faculty once brought their lunch bags into this area."

The main goal of most of our eating areas is to enable diners to get into the food line, to get their food, eat it quickly, and leave. What can be done to encourage people to sit down at lunch and have conversations together?

A number of student athletes asked, "Why are the gyms basically closed on weekends, and late at night?" Since that discussion, a move has been made to have late night openings for the basketball courts. More intramural athletic facilities could help to integrate mind and body as well as to promote more faculty-student interaction outside the classroom.

These conversations demonstrated how eating areas, aesthetics, times and places for interaction are all academic, intellectual issues in ways we have not fully recognized. Karen Steinhauer stressed the Residential Life Staff's strong conviction that, "We really need to provide more opportunities for residential faculty, for adults to be in the dorms. The RA system is no substitute for having mature, adult people in
contact with students where they live."

Last year, when Dartmouth became concerned about student life and its pernicious affects upon academic endeavor, Dartmouth initiated a program entitled, "The Life of the Mind." That sounds a bit too cerebral, a bit too detached for my tastes, a continuation of the unhealthy compartmentalization and segmentation of both the university and those who live here.

Why isn't alcohol an academic issue? When we concern ourselves with the poor state of Duke's intramural athletic facilities, with what fraternities do to the social life of the university, with the physical appearance of our dormitories, why are these not intellectual concerns? This seems an appropriate point to bring up what many consider to be the number one student life issue today.

ALCOHOL

The "work hard, play hard" ethos permeates the students' image of themselves. Yet I am uncertain even if we know how to play hard. "We know how to drink hard," charged one sophomore, a woman who confessed to being utterly repulsed by the dominant social scene, "but do we really know social skills?"

Director of Public Safety Paul Dumas, says that the number one public safety issue is alcohol. "That is the only issue. Students need to take more responsibility for their own safety. On the one hand, they want to be protected from all hazards but they still want to be free to do what they want. Public safety is in the odd position of being both protector and enforcer, expending huge amounts of time rescuing people from themselves, particularly as their actions relate to alcohol abuse." Student Health Services likewise reports, "Alcohol is the number one student health issue."

(For a good historical view of Duke's dealings with alcohol, see "The History of Alcohol at Duke University Since 1960," a paper by Robin Wilson, for the course The History of Alcohol
[History 101N, November 20, 1990] also, "Bourbon and Bookworms: Ten Years of Turbulence Within the Duke Alcohol Policy," a paper by Andrew Weinstein for The Concept of a University, [History 195/196] located in the Duke Archives.)

Very few students will say "Kegs are great." Socially, they take the path of least resistance. A greater percentage of upperclass students are critical of the kegs scene and women students appear to be the most critical. As students mature, many appear to become more disenchanted with the kegs scene. Alas, for too many, "Fun" is defined as getting trashed. Kegs have been curtailed on campus, yet we still permit kegs on Thursday nights even though we have Friday classes.

Alcohol abuse is a much more interesting subject than it first appeared to me when I began my investigation. I think that I attributed our students' alcohol abuse to simple rowdiness, the "boys will be boys" syndrome, as an example of rather typical adolescent exuberance.

To my surprise, alcohol appears to fulfill certain "social functions" beyond the simple narcotic effect of taking away some of the anxiety engendered through social contact.

For instance, there is an economic component to our consumption of alcohol. From conversations with Dr. Philip Cook of Duke's Public Policy Studies, someone who has spent the past two decades studying alcohol policy among different cultures and its relationship to abuse, I learned that alcohol consumption has been declining every year for the past twenty years among adults except in one age group -- young adults. The beer industry has obviously targeted young adults as its best hope for increasing the amount of alcohol consumed.

Thus, ACC basketball is brought to us through Anheuser Busch. When we speak of the money generated by "TV revenues" this is a great misnomer. The truth is, these are beer revenues. One need only watch the basketball games on the weekend to find that college athletics is financed to a great degree by the beer companies. It is a bit sad that our students are having their
"strings pulled" by economic forces of which they are mostly unaware.

Also, alcohol serves to demarcate certain social groups. As one student said, the image given on Duke's West Campus on the weekend nights is that Duke is a drinking club for affluent white males. The fraternities, through "kegs," fairly well determine the social scene. They have the most visible, desirable location for parties on campus.

The dominance of the social scene by kegs has various spinoff effects. For instance, when I have asked African-American students why they have chosen to live on Central Campus, I expected to hear them say something like, "I enjoy living in an Afrocentric environment." That is not what I heard. Instead, alcohol abuse is one of the main reasons given by black students for living on Central Campus. To them, the vomit on the floor of the dorm during the entire weekend, the condition of the restrooms after a night of partying, typify an environment which sends signals to them saying, "You are not wanted here."

In what way is alcohol abuse a function of race? Most of the black fraternities not only do not purchase beer for their members, but they prohibit alcohol at their parties. In general, the image in the minds of many African-American students is that white students are spoiled, chronic over-drinkers.

Women are also threatened by the environment which alcohol creates. Late in the evening, after midnight, I was amazed at the amount of shouting back and forth between various fraternities. People who are doing the shouting are probably inebriated, but the words that they are shouting are full of violent, sexual intent.

As one woman said to me, "You ought to come over and spend a night in our dorm and listen to the sort of things that I have to listen to every weekend night. It's scary."

I did indeed spend a weekend on campus, and I also found a kind of low-level of intimidation just by the crude speech which is shouted back and forth across the quadrangles in the evening.
What is the effect on the sensibilities of women of the two male students I observed urinating on a wall outside the dorm?

This is to say that more is happening in the area of alcohol abuse than I thought. Students report a highly pressured environment in which people are encouraged to overdrink. Why would it be progress to, in one administrator's words, "Establish a women's dorm where women would be free to have their own keg parties on their own turf"? Why would it not be better to struggle to give people the means to resist participation in practices which have little or no positive educational function?

Professor Cook's studies have thoroughly convinced him that alcohol availability is related to alcohol abuse. As Roy Matthew, Director of Duke's Alcohol Treatment Center, says, "If one were devising an environment to produce alcoholics, one could do no better than Duke's West Campus on a weekend. All of the factors which contribute to the development of alcoholics -- availability, social pressure to overindulge, no social restraints against over-indulging, etc. are there on a Saturday night."

Kegs are particularly problematic. When a couple of kegs are put in the middle of a room on a Saturday night, and people are invited in to drink freely, without cost, until the kegs are emptied, this is a formula for abuse.

Professor Cook believes that the current North Carolina laws against drinking by those under 18 are virtually unenforceable on a college campus. However, he does believe that Duke could do more to provide an environment whereby skills might be better learned related to the consumption of alcohol. For instance, he suggested that there be a rule that alcohol could be freely consumed on the Duke campus, but no alcohol could be consumed anywhere without paying cash for every drink.

Another proposal might be to tell students that they are free to have open bars anytime they wish, but they would be required to hire a licensed bartender to run the bar.

These proposals would certainly have the virtue of bringing
our alcohol consumption somewhat closer to "real life" as well as
closer to the norms for responsible adult consumption.

In all matters, we ought not to forget that we are an
educational institution. Training in the wise use of alcohol is
an educational matter. Tragically, the effects of early alcohol
abuse, like being infected with the HIV virus, do not show up
until years later. When students' alcohol abuse patterns bear
fruit, they are alumni.

I am unimpressed with students' argument that "if we are not
allowed unlimited access to alcohol on campus, we will just get
in cars, drive drunk, and kill each other."

This is not only strange reasoning, but also a not very
flattering portrait of themselves. I point out to them that, in
just a couple of years, all of them will be off campus and into
the "real world" where alcohol is totally available and where
they will be totally free to drive a car under the influence of
alcohol if they wish. Why not develop the skill, discipline, and
ability to care for ones friends now?

A rather surprising number of Duke students report to me
that they never, or very rarely consume alcohol at parties. I
have no idea what the percentage of these non-drinkers, or
extremely moderate drinkers are. About 40 per cent of all adults
do not consume any alcohol. The curious thing is that when a
student tells me that he or she does not drink, the student
usually prefaces these remarks by saying "Well I am very strange,
very different from most Duke students. I don't drink."

Ironically, on a given day, I encountered many of these
students. Perhaps again, symbol is closer to reality, and the
impression that "everybody does it" is more important than the
reality. Students definitely feel under some pressure to drink.

Alcohol abuse may also be related to a lack of social
opportunities. When it comes to the party scene, the
fraternities are clearly in control. They have the
organizational structure, the financing, and the commitment to
pay for the kegs and the bands so their concept of social life
dominates the scene.

There is widespread agreement that freshman year social life is a great problem -- particularly for women, and particularly as social life centers around alcohol. There is a great need for new students to see more options presented earlier in their Duke experience.

ALCOHOL ABUSE AT PRINCETON

The recent effort of Princeton University is instructive as we think about our alcohol abuse problem at Duke. In a fascinating article, "Saying When: Princeton Faces Its Drinking Problem," by D. W. Miller in the Princeton Alumni Weekly12, the story was told of Princeton University's attempt to struggle with its alcohol abuse problem. The University began by stressing alcohol education. "Unfortunately, the enemy wasn't ignorance; Princeton undergraduates hardly needed instruction in the harmful effects of alcohol abuse." Something else was needed. When an intoxicated freshman fell from the roof of Campbell Hall in 1985, his death drew little notice. However, in 1988, there was a weekend at Princeton in which over 40 students were treated by the Princeton Student Clinic after a party. This, coupled with the death of a Rutgers fraternity pledge in a hazing incident involving drinking, moved President Shapiro to action. The alcohol policy was tightened and sanctions were threatened. Hosts were made more responsible for the alcohol related aftermath at their parties. The University decided that mere alcohol policies and disciplinary measures were not enough for significant change. Surveys showed that 80% of Princeton students drink, and 35% are "binge drinkers" -- they regularly consume 5 or more drinks at one sitting. While these figures are high, they are said to be a little lower than the national averages for college students.

In 1990, concerned by increasing reports of alcohol abuse and vandalism related to alcohol, noting that the bulk of
disciplinary cases at Princeton were related to alcohol (all the sexual assaults reported to the administration in the last few years at Princeton have involved alcohol), when in November of 1990, a Princeton sophomore was electrocuted while climbing drunk atop the Dinky Shuttle late at night, leading to the amputation of three of his limbs. President Shapiro moved to transform the University’s entire approach to the alcohol issue. Declaring alcohol abuse to be "the single greatest threat to the University’s fulfillment of its mission," Shapiro named O. Carl Wartenburg, an administrative assistant and popular campus figure, to work on alcohol abuse full-time. Shapiro charged Wartenburg with "assisting students to see the problem of abuse as their problem, and enlisting their involvement in education and prevention programs."

With a grant from the Department of Education, Wartenburg began a comprehensive approach to alcohol abuse. Instead of drawing up new rules for students, he placed the student’s needs and experiences at the center of his alcohol initiative. After a number of years of shunning any negative publicity related to alcohol abuse, the University reversed its policy and began directing attention loudly and publicly to the campus problem with alcohol. The administration’s strategy was to show students that it cared more about their welfare than keeping embarrassing news out of the papers. Wartenburg, dubbed as the "alcohol czar," roamed the campus for eighteen months, gathering information, talking to students, visiting their places of social interaction. Then he devised a threefold strategy. First, he consulted with students and others about the causes and results of excessive drinking, second, using the data collected, there was a public attempt to explode the illusions about campus life and to expose the seamiest side to public gaze, and third, a corporate strategy was devised to alleviate the problems.

Wartenburg, in discussions with students, found that many students wished that alcohol were less central to social activities. There were many factors prompting students to drink
excessively, factors having to do with the complexity of campus culture. He concluded that the best way to change drinking patterns was through peer pressure. Therefore he collaborated with students and administrators to devise social alternatives to keg parties.

Wartenburg confessed an administration abdication of its responsibilities outside the classroom. "This initiative is about the quality of undergraduate life, and that includes all of the ways in which people relate and grow." Wartenburg asserts that, "the educational outcomes we seek to foster are moral, spiritual, emotional, and physical, as well as intellectual. Right now, we do a great job from the shoulders up."

From the very beginning, at freshmen orientation (which was characterized at Princeton as a "five-day drunk") freshmen are introduced into an alcohol-centered culture. At this year’s orientation, Wartenburg fashioned a slate of non-alcoholic events every night of the week for the Class of 1995, including late-night athletic activities in the gym. He even opened a pub in the student center, convinced that drinking under controlled circumstances is better than overdrinking freely in clubs and dorms. (An earlier pub had closed in 1985, two years after the rise of the drinking age put a huge dent in its business.)

Confronting the Princeton drinking clubs for their behavior, discussing the issue openly, Wartenburg got most clubs to agree not to hold parties during orientation week and they also agreed to bar freshmen at the door.

Interestingly, Shapiro also confronted the issue of alumni reunions. In the student’s mind, excessive drinking by the alumni, made administrative efforts to curb alcohol abuse by students look hypocritical. President Shapiro announced a one year ban on beer kegs on the campus. Major reunion officers had to negotiate with the ban, submitting plans for restricting access and availability of beer at their reunion parties. Mainly, the one year ban served to grab people’s attention to the problem and show administrative seriousness related to the issue.
He sponsored a convention of sorts, among Princeton alumni, students, local businesses, and others concerned about the problem, The Alcohol Congress on Responsible Decisions (ACORD), a two day meeting in May of last year.

Princeton quickly realized that one of the main factors was not policy and rules but a self-confessed "image problem" on the issue of drinking.

This year’s research from The Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles, in a survey of 213,000 at 404 colleges and universities, found that beer and wine consumption was down among freshmen, with only about half saying in 1992 that they "frequently or occasionally" drank beer. That is a substantial drop from the 3 out of 4 who reported drinking beer in 1981 and 1982. However, a study by The Core Institute, based on a survey of 56,000 students at 78 institutions during the 1989-1990 academic year reported that 42 percent of the students who responded to the survey reported that they consume 5 or more drinks at one sitting within a two week period. A drink was defined at 12 ounces of beer, 4 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of liquor. Similar figures on excessive drinking were reported by researchers at Harvard and the University of Michigan. 36 percent said they had driven while intoxicated, 33.2 percent had gotten into an argument or a fight while drunk, and 23.2 percent had performed poorly on a test because of drinking. Curiously, the survey found that students at smaller colleges, with fewer than 2,500 students drank an average of 6.9 drinks a week while students at larger institutions, with more than 20,000 students, drank 4.3 drinks on average.

Perhaps more nighttime classes and nightly scheduled activities would help. I consider it a positive move to more Friday and more early morning classes as well as late night hours for the gym. Yet faculty and administration must show that they know alcohol to be not only our number one "student life" problem but our number one educational, academic problem.
IN LOCO PARENTIS

Those who work in student life frequently invoke the memory of in loco parentis (in place of parents), the alleged modi operandi of colleges and universities at least until the early 1960's. As in so many conversations on campus, the world is dichotomized into a simple either/or. Either we could expend ourselves in a vain attempt to be their parents while they are away from their parents, or we could simply leave them to their own devices.

I clearly remember a conversation I had, upon returning to the university, one morning in the Student Affairs Committee. It was a rather typical Student Affairs Committee, a meeting which some of us cynically referred to as "damage control," mopping up action after a weekend of carousing and vandalizing. One of the assistant deans remarked on how she was impressed by the number of students who seem to be suffering from serious alcohol abuse problems. I, a newcomer to the scene, blurted out, "Can't something be done about this? Don't you think it is a shame that these people come to us with such potential and then waste themselves with alcohol?"

Another dean said, "But what can we do? After all, we are not their parents."

"No, we are not their parents," I agreed, "but could we at least try being their older brothers and sisters? Could we possibly be their friends?"

I have wondered if the modern university might consider not in loco parentis, but perhaps in loco amicis.

When one talks in this way, the typical student life response is something like, "Well, I think it is important that we give them their freedom. Freedom is developmentally important at this age. We show our faith in our students by treating them like adults, by relying on them to make mature, responsible, decisions for themselves."

To my mind, such talk reveals a strange view of human
development. After all, they are not adults. At best, they are in Daniel Levinson's words, "a novice adult." Few of them are capable of "making their own decisions," or "thinking for themselves." Leaving them to themselves, they become the willing victims of the most totalitarian form of government ever devised, namely, submission to their peers, obeisance to people who are just like them. This is neither freedom nor maturity.

In fact, I remember in one meeting noting that, if the university were filled with students who grew up on the streets of Harlem or the south side of Chicago, then perhaps we could trust them to look out for themselves. After all, they had had so much experience looking after themselves before they arrived here. Unfortunately, for our administration of in absentia parentis, few of our students grew up on the south side of Chicago. Most of them have come from privileged homes where there was a relatively high degree of parental supervision and determination of their lives. To bring such people to a university, wave a magic wand over their lives, and tell them that they are magically transformed into mature, responsible adults, is ridiculous.

How do people grow up, develop social skills, and critical thinking ability? I would argue that such skills and abilities are not so much related to abstract notions of "freedom" as they are related to opportunities for observation, imitation, confrontation, and argument with those who have gone before us in life. So Neil Postman, in his new book, Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology, urges that all teachers, no matter what subject they teach, should regard themselves as historians, those who initiate the young into the human race by sharing with the young what humanity has learned about the world thus far. Ironically, with faculty and adults mostly absent from campus, especially during evening hours and weekends when students are most socially active, even during lunch when faculty are eating in their offices or are dining in restricted Faculty Commons, opportunities for student observation of their elders
are virtually non-existent. Could not it be argued that there is an interesting relationship between good teaching and good parenting. Abandoning in loco parentis has rendered us into a sterilized community without the "diversity" which we say we crave. Diversity, the ability to be different, to enjoy one's differences, to stand alone against the crowd if needed, to exercise bold thought and judgement, may be in great part the gift of being with elders who demonstrate, in their lives and teaching, the values which foster true diversity. De Tocqueville noted that in America, we had created a culture in which everyone was free to say whatever he wanted, yet unfortunately everyone chose to say the same thing. Freedom, individuality, are complex products. How do individuals really develop? How do people become persons who can think? What are the conditions which evoke free people? We have not acted on what we already know about the way young adults develop emotionally and intellectually.

Conversation with a number of administrators confirmed these impressions. A person who has spent many years counselling students on our campus noted that empirically speaking, a better case could be made for in loco parentis during the 1990's than during the 1950's. Increasing numbers of our students have been inadequately parented. They arrive on campus, having missed important aspects of human development, interaction and conflict with parents over values, struggle to obtain individuality and freedom, having been fairly much left to their own devices, having been raised by people just like us. These are not people yearning to be left alone by adults.

One of my theories for the current state of the university is that universities are being run by people my age. They are being administered by people who were themselves students in the sixties, people for whom abstract notions of freedom were their supreme values. These were the students who fought for, and achieved, the abolition of rules, structures, faculty and administrative interference in student life, and now they are in
positions of power within the university. They therefore run the university fairly much as they thought they wanted it administered when they were students.

Unfortunately, many of these middle-aged products of the sixties, these "tenured radicals" as some of us have been derisively called, fail to realize that we are dealing with a very different generation of students, students who have a very different developmental and educational agenda from ours when we were students. Today's students do not seem as obsessed by the search for freedom. Rather, they seem much more interested in the search for roots, stability, order, identity. Many of them are convinced of the chaotic, essentially unmanageable quality of modern life. Perhaps one of the ways to account for their passivity is that having no memory, no real awareness of history, they have lost hope that anything they decide or do can possibly impact the shape of the world.

A student therapist at CAPS told me that many of her fellow student counselors are frustrated because they are now unable to deal with the seriously emotionally disturbed because they spend so much of their day dealing with rather mundane, trivial problems which ought to be dealt with by parents.

"An hour long counselling session will end with my saying something like, 'Well you know, it really is a good idea to get at least six hours of sleep at night,' or something painfully obvious like, 'You really ought to try to eat two or three times a day.' These are the things parents ought to have told them, or ought to be telling them now. Alas, many of their parents are in a greater state of emotional and moral confusion than they. Adults like them will not be of too much help to young people."

Indeed, in my First Year Student Seminar, I begin by having students write a short "Personal History Paper." This past year, I noted to the students that out of the sixteen papers I received, seven of them mentioned that the most determinative life changing event for them was their parents' divorce. Only one paper out of the sixteen mentioned a father. Even the
student whose mother had committed suicide during his high school years, never once mentioned his father. It was as if all of these people were orphans.

You can therefore understand why, at a recent Parent’s Weekend discussion, when asked by a parent, "What is the greatest moral issue facing today’s young adults?" I said, "The greatest moral issue facing today’s young adults? Your divorce."

If one were administering higher education’s relationship to students on an empirically derived basis, one could easily argue that our students need more adult, maternal and paternal, parental supervision than any previous generation. Although we claim that our current policies respect their maturity, treat them like adults, or give them their freedom, our policies appear more truthfully to be derived from our abdication of responsibility, or to arise from the sad fact that our generation of university administrators and faculty have so little idea of what we want out of our university and its students that we have no means of saying Yes or No to our students.

EDUCATION AS THE FUNCTION OF THE UNIVERSITY

Maureen Cullins, who administers Duke’s alcohol policy, noted that, "The striking thing is that the use of alcohol doesn’t seem to impact academic performance, at least as far as grades are concerned. Many of those who are disciplined for alcohol abuse, and alcohol related infractions, do not seem to have a lower GPA. How does the faculty assume responsibility for social life?" Behind this observation is the impression, voiced by a number of administrators, that "faculty are wimps." That is, grade inflation, a gradual lowering of academic expectations and standards, is somehow related to the large amount of discretionary time many students have.

"Interestingly enough," says Cullins, "when Duke students need to get down to work, they do. There are almost no alcohol problems during the period close to exams. What does that tell
us?"

The Deans' move to encourage more Friday classes is surely a positive step in lessening the amount of alcohol abuse on Thursday evenings. Perhaps more night classes would help, along with more early morning classes. "When they need to get down to work, they do."

Are faculty willing to assume more responsibility in addressing the issue of alcohol abuse? Will they come to see alcohol as an academic, educational issue? For three years, the Academic Council has been asked for a faculty representative to the Alcohol Beverage Regulation Review Committee. None has yet been appointed.

Many of the effects of alcohol abuse show up later (very much like the AIDS virus) in people's lives. The fruits of alcohol abuse patterns, begun in the young adult years, occur later. It is difficult to see any positive educational value in routine over consumption of alcohol. Why is so much administrative time, to say nothing of student time, consumed with alcohol related matters?

Maureen Cullins says, "I don't think we've done what we can do." Have we done enough as administrators to set expectations for different kinds of behavior from our students? "We don't have an alcohol policy, because we don't have a Mission Statement for the university," says Cullins. "We're 60 years old -- which means that, as far as universities go, we are an adolescent institution. We are not only dealing with adolescents, but perhaps our institution itself shows some adolescent characteristics in not knowing who it is or what it wants to be."

I am claiming that alcohol is a symbol, a symptom of larger educational issues. Do we need to remind ourselves, throughout the university, that education is our primary mission? John Nobel, Director of the Career Development Center, noted that his Center was "in the education business -- not the business of getting people jobs." For Nobel, this means that his work ought to be viewed as one more aspect of a student's growth and
education, not as a service rendered to consumers who happen to be students. His self understanding ought to be a model of every aspect of the university.

When I interviewed a group of housekeeping personnel, they agreed that alcohol abuse was the number one student problem, from what they observed. A number of them reported long conversations with students concerning their alcohol abuse, conversations engendered by the results of "the night after" some party in the dorm. For these housekeepers, alcohol was clearly an educational issue.

Curiously, Public Safety personnel complained that "the university can't seem to decide what business it's really in. Are we a high priced resort for adolescents or are we a school?" Public Safety officers also feel that we had "a vacuum of leadership. Who are the campus leaders? The RAs are the only authority, the only person caring for students after dark and on weekends. One reason there is little discipline on campus is that there is no punishment. There is nobody to say no and students have very little accountability for their actions. This is not educationally valid. Why isn't it important learning for a student to learn that irresponsible actions have definite consequences?" Public Safety says that it needs clear signals from the administration concerning what sort of university we ought to be and what behavior is totally out of bound for students at this university. They complain that they rarely see administrators on campus at times when student behavior is at its worst. They plead for consistent, persistent application of policy. Yet how can we have coherent policy or consistent application of that policy when we have not yet had a sufficient discussion of who we want to be?

One evening, when discussing the alcohol policy with a group of students, one male student blurted out, "This is a university, not a bar, for God's sake."

By that he meant that he found it somewhat ludicrous for a university to spend so much energy agonizing over the pros and
cons of the social life of its students. Perhaps we have been well intentioned in attending to the intricacies of student life, but our intentions, without clear educational goals and intellectual commitments, have led us into a consumeristic mentality. Our purpose is not to fulfill the will of the customer but rather to educate people. ASDU says of itself that, "The mission of ASDU is to enforce the will of the students." Do students know what their will is in the context of education? Why would not the purpose of ASDU be to participate in the educational process? Should we not strive to view alcohol as an educational issue?

THE 1992 "DUKE EXPERIENCE SURVEY"

Actually, between the class of 1985 and the class of 1992 (1985 is when the first "Duke Experience Survey" was administered), there is very little change in students' report of their academic life here at Duke. They report about the same amount of hours spent studying each week (about an equal number of Duke students -- 37% of those surveyed -- report spending from 11 to 20 hours or 21 to 30 hours per week studying). The figures on "academic pressure" and "workload" are amazingly similar between this eight year time period.

I was pleased to see that the class of 1992 did report somewhat better experience with the advising process at Duke. The amount of student-faculty interaction reported was about the same.

It is interesting to note that, in the "Duke Experience Survey," the class of 1992 rates "ability to think" as the highest rated factor in motivating them at Duke. The rating for "ability to think" was 8.38 compared to "career" which was only 4.85. The second highest factor in motivation was "diploma attainment" (7.89). These figures would seem to indicate that, at least from students' report of their motivations, the much discussed "careerism" in higher education is not a major factor
for Duke students' image of themselves. They put the highest value on "ability to think."

The "Duke Experience Survey" still gleans spectacular results from the question of whether or not they would attend Duke, confirming Duke's rather spectacular rate of retention. Whereas the class of 1985 said that 90.90 percent of them would still attend Duke if given the chance again, the class of 1992 answered yes at the rate of 93.9 percent. (The highest score for a year of the "Duke Experience Survey" was 96.3, the class of 1987.)

To many, the positive results of the survey in regard to overall student satisfaction as well as student satisfaction with academic demands would raise questions about the validity of my project and its findings. Yet I think that the data of the survey demand interpretation. Does our students' overall satisfaction relate to the superior academic job we are doing or to other factors such as their general lack of critical awareness in regard to academic life? Perhaps these recent graduates, having spent so much on their education here, bestow a "halo effect" upon their university, believing it to be the best of all possible academic worlds.

The class of 1992 "Duke Experience Survey" rated the importance of the Greek system at 5.35, roughly the same as it was rated by the class of 1985 (5.25). Interestingly enough, the "social atmosphere" was rated down by the class of 1992 to 5.36, a full point lower than the "social atmosphere" as rated by the class of 1985 (6.33). When asked "Why?" a number of students reported to me their dissatisfaction with the alcohol policy as a major factor. In fact, the class of 1985, seemed relatively pleased with the much more open and unrestrained alcohol policy rating it at 7.24. The degree of dissatisfaction with the alcohol policy by the class of 1992 was much greater, 5.51. In fact, the item on "alcohol policy" is interesting because it appears to decline in nearly every year over the eight year time frame of the "Duke Experience Survey." I believe it fair to say
that any administrative effort further to restrict alcohol consumption on campus would meet with stiff and widespread resistance. Even those students who are relatively unhappy with the status quo in regard to alcohol want the problem to be addressed through means other than more administratively imposed rules and restrictions.

As far as eating facilities are concerned, in the "Duke Experience Survey" the Oak Room draws the highest level of satisfaction, 8.03 (compared to 3.81 for the "Boyd-Pishko Eatery"). The Magnolia Room was rated a high 8.19. (The class of 1992 rated the Rathskellar a low 5.89.) The money spent on redecorating the Rathskellar last summer may not have been well spent. Students almost universally thought the TV-Sports Bar atmosphere was loud, ugly, and detrimental to student interaction while eating. Students definitely seem to rate the more civilized, quiet, conversation enabling eating areas the highest.

Generally, there has been little change in the rating of the "overall Duke experience" on the "Duke Experience Survey." The lowest rated overall experience score was by the class of 1991 (7.84) and the highest rated was by the class of 1988 (8.53). The class of 1992 rated their overall Duke experience at 8.31, definitely higher than was rated by the previous class of 1991.

So why are we concerned with the quality of student life on the Duke campus if the students themselves seem to be so content with the status quo? Contentment can be a byproduct of lack of imagination, or of an inadequate historical perspective. We may imagine that this is the best of all possible worlds simply because we have limited experience with other worlds, or our present condition seems eternally constructed, impervious to change. Faculty and administrators are asking a great deal of undergraduates if they ask them to be the sole determiners of the character of the university. The "Duke Experience Survey" might be interpreted, not as a report on how well we have served our students during their time here, but rather on how well we have conditioned our students to ask little of their education.
HAVING THE MEANS BUT NOT THE ENDS

During the first days of my project, I proceeded as if what was needed was more information on student life, more data. The belief that all human problems are the result of a lack of information typifies the technological understanding of life which Neil Postman calls "Technopoly." Now I believe that insufficient information is not our problem.

Thomas Jefferson felt that, if information were made available to students, they would democratically sift through it and organize it themselves, knowing instinctively what to do with the information they had received through education. Jefferson believed that ideas were so ordered that students could make sense of what they heard and read and, by reason, judge its value, apply it to their lives. It is clear, in reading Jefferson on education, that he assumed a community of shared virtues and principles about the value of education.

Neil Postman argues persuasively that today we live in the aftermath of an age in which the connection "between information and human purpose has been severed, i.e., information appears indiscriminately, directed at no one in particular, in enormous volume and at high speeds, and disconnected from theory, meaning, or purpose."

Postman adds, "...any educational institution, if it is to function well in the management of information, must have a theory about its purpose and meaning, must have the means to give clear expression to its theory, and must do so, to a large extent, by excluding information."16

Lacking any definable ends, we are left only with means. Hoping to avoid any moral judgement, we make only practical ones. University administration becomes adjudicating between conflicting entitlement claims, servicing an environment in which the student, informed and uninformed in the purposes and ends of higher education, is king. What we call "curriculum" is more a cafeteria line of subjects, a hodgepodge which lacks a clear
vision of what constitutes an educated person. The image of personhood engendered by the curriculum appears to be that a person is someone without a point of view, devoid of commitment, but someone who has been exposed to the maximum number of lifestyle options.

Postman recalls Plato's *Phaedrus*, the legend of Thamus, in which Socrates complains about students who "will receive a quantity of information without proper instruction, and in consequence be thought very knowledgeable when they are for the most part quite ignorant. And because they are filled with the conceit of wisdom instead of real wisdom they will be a burden to society."

Lacking any theory of our life together at the University, any statement of purpose or mission, we have become consumer driven. Whatever student consumers want, whatever they think makes them happy, it is our duty to give. Auxiliary Services becomes the main focus of our administrative interaction with students, indeed, the whole university becomes but various aspects of Auxiliary Services -- servicing ever more demanding student consumers.

As Reynolds Price told us on Founders Day, both faculty and students, "All of us, in long collusion, have failed to exert a sustained and serious attempt to nurture the literal heart of a great university." For Price, that "heart" consists of "an environment that is suited for and continuously encouraging to the more or less constant discussion of serious matters" and "an atmosphere that awards itself a steady supply of human beings (students, faculty, and other staff) who are fitted to converse with one another on serious matters or are willing to learn how."

Lack of information is not our problem. Our problem is that we have tried to have a university without arguing about what a university is, what we want out of ourselves, who we expect our students to grow up to be, what we expect them to give to the world. James B. Duke was quite clear that the only reason he
could think of for a university was to produce people who would
influence the world for good. We should spend more time
thinking about what is the best possible way to live in this
community and then we should unashamedly ask students to conform
to this best way.

There is no way for us to sidestep the necessity of theory,
the need for us to debate the ends of our lives together here at
Duke. Lacking any worthy end, we will be stuck with petty
debates over administrative means, which is a university which
only mirrors our surrounding cultural status quo rather than
gives students the power to rise above it.

A Sophomore voiced an impression which I heard, in various
ways, voiced by many, "There's nobody at the top to say, 'Hey
people, this is what this place is all about.'" Mark Grassman, a
campus student activist who has spent many hours on the
Curriculum Committee, noted, "We've got no philosophy of what the
hell it is we want by the time somebody graduates. The so-called
curriculum is a set of hoops that somebody says students ought to
jump through before graduation. Nobody seems to have asked, 'How
do people learn to think?' or 'How do people become good people?'
We need more leadership from faculty and administration."

I heard disturbing charges, whether they are based on fact
or not, I could not discern, that student life, particularly
student life policy and discipline, is sometimes inappropriately
influenced by intrusions from the Development Office or by the
"What-would-our-alumni-say?" syndrome. The notion that the
Development Office would insert themselves into decisions about
student discipline is especially repugnant to me and I hope that
it has no basis in reality. However, lacking any firm conviction
about the type of student we want here, unable ever to say to
someone, "You have, by your actions, violated the spirit of life
here and thereby forfeited your privilege to be here," we leave
ourselves vulnerable to inappropriate intervention by those
representing concerns other than the educational mission of the
university.
A student administrator charged that, "Lacking any vision of
why we are here, administration becomes the mere lunging into one
crisis after another without anyone stepping back and asking,
'Why are we here?'"

"THE WAY WE LIVE NOW"

I was fascinated by how many of the students' concerns which
I heard were raised in a faculty newsletter offering in the
Department, in her article "The Way We Live Now" confessed "I
crave a sense of belonging, the feeling that I'm part of an
enterprise larger than myself, part of a group that shares some
common purpose." She reported that loneliness is a major factor
of life for many Duke faculty. Noting how she felt a real sense
of community, and constant faculty contact, during her time at
the National Humanities Center, she was impressed by how
different were her experiences at Duke.

Professor Tompkins says that "deliberate attention to
quality of life and workplace....is missing from most
universities I have known, and especially, a consciousness of how
important it is to establish and maintain good human relations
among people who occupy common space." She complains that the
value structure of faculties discourage a "communal atmosphere."

"At schools that emphasize research (and this is by now a
familiar story), each professor is an entrepreneur whose aim is
to enhance his or her reputation within a subfield, so that he or
she can move up the ladder -- receive more money, more
recognition, a lighter teaching load, and various other perks.
In this kind of competitive, hierarchical system, people’s energy
naturally goes into their publications and not toward the
institution or each other."

She laments that "there's no time for just hanging out."

"One might argue that the professorate is made up largely
of people who do best when left alone to pursue their own ends,
and were attracted to the profession for that reason, in which case my discomfort may be anomalous."

Comparing universities to corporations, and praising corporations for the strides they have made in recent years in addressing issues related to the quality of life in the workplace, Professor Tompkins says "universities are every bit as product-oriented as businesses. Teaching and publishing are the products and universities pay attention to them.... Not much thought is given to what business people call 'product capability,' that which enables production to take place in the first place, the processes and structures that facilitate and house productive action. In simpler language, how to address human needs for nurture and support."

She ends her article with a straightforward series of suggestions.

"How can these obstacles be overcome? By a commitment to finding a community of like-minded people, by a willingness to pay the price in personal advancement and scholarly achievement as these things are now measured, by constructing an alternate reward system."

"Universities, it seems to me, should model something for students besides the ideal of individual excellence -- the Olympic pole-vaulter making it over the bar. They should model social excellence as well as personal achievement, teach, by the very way they conduct their own internal business, something about our dependence upon and need for one another; something about how to achieve the feelings of acceptance and encouragement that community life affords, the sense of self-worth and belonging that keeps us all going on the inside. If institutions that purport to educate young people don't embody society's cherished ideals -- community, cooperation, harmony, love -- then what young people will learn will be the standards the institutions do embody: competition, hierarchy, busyness, and isolation."
FRIENDSHIP

I understand that the in loco parentis model of student administration is dead. The tragedy is that, in its place, we have a policy of virtual abandonment of students to their own devices. Jane Tompkins' article, and the conversations it has engendered, suggests that many faculty also feel abandoned. We desperately need to transform the student experience into one in which faculty again take responsibility for student life, in which opportunities for quality student/faculty interaction are encouraged, and the university considers virtually every adult on campus as a potential contributor to the educational process.

To that end I would like to suggest an alternative to abandonment. We cannot reinstitute in loco parentis. Yet might it be possible for Duke to pioneer a mode of campus life which encouraged us to live in amicis? As Jane Tompkins says, loneliness appears built into our present system. What can we do to make Duke the sort of place where friendship is encouraged and explored as the normative means of education, particularly that friendship which occurs between adults and those who are becoming adults?

Aristotle noted that friendship "holds states together" (Nicomachean Ethics). Today's university, a misnamed institution if ever there were one, has little about it that is unified or coherent. We desperately need some relatively commonly affirmed "glue" to hold us together, to serve as a basis for our decisions about our goals and our means. Although Aristotle was quite skeptical of the possibility of true friendship among the young because "their lives are guided by emotion, and they pursue most intensely what they find pleasant and what the moment brings," so they "become friends quickly and just as quickly cease to be friends," he did believe that friendship was one of the supreme intellectual virtues to be cultivated in life. "Moreover, time and familiarity are required," for friendship in the Aristotelian sense. "For, as
the proverb has it, people cannot know each other until they have
eaten the specified [measure of] salt together. ... This wish
to be friends can come about quickly, but friendship cannot...."

Might it be possible for us to see our university as a place
where people are allowed the time and the place for friendship to
develop, where the virtues required of friends are cultivated,
and where we all become more adept in the art of relating to one
another not as strangers, clients, customers, caregivers, but as
friends?

"Friends don't let friends drink and drive," says the slogan
on TV. The thought, though proverbial, is not trite. What might
it mean if we viewed alcohol, not as an issue of rules,
regulation, and solely an administrative responsibility, but
rather as an issue related to the skills of friendship?

Hannah Arendt has noted that, missing the "political"
implications of friendship, "We are wont to see friendship solely
as a phenomenon of intimacy, in which the friends open their
hearts to each other unmolested by the world and its demands."
She challenges this view as a modern perversion, defending the
Aristotelian idea that friendship is the basis of human
community.

Arendt helpfully recalls the relationship between friendship
and conversation. "For the Greeks the essence of friendship
consisted in discourse. They held that only the constant
interchange of talk united citizens in a polis. In discourse the
political importance of friendship, and the humanness peculiar to
it, were made manifest.... The Greeks called this humanness which
is achieved in the discourse of friendship philanthropia, 'love
of man,' since it manifests itself in a readiness to share the
world with other men. Its opposite, misanthropy, means simply
that the misanthrope finds no one with whom he cares to share the
world, that he regards nobody as worthy of rejoicing with him in
the world and nature and the cosmos." Thus matters relating
to space for constant conversation and interaction are not small
matters. Seemingly small and irrelevant matters like whether or
not automobiles are a right of First Year students, whether or
not it is wise to allow students to have refrigerators and
microwaves in their rooms, become major matters if it is a stated
university goal to foster the maximum amount of student/student
and student/faculty interaction. The concern, on the part of many of our students and faculty, for places to eat together and to have conversation together (such as the new East Campus Coffee House) is a concern about the foundation of our life as an educational community.

Because, in the words of Montaigne, "Friendship feeds on communications...," if we want friendship to be the basis of our life together we must foster those settings and opportunities where there can be much conversation and intellectual conviviality of the sort advocated by Reynolds Price in his Founders Day address as well as the numerous students who yearn for places to meet and encounter each other and faculty in significant ways.

Montaigne doubts that there can be true friendship between parents and children, because of their inequality. Perhaps he would say the same of faculty and students. Inequality is inimicable to friendship since inequality inhibits correction and discipline, one of the chief duties of friendship, for Montaigne. Yet even within the necessary constraints of the student-teacher relationship, or perhaps one should say especially because of the demands of the student-teacher relationship, friendship is an adequate metaphor for what we want to happen between faculty and students.

One hears much criticism of the Undergraduate Judicial Board. Most of the comments are typified by the ones I first heard when meeting with representatives of Public Safety, that the UJB is "inconsistent, ineffective, and far too lenient with serious student misbehavior." While there does appear to be some basis for those charges, I was interested in how the UJB mirrors our society's infatuation with rules, procedures, and process. Some students who go before the board, like the woman who sought redress for sexual harassment by two male students, feel that they encounter a group of people hiding behind procedures without concern for the individual seeking redress. What would it mean for the UJB to see itself as a proactive group, reaching out in friendship to those who had violated the character of university life through their errant behavior?

In my conversations, I encountered much criticism of Greek life on campus. There is indeed much to criticize, especially
among our fraternities. Yet my opinion of the "Greek problem" changed as I learned more about campus life. For all their faults, fraternities play an important role in many students' lives. Sororities and fraternities are criticized, but many First Year students find that they need to enter a fraternity or a sorority to have a sense of themselves, a sense that anybody out there cares about them. The meaningless Greek letters of the fraternity give them a sense of belonging.

My main criticism of Greek life is that we have allowed it to monopolize student social life. Not that fraternities want to be the virtually the sole social life on campus. Students need to take more responsibility, and to exercise more creativity for their social life. Also, we need to end some of the fraternities' historic hold on the best housing on West Campus. By providing fraternities with the best housing on campus, we are administratively subsidizing fraternities and giving them an administrative sanction which they do not deserve. "If you look at West Campus," said one Sophomore, "you immediately note that white males have the best housing. The impression is that Duke is an exclusive drinking club for white males on their way to Wall Street."

We ought to say, "It is fine to have fraternities on campus, but now you must compete with other organizations and living groups on 'a level playing field.' You will not be bolstered by offering students who join the best rooms on West Campus."

What is good about the Greek system? It provides one of the few places, though fortunately not the only place, where students can be together in face-to-face, intimate, sustained ways. In short, fraternities are an experiment in friendship. Although they are not complimented when compared to sororities and fraternities, living groups like Epworth, Rountable, Fubar, or even the Women's Dorm, at their best share some of the best characteristics of fraternities and sororities.

There is a fascinating connection between membership in a group, like a sorority, and the development of true individuality. For instance, members of the Epworth living group voiced contempt for the Greek system, telling me of their love for living in Epworth because "we are a group of staunch individualists." "Here," they said, "everybody is totally free
to be himself."

I noted that many of them, before they became members of Epworth, felt pressured to conform to the image of the "ideal Duke student." When they became part of Epworth, found a group of close, intimate friends who cared deeply about them, they were free to "be myself." My point is that ironically, the courage to be an individual appears to be related to membership in a group. For all its contempt of fraternities and sororities, Epworth at its best resembles the most positive aspects of Greek life.

Perhaps the issue ought not to be, "shall I be a member of a close-knit group at Duke or not?" but rather, "Will the group of which I am a member contribute to my growth as an interesting person or not?"

My point is that, rather than abolish the Greek system, we need to continue to encourage a plethora of groupings whereby our students might experience more ownership and control of their lives on campus, might be forced to be with a diversity of students within sustained, deep encounters, where they might learn to be friends with people who once were strangers.

Director of Admissions, Christoph Guttentag, noted that, "One of Duke's great advantages, is that it is a fairly young university, with a positive image of itself, and a possible willingness to try new alternatives. These factors ought to be encouraged in some fresh thinking about old campus problems."

I hope that he is right. Through the leadership of our administrative officers, I hope that we shall boldly venture forth to rethink what it means to be offered an opportunity like Duke, to experiment with those ways of being faculty and students, administrators and employees who desire, in the context of incredible campus beauty, a surplus of human talent, and an exuberant student body, to become friends for life.

2. Ibid., p. 294.

3. Sociologist Peter Blau, like many sociologists, states the painfully obvious when he notes that, "Once firmly organized, an organization tends to assume an identity of its own which makes it independent of the people who have founded it or of those who constitute its membership."


6. Russian poet, Yevgeny Yevtushenko, characterizes modernity as "a world with walls." "At first, it was people who invented borders," he writes, "and then borders started to invent people."


19. See the account of her experience in her paper, "The University Is Not An Island: the Inequities In the Structure of Duke University's Undergraduate Judicial Board," a paper by Tracy Nayer for CA 105S, located in the Duke Archives.

20. For a succinct, articulate, devastating criticism of fraternity life, from the inside out, see the article by Andrew Cohen, a student at Bucknell, in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 3, 1993, B5.