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An Agenda of Common Caring

The Call for Community in Higher Education

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In the closing years of the twentieth century, a concern for “community” enjoyed a renewed visibility in public conversation and literature, as reflected in *Habits of the Heart* (Bellah and others, 1985) and *The Spirit of Community* (Etzioni, 1993). A similar theme entered the literature of higher education with the often-cited special report titled *Campus Life: In Search of Community* (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990). The theme of “community” was also engaged in journal pieces (Kuh, 1991; Miller, 1994; Tompkins, 1992).

An important hope is carried in this opening chapter. It is the hope that those holding our colleges and universities in trust—students, faculty, staff, trustees—will understand that colleges and universities are complex, essential, and precious communities in our national life. Marketplace pressures are being increasingly felt in American higher education. We are invited to view students as customers and colleges as businesses, but there are important limitations in applying profit-sector principles in higher education. If we desire community in higher education, we need to understand the nature of the enterprise.

How are colleges distinguished from other organizations? What exactly does the term *community* signify, and why is it important to our colleges and universities? What is the nature of the community we wish to nurture in colleges and universities, and what may we,

as well as our students, learn from our efforts to fashion community? What are the challenges—the impediments to the cultivation of community in higher education? These are the questions I intend to engage in this chapter.

Spaces in Our Togetherness: The Meaning of Community

Let me probe the meaning of community, especially the idea of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts, with a quick personal story. While on the administrative staff of the University of Memphis in the 1970s, I enjoyed an avocation that I found renewing: playing second French horn with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. In the 1973–74 concert season, one of our programs concluded with Brahms’s “Symphony No. 1 in C Minor.” There is a lovely moment in the third movement when the second horn answers a short melodic passage carried by the first horn, and I can still remember a frisson of inner pleasure as the first horn and I exchanged melodic expressions. The closing and brisk pace of the third movement transitions into a majestic and fortissimo fourth movement.

As we moved into the symphony’s finale, every member of the orchestra could sense that we were performing on a plane of musical excellence beyond our ordinary reach. The talent of the Memphis symphony would not match that of a major orchestra such as the New York, Boston, Philadelphia, or Chicago orchestras, nor perhaps other orchestras closely following, such as those in Cincinnati or Dallas. But on this evening, we were performing at a level of musical excitement that the patrons recognized, and the closing notes were followed by a ten-minute standing ovation. Members of the orchestra knew that we had enjoyed a magical moment, an emotional high, in which the combined performance of the eighty musicians clearly was something more than the sum of individual talents. There was common purpose in that moment, disciplined and responsible talent at work before and during the concert, and

a common love of music. And there was a lovely experience of common pleasure that could not have flowed from solo music making.

There is a thought jewel in the fourth chapter of the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes, which is as follows: “Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow, but woe to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, they have heat; but how can one be warm alone?” (verses 9–11). There are works to be done, benefits to be derived, and pleasures to be enjoyed that are impossible in our oneness.

Shared purpose, shared commitment, shared relationships, shared responsibility—the need for community is a primal yearning and a practical necessity in our lives and in our society. A healthy community is one in which essential but often competing values are maintained in tensioned balance. In a healthy democracy, for example, there is a need to balance those competing ideas and impulses that are philosophic anchors for a democracy—the balance between access and excellence in education, rights and responsibility, justice and mercy, diversity and community, opportunity and disciplined effort, cooperation and competition, service and profit, self-interest and self-sacrifice, tradition and innovation.

What happens without the balance? Community degenerates. For example, cooperation taken to its negative extreme may lead us to seek the lowest common denominator of performance, in which mediocrity is not just tolerated but embraced. Competition taken to its negative extreme may lead to a dog-eat-dog mentality in which our ambition causes us to sacrifice integrity for personal profit—a moment when arrogance is ascendant. In their best expressions, however, cooperation multiplies the power of intelligence, and competition makes us stand on our performance tiptoes. It’s the balancing of these and other impulses that is essential in the construction of community.

Here’s another illustration of the need for balance. In *The Spirit of Community*, Etzioni (1993) notes our inclination to focus on

individual rights but to neglect individual responsibilities: “To take and not to give is an amoral, self-centered predisposition that ultimately no society can tolerate. To revisit the finding that many try to evade serving on a jury, which, they claim, they have a right to be served by, is egotistical, indecent, and in the long run impractical” (p. 10).

In a word, there can be no *rights* in any community, whether societal or organizational, unless those living there also discharge their *responsibilities*. Duty is an essential but often neglected motivator in any community. It is no less so in colleges and universities, as Donald Kennedy affirms in his book *Academic Duty* (1997).

Orchestrating the tension between individual interests and community interests, between the good of self and the good of the community, is a major engagement and theme of great literature. Might we find a more potent expression of individualism than in the writings of Russian-born, America-nurtured novelist Ayn Rand? Toward the end of her novel *The Fountainhead* (1943), the multiple-page soliloquy of fictional hero and architect Howard Roark is an eloquent testimony to the power of the individual: “The mind is an attribute of the individual. There is no such thing as a collective brain. There is no such thing as a collective thought. An agreement reached by a group of men is only a compromise of an average drawn upon many individual thoughts . . . all the functions of body and spirit are private. They cannot be shared or transferred” (p. 725).

According to Miss Rand’s testimony, it took her two years to compose this soliloquy, and when she consulted in the filming of the movie based on the book and starring Gary Cooper and Patricia Neal, she would not consent to the omission of a single word, though the courtroom soliloquy scene occupies some six minutes of film time, and the director of the movie wanted to reduce that scene by half.

Perhaps Ayn Rand’s philosophic devotion to individualism was in some sense a reaction to the worst expressions of the collectivism

she experienced while living in Russia. Neither she nor her fictional hero Roark, however, lived without relationship. And relationship is central to community.

Although the theme of community celebrates our relationships and interactions with others, it is important to acknowledge the contribution of solitude, which is certainly appropriate for a college or university. Anthony Storr has written a work titled *Solitude* (1988), advancing the idea that health and happiness flow from the ability to live in peace with oneself. The capacity to be alone, according to Storr, is as much an element of emotional maturity as our ability to cultivate relationships. The capacity to rejoice in our aloneness may thus be a mark of emotional security and maturity. Storr points to the creative achievements that writers, musicians, artists, and religious leaders have derived from their solitude.

Gibran (1973) speaks also to the contributions of solitude: “Solitude is a silent storm that breaks down all our dead branches; yet it sends our living roots deeper into the living heart of the living earth” (p. 51). However, loneliness and separation from others is one of the more difficult human experiences. Why labor to discover and create if there is no one to benefit or to share? Is the experience of beauty diminished when there is no other to join in appreciation? The human experience sings to our need for both solitude and relationship.

Although learning and creativity can take seed and flower from moments of solitude, they can also flow from our experience of community. Consider, for example, this illustration and exploration of community that is found in a true story of two thousand men and women—prisoners of the Japanese during World War II—who were forced into constructing a community in China. The story is told by Langdon Gilkey in *Shantung Compound* (1966). There were missionaries and prostitutes and a host of other diverse personalities and occupations herded into the prison compound. The prisoners were not physically abused by the Japanese but had to create community and social order without benefit of law or regulation. Such

mundane but incendiary questions as who peels the potatoes for meals and how much living space is allotted for each person had to be resolved without courts or police force. They were souls without sanction, these men and women of Shantung Compound.

Aren't we more likely to share in the face of common difficulty and danger such as these men and women faced in this prison camp? Will goodness not emerge in times of crisis? Gilkey's theologically trained heart was seriously stressed to learn that the answers to these questions were not always yes. If folks in a community cared less about justice and equity than their own comfort and self-interest, what does this suggest about the patina of civilization? As did Victor Frankl in his German concentration camp experience (*Man's Search for Meaning*, 1959), Gilkey kept a diary and transformed this unwanted experience into a learning experience. He concluded that "without moral health, a community is as helpless and lost as it is without material supplies and services" (p. 76). Gilkey says, "One of the strangest lessons that our unstable life-passage teaches us is that the unwanted is often creative rather than destructive . . . this is a common mystery of life, an aspect, if you will, of common grace: out of apparent evil new creativity can arise if the meanings and possibilities latent within the new situation are grasped with courage and with faith" (p. 242).

The Shantung Compound was given to me by a friend serving as academic dean of a private college, an act of friendship and relationship. Can I be sure that my mind, in its oneness and in its solitude, would have been exposed to and enriched by Gilkey's experience and thought? Not necessarily. Our minds are immersed in great oceans of thought that flow from community. Solitude and community are thus complementary, and both are essential conditions of the human experience.

What is community? Community is a laboratory of discovery in which we come to value the possibilities found in mistake and error and serendipitous moments. Community is a venture in human learning and association, where moral meaning—concepts

of justice and fairness, of human goodness and depravity, of rights and responsibility—may be factored from moments that can be both elevating and wrenching to the human spirit. Community is a dance of paradox, in which personal aspiration and personal sacrifice are found in embrace. These are lessons to be learned by faculty, staff, and students as they work to fashion community in our colleges and universities.

A sense of community in any setting signifies the presence of what I call an agenda of common caring and grace. This agenda of common caring embraces a love for soul, for standard, and for system. There is a caring for the individuals in the community, for those whose welfare is held in trust. There is a caring for a standard of excellence and integrity. And there is a caring for the policy and physical systems in which men and women relate in both work and play. Central to the essence of community is the other face of love, which is forgiveness. Readers interested in the political and practical power of forgiveness will find Bishop Desmond Tutu's book *No Future Without Forgiveness* (1999) a stimulating engagement.

In a community, there is a vision of shared purpose. There are shared values that shape and guide behavior. There is a shared giving and, yes, sacrifice to cause beyond self. Gibran (1969) urges: "But let there be spaces in your togetherness and let the winds of heavens dance between you" (p. 15). And so there are spaces in community to respect private interests and public interests. There is a space for intimacy and a space for solitude. There is a space for laughter and a space for lament, for shared moments of joy and pain. There is a space for the harmony of our togetherness and the conflict of our differences. There is a space for dark struggles and night journeys and a space for dawn arrivals of imagination and inspiration. There is a space for fellowship of conversation and a space where our silence is honored. These are also lessons to be learned by faculty, staff, and students as they construct communities of learning. But what is the special nature of collegiate community? Let us go there.

The Nature of Collegiate Community

The concept of community is central to our colleges and universities for the lessons that may be gained in the pursuit of community, some of which are cited in our previous discussion. Colleges and universities exist for purposes beyond developing knowledge and skill in our students. They are also sanctuaries of our personal and civic values, incubators of intellect *and* integrity. And so the values that mark the community of higher learning are the values that are most likely to be caught by our students.

Although his words are not specifically directed to colleges and universities, John Gardner (1990) writes:

The community teaches. If it is healthy and coherent, the community imparts a coherent value system. If it is fragmented or sterile or degenerative, lessons are taught anyway—but not lessons that heal and strengthen. It is community and culture that hold the individual in a framework of values; when the framework disintegrates, individual value systems disintegrate [p. 113].

The unhappy fruits of such moral disintegration are loss of meaning and loss of potency. A collegiate community must be more than a collection of buildings connected only by steam lines and fiber optic cables. It must be a set of relationships that recognize and celebrate a shared vision of purpose and values.

Colleges and universities are often described as communities of scholars, communities of truth—learning communities. In one of the most familiar and informing legacies of collegiate community, Ernest Boyer (1990) characterized a college or university as

- *A purposeful community.* A purposeful community is one in which students and faculty share learning goals, and the classroom is seen as a place where community

begins and where “great teachers not only transmit information, but also create the common ground of intellectual commitment. They stimulate active, not passive learning in the classroom, encourage students to be creative not conforming, and inspire them to go on learning long after college days are over” (p. 12).

- *An open community.* An open community is described as one in which freedom of expression is nurtured and civility is affirmed. The virtue of civility recognizes the dignity of every person and is built on the reciprocity principle honored in every great religious literature.
- *A just community.* Prejudice and arrogance are the enemies of a just community. Thus a just community is one that affirms diversity and “is a place where diversity is aggressively pursued” (p. 35).
- *A disciplined community.* The report describes a disciplined community as “a place where individuals accept their obligations to the group and where well-defined governance procedures guide behavior for the common good” (p. 37). Codes of conduct and security plans are attended under this community value, as are the values of courtesy and privacy.
- *A caring community.* A caring community is one where a sense of connection between student and campus is cultivated, and the nobility of service to others is emphasized. The report suggests that “students also should be brought in touch with those genuinely in need, and through field experiences, build relationships that are inter-generational, intercultural, and international, too” (p. 54).
- *A celebrative community.* A celebrative community is one in which campus heritage and traditions are central

to the culture of the campus and to student life. Both the physical environment and the ceremonial traditions mark it for memory and connection in the lives of its students.

Threats to these marks of community are nicely identified by the writers, who point to disturbing realities:

On most campuses expectations regarding the personal conduct of students are ambiguous, at best. The deep social divisions that all too often divide campuses racially and ethnically undermine the integrity of higher education. Sexism continues to restrict women. The lack of commitment to serious learning among students often saps the vitality of the undergraduate experience, and we ask: If students and faculty cannot join together in common cause, if the university cannot come together in a shared vision of its central mission, how can we hope to sustain community in the society at large? [Boyer, 1990, p. 3]

Ernest Boyer was a champion of collegiate community; as an executive of The Carnegie Foundation, he furnished a leadership impulse for the study of higher education community and the issuance of this report. He was also champion of a complementary theme. In his book *College: The Undergraduate Experience* (1987), Boyer laments the separation of competence and conscience in collegiate education, and his writings remind us that what we know is always servant to what we believe, that knowledge is servant to our values.

As we explore the essentials of campus community, this may be a moment to revisit the idea that the presence of community does not imply or require the absence of conflict. Conflict in any organization can have constructive and destructive valence. The conventional wisdom is that conflict signals individual or organizational

pathology, and its presence is an alarm call to seize the nearest hose and douse the fire. This narrow view, however, misses the personal and organizational growth possibilities, the clearing-away and renewal promise that may be found in conflict. And it misses the necessity for creating conflict as an instrument to combat injustice and inequity. Leaders in any enterprise—and certainly in colleges and universities—have the responsibility to prevent unnecessary and destructive conflict, to resolve conflict that threatens the welfare and promise of either individuals or organization, and to create conflict when that instrument will serve as an instrument of growth, renewal, and justice.

Not the absence of conflict but its thoughtful orchestration is what marks the presence of campus community. Designing and nurturing a sense of community in our colleges and universities is a leadership challenge of majestic complexity. Here's why.

The Complexity of Collegiate Motive and Method

There are challenges of both motive and method to be engaged in fashioning community within our colleges and universities. On the theme of mission and motive, American higher education is expected to be both cultural curator and cultural critic, to honor heritage and to assault the limitations of common sense. This is an expectation guaranteed to keep our colleges and universities in the spotlight of public scrutiny and in the crucible of criticism.

Our colleges and universities constitute a system of both privilege and opportunity in which elitist and egalitarian impulses contend. It is a system in which the principle of autonomy, so essential in the pursuit of truth and in the nurture of democracy, is in dynamic tension with the principle of accountability, which is an antidote to professional arrogance and intellectual narrowness. Citadels of reason and persuasion, guardians of liberty and democracy, homes of discovery and dissent, engines of cultural and

economic development, repositories of artistic expression, instruments of curiosity and wonder—here are mission metaphors of no small complexity and consequence.

As we noted early in this chapter, contemporary marketplace pressures on higher education constitute yet another tension in the search for the soul of American higher education, as well as a challenge to community. Will market pressures confine and distort the search for truth in the distinctive culture, and community, of American colleges and universities? There are sufficient stories in both the public and professional press in which economic interests thwart the interests of truth seeking to warrant our attention. Will college faculty become hired hands and eager entrepreneurs rather than discoverers and custodians of truth? Will college presidents become captains of enterprise rather than erudition? Will the house of intellect become a house of merchandise, where faculty are salespeople hawking their wares to students, who are credential-hungry customers? Will the college experience become one of barter and exchange between teacher and student—knowledge and credentials for time and money—rather than a shared journey of learning?

If marketplace models and ideology may prove injurious to community in our colleges and universities, so may civic models. Our nation's history in the 2000 presidential election teaches civic lessons in the power of vote and majority rule. But truth is not necessarily to be found in consensus or majority vote. The religious majority may have weighed against Galileo, but Galileo had the truth. The medical majority may have weighed against Austrian physician Semmelweiss, but Semmelweiss had the truth. The military majority may have weighed against General Billy Mitchell, but General Mitchell had the truth. The political majority in the South may have weighed against Martin Luther King Jr., but Reverend King had the truth.

Carl Sagan's *The Demon Haunted World* (1996) and Daniel Boorstin's *The Discoverers* (1983) are informing intellectual works that depict the confining effects of superstition and narrow reli-

giosity. Colleges and universities constitute an organized assault not only on common sense but on the bondage of superstition. And so the birth of new truth may contradict conventional wisdom and discomfort majority belief. The birth of new truth is never without pain. Any sustained and reflective engagement with this idea will again mark the complexity of nurturing community in a college or university.

There are also many stakeholders who could claim a legitimate voice in addressing questions of higher education mission and purpose and in evaluating higher education performance: students, faculty, administrators, parents, civic friends and political officers, board members and alumni. Thus the often ambiguous governance processes, the concept of shared authority among this extensive range of stakeholders, and the often tedious processes of consensus decision making add to the challenge of building community.

If the complexity of mission and governance were not sufficient challenges to the nurture of collegiate community, let us consider method. Conflict and argument are integral to the work of our colleges and universities. An organization whose mission embraces the unswerving search for truth, whose methods include the adversarial testing of ideas in public forum, whose spirit embraces a certain irreverence—such an organization will not find the search for community an easy one.

If we may borrow a thought agenda from Neal Postman (1996), American educational institutions are asked to serve many gods: the god of economic utility (get a job and be a competent worker), the god of consumership (spend money and acquire material possessions), the god of technology (use tools and be efficient), and the god of multiculturalism (accent and respect differences). What you do for a living, what material things you accumulate, what toys you can use, and what your ethnicity is count for meaning. The result can be a society of hyphenated Americans—an outcome that American historian Arthur Schlesinger laments in his book *The Disuniting of America* (1992).

Postman (1996) goes on to suggest that the story of America “is a story of continuing experiment, a perpetual and fascinating question mark” (p. 71). In this view, America is a story of questions and arguments:

Can a nation be formed, maintained, and preserved on the principle of continuous argumentation? . . . We know what happens when argument ceases—blood happens, as in our Civil War, when we stopped arguing with one another; or in several other wars, when we stopped arguing with other people; or in a war or two when, perhaps, no argument was possible [p. 73].

As I earlier noted, then, American higher education is a guarantor of democracy and a guardian of liberty because in some ways higher education is an organized and continuous argument. Thus colleges and universities serve a critical and civilizing purpose in our society via the maintenance of argument, in serving as a forum in which contesting ideas may be evaluated in a public forum.

Continuing with our concern for method, we should observe that colleges and universities are sanctuaries for scholars seeking truth on many fronts, using diverse methods, and honoring a wide variety of philosophic assumptions about the nature of truth. Scientists want an experiment and lawyers an adversarial hearing. Mathematicians want a logical argument and theologians a search of sacred literature. Sociologists want a compilation of opinion and historians an analysis of prime sources. Novelists, musicians, and visual artists bring an interpretative spirit to the enterprise. Professional scholars look to the practical application of ideas.

Is truth revealed, discovered, or constructed? The answer may be yes to all three questions in the halls of the academy. Does truth exist independent of the observer or is the observer a part of the truth event? Again the answer may be yes on both counts. Is truth relative or absolute? Yes! Colleges and universities are companies

of fact and faith—enterprises in which ideological conflict and argument are woven into their very fabric.

Here also is an enterprise often criticized for its fossilized views and processes, its reluctance and resistance to change. There is something to be said, however, for the andante majesty of higher education in its pace of change. Nurturing truth and talent is an eminently personal occupation, a work of the long term whose success is not to be found in a neat balance sheet for the current quarter or year. It is a work largely of faith and optimism.

There is yet another distraction to community in our colleges and universities. Faculty members have allegiance residing outside a particular campus, especially for research universities. They belong to various disciplinary and professional associations that can call their attention, loyalty, and caring from the campus that furnishes their financial sustenance.

To this point, I have not commented on the challenge of size as it affects our ability to form and maintain community. In recent years, I have participated in campus celebrations at three relatively small, private, religiously affiliated colleges in East Tennessee: Carson-Newman College, Lee University, and Southern Adventist University. Here are collegiate places where it is easy to feel a keen sense of community, where the size of the campus makes it possible to know almost every faculty member and student, where shared religious values furnish bonds of common commitment, and where there is a clearly articulated agenda of common caring. But what of the large university, whether public or private?

Here we depend on multiple connections to furnish a sense of belonging. A student playing in the concert band or on a varsity athletic team, living in the residence hall, participating in one or more student clubs, giving volunteer service through student organization, or holding a part-time job on campus builds his or her own network of connections that help make that student feel a part of the community of the university, whether two thousand or twenty thousand. Whether small or large, we know the practical contribution of

community. Students connected to and involved with a campus are more likely to persist, to find pleasure, and to graduate.

The Soul of Collegiate Community

Is it my imagination, or is the term *soul* appearing more frequently in contemporary literature? One would not be surprised to find the word *soul* appearing in religious literature, but here is a book by Bolman and Deal titled *Leading with Soul* (1995) and one by Marsden titled *The Soul of the American University* (1994). There is an article by Frank Newman in the October 2000 issue of *Change* magazine titled “Saving Higher Education’s Soul,” and I have an essay titled “Searching for the Soul of American Higher Education” appearing in *100 Classic Books About Higher Education* (Fincher and others, 2001).

In 1994, I acquired two books with “soul” in their titles. One of these was a work by Thomas Moore titled *Soul Mates* (1994), and one was by Nobel Laureate Francis Crick titled *The Astonishing Hypothesis: The Scientific Search for the Soul* (1994). The themes of these two works are in rich and provoking contrast. Moore notes our inclination to see the world in terms of systems, machines, and programs—metaphors reflecting the triumph of technology. We speak of marriages and families and communities as “social systems.” Mystery and essence yield to measurement and mechanics.

Moore suggests that if a concern for soul takes center place, community would be more paramount than organization and friendship more central than productivity. He further explores the importance of manners in community. This suggests that collegiate communities would be places where dignity and civility, as expressions of manners, would be celebrated. And these values are indeed affirmed as essential to collegiate community in the *Campus Life* report cited earlier. There is a spiritual center to this work. Sustaining hope and persistence in the face of dark journeys is an act of faith. And the power of faith is the centerpiece of religious thought.

Not surprisingly for a world-renowned scientist who, with James Watson, discovered the molecular structure of DNA, Crick's work centers on the scientific study of consciousness—a conceptual counterpoint to what he describes as “the hypothetical immortal soul.” His “astonishing hypothesis is that ‘You,’ your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will, are in fact no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules” (Crick, 1994, p. 3). Such a view constitutes a counterpoint to musing about the spiritual nature of soul.

It is this idea of established disbelief that Marsden probes so well in his work *The Soul of the American University* (1994). He profiles the transformation in higher education's mission from instruction in religion, the study of moral philosophy, and a belief in God to the ascendancy of science, pragmatism, and relativism. He poses this question on science and religion: “In a world where there were no longer self evident first principles based on God-created natural laws, what happened when allegedly scientific definitions of the ‘good’ conflicted? How could one argue, for instance, that all humans are ‘created equal’ if one denied that humans were created?” (p. 375).

Now what do these ruminations on soul in general and on the soul of the university have to do with the nature of community in colleges and universities? First, scientific and religious inquiries coexist in the collegiate community. That scientific and religious inquiry can coexist—that these two wildly different assumptions about the nature of reality and the nature of human experience can both guide inquiry within the community of higher education—is a matter of some marvel.

When physicists began to talk about alternative realities and dark matter, we are led to the surprising idea that the hallway between science and religion may be shorter than we thought. When astronomers think about the “Big Bang” theory of the universe's origins, theologians are anxious to solve the scientific dilemma of an

effect without a cause by reference to the Genesis scripture, “In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.” To talk about the soul of higher education, therefore, is paradoxical, because we must acknowledge that for some colleagues the concept of soul has no meaning. And how paradoxical can it be to acknowledge that the argument over the existence or nonexistence of soul is a part of the soul or essence of collegiate community!?! (The rarely employed interrobang is certainly an appropriate punctuation here.)

Writing in his thoughtful and informing *Change* article “Saving Higher Education’s Soul,” Frank Newman (2000) offers this note and query:

With growing emphasis on revenue streams, introduction of for-profit activities, large-scale corporate sponsorship of research, high presidential salaries, and other trappings of the corporate world, there is new danger that the public and its political leaders will review higher education as just another interest or industry devoid of attributes that raise its interests above those of the marketplace throng. . . . It is, therefore, critical to ask what is the soul of higher education that needs to be saved?
[p. 17]

Newman’s article distinguishes three “soul” dimensions, as he points to the civic mission of higher education, accents the social mobility responsibility of higher education, and highlights higher education as a home for disinterested scholarship.

The Uniting Force of Curiosity and Wonder

With all this complexity in mission and motive, what provides the uniting force for the special and distinguishing character of community in American higher education? We have advanced some answers to this question. The community of higher education is a

forum of fact and faith, where some truths reside in the numbers and some in the mist, but the search for truth is a uniting aspiration. It is a lively and often contentious argument over the nature of truth. It is a museum of ideas once fresh and energizing but now quaint and outmoded. It is the home of our hope, where scholars labor to solve those problems that rob men and women of their dignity, their promise, and their joy. It is conservator of the record of our nobility and our barbarism. It is the theater of our artistic impulses. It is a forum where dissent over purpose and performance may be seen as evidence that higher education is meeting its responsibility for asking what is true, what is good, and what is beautiful. It is a place where all in the community—students, faculty, staff—are called to ask what brings meaning to their lives and makes them glad to be alive. It is, above all, a community in which we celebrate the humanizing force of our curiosity and wonder, a place for dreamers of day.

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